

## True Disciple #10 – Serving

Welcome to True Disciple #10. This is Rod Nichols and I want to commend you on investing the time to listen to these messages that will help you become a true disciple of Jesus. If you haven't listened to the others or want to listen to them again, you can always find all the messages on [www.TrueDisciple.Info](http://www.TrueDisciple.Info) by clicking the Weekly Messages button under the current message on the front page. If you are on the site, but not on the front page, you can find the Weekly Message and many other great pages under MORE in the top menu. We're constantly adding to the site, so go back often and make sure you subscribe to the email list, so you will receive our weekly email update.

Today I'm going to talk about serving.

By nature, we're selfish and self-focused and quite often our lack of service will highlight this. In fact, even our service might be selfish, if we are serving to be seen and to receive recognition or to get some brownie points with God or our Pastor, then we're serving out of selfishness and that's not what Jesus intended.

Jesus is our perfect example of a servant. Here is the Son of God in flesh and He says in Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Are getting this picture in your head? This is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. The one who was with God and was God, in the beginning. The One through whom everything was created. If there was ever anyone who deserved to be served, it was Jesus and yet he came to serve.

He puts action to His words in John 13:5-11. Let's read it:

"After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”

<sup>8</sup> “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.”

Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”

<sup>9</sup> “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.”

This is a little hard to picture, because in our culture, we wear shoes, not sandals and drive most places in our cars. We don't have the need for servants washing feet, but in those days, they wore open toed sandals on muddy roads covered in animal excrement. They didn't take showers or baths every day, so these were some dirty, smelly, and gnarly feet. The lowest servant in the house was the one who washed the feet of guests as they entered a home.

Ok, with that in mind, here again is the Son of God removing His priestly robe and stooping to wash the feet of His disciples. He wasn't doing this to show them that they should go around washing feet, rather that they were to be servants. Nothing was too low for them.

As true disciples of Jesus, nothing should be too low for us either. We should serve with the heart and compassion of Jesus who in Matthew 8:1-4 reached out His hand and touched a leper to heal him. Lepers were highly contagious by touch and this also would have made Jesus ceremonially unclean, but Jesus didn't care about any of that. He could have spoken and the man would have been healed, but Jesus knew that the man hadn't been touched in years and so in love, he touched the man.

Twice Jesus felt sorry for all the people who had been listening to him all day and so he fed them miraculous meals of fish and bread (Matthew 14:13-21 and Matthew 15:29-39).

Jesus healed all of the sick who came to him. He healed the lame, deaf, blind, and mute. He delivered demons from people and set them free from the prison of their own mind.

As true disciples of Jesus we should be feeding, clothing, helping the homeless find shelter, healing the sick, delivering demons from people, visiting people in prison, and taking care of the widows and orphans.

In fact in Matthew 24, verses 31 – 46, we see a prophetic view of the judgement of mankind. Jesus will separate the goats (those who aren't saved – who didn't accept Jesus as the Savior and Lord) to the left and the sheep (those who are saved) to the right. Then Jesus does something curious. He talks about those on the right and how they gave him food when he was hungry, gave him something to drink when he was thirsty, as a stranger they invited him into their home, when he was naked they gave him clothing, when he was in prison, they came to visit him.

Of course the sheep responded with when did we ever see you like this and Jesus responded that what they had done for others (the least), they had done for Him. When we serve others, we're actually serving Jesus and one day, we will stand before Him as a sheep (already saved and going to heaven) and He will give an account of what we did and said. Then, hopefully Jesus will say, "well done good and faithful servant, what you did for the least of these, you did for me."

Wherever you live, there are food and clothing banks, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters that need volunteers. You can get a small group together and take water and sandwiches (and coats and blankets during the winter) out to homeless people. You can serve as a mentor to orphans or kids who only have one parent. You can mow the lawn or do housecleaning for a widow or the elderly. You can pray for the sick, lame, deaf, blind, and mute and believe that God will heal them because the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective (James 5:16) and Jesus said we would do what he did and even greater (John 14:12).

True disciples get out from behind the church walls. Out from their comfort zones, to serve the least of these. To serve Jesus. Start with your family – serve your parents, spouse, children, and siblings. At work, serve your boss and co-workers. Serve your neighbors, then move out into your community. Go and be the feet and arms of Jesus. You might be the only Jesus some people ever see.

True disciples are like Jesus, they have a heart of compassion and go into the world, not to be served, but to serve others.

That's it for message #10. I hope you will take this message to heart and start serving. First in your family, second in your church body, third in your neighborhood, and fourth in your community. Your service may seem small, but it's going to rock someone's world!

Thanks again for listening. Tune in next week for message #11 on Preaching the Gospel. Have a great week and may God abundantly bless you!