

May 4, 2024

Servant Leadership Training

[Mark 10:35-45](#)

But it is not so among you; but whosoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. (Mark 10:43-44)

I want to begin this meditation by acknowledging all the WV Annual Conference does in providing training opportunities for those who hear the call, especially lay members. Current training opportunities can lead to a certification as a Lay Servant, Lay Speaker or Lay Minister.

These initiatives continue the work that began with Jesus when he called 12 individuals to follow him. They accepted the invitation--possibly out of curiosity or a nudge from God. What they did not know was they had signed up for leadership training. I am guessing that Jesus felt it best not to label it.

As they traveled the countryside, the Disciples saw Jesus at work. They saw his power and greatness through his actions to heal the sick and feed the poor. They participated in his public and private teaching sessions.

The thing that the Teacher failed to do was to give them a pop quiz or test to assess what they were learning.

This became apparent when James and John came up to him and said, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." They had been dazzled by all the power Jesus had exhibited through his miracles and the crafty ways he dealt with the religious leaders.

They wanted to be just like Jesus. Unfortunately, they had not fully understood what Jesus was teaching. Fortunately, their boldness provided Jesus with an opportunity to refine and clarify his teaching. Jesus did not rebuke James and John but sat down with them and the rest of the class to explain and share his vision for their leadership roles.

Jesus recognized that the request for glory came from a cultural context. Power was in the hands of the Roman Empire and the religious leaders were threatened by Jesus' influence. Jesus calls the Disciples to live in a way that differs from all the world. We are not to abuse power, but to serve our neighbor and the poor. Jesus equates greatness with servanthood. The concept of servant leadership is born.

Through reading scripture, participating in Bible study, and attending weekly worship, we have completed our training. May we remember and use Jesus' definition of greatness and live into our greatness and our purpose.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, thank you for the lessons of humble servanthood. Open our hearts to see opportunities to serve others and learn what it means to love like you today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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