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Opening: A story of mentorship

1. **The Internship of Heaven: John 15:16(NIV)** “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit--fruit that will last--and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.
 - a. “ God has chosen us to become heirs in the Kingdom to come. This time we live in now is preparing us for a real purpose in the Kingdom to come.
 - b. You are in training for reigning, all that you will do in eternity is not fully known but God is using the experiences in this life to prepare you for the work of the Kingdom to come.
 - c. Servant Evangelism: The key to some people’s hearts is to just serve them until they open their eyes and wonder why? ** this can be the hardest form of evangelism because it requires faith and patience.
 - i. **Life Lesson: Servant Evangelism is loving people on credit with the belief and hope that your love will reveal Christ to them in tangible ways. We should never write people off as impossible to be saved without serving them in the Spirit of Christ.**
2. **The Law of Christ and serving: Walking a mile in the shoes of your neighbor**
 - a. **Empathy** refers to the ability to relate to another person's pain vicariously, as if one has experienced that pain themselves:
 - b. **Galatians 6:2** Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.
 - c. **1st Corinthians 9:19-23** ¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made **myself a slave to everyone**, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the

law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am **not free from God's law but am under Christ's law**), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ **I do all this for the sake of the gospel**, that I may share in its blessings.

- i. Paul tells us to win the world to Christ He became the "slave" or servant of all. **The Greek word for Slave here is "Doulou" which is the same word used by the Apostle Paul in Romans 6:18 speaking of being a slave to righteousness.**
 - ii. This term means we are doing a work of **willful submission and service**.
 - iii. If we are going to win the world like the early church did, we are going to have to consider our life the same way they did. They saw this life as one of investment into others for the greater purpose of saving people to Christ.
- d. **Life Lesson: The Bond servant of Christ claims no rights but has right to them all. They forsake the rights of this life so that they may serve and lead many to righteousness in Christ.**

3. What was a Bondservant?

- a. **Romans 1:1** Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.
- b. The following is taken courtesy of Gordon Kler of Portlaoise Life Church in loais Ireland "Slaves occupying the lowest tier were called "huperetes." They had the least value and were considered worthless. They were chained to their benches until death took them. Their only purpose in life was to obey the command of the captain through the drumbeat set by the coxswain of the galley ship. His cadence determined the speed of the ship."
- c. Five aspects of our Christian servitude can be gleaned from the Bible's view of "bondservant":

- i. The under rowers – us – had to row to the drumbeat set by the captain – Jesus. 150 oars rowing in perfect cadence; perfect harmony.
 - ii. The bottom oars or sweeps were shortest; they had to synchronize with the other rowers. If one rower was out of perfect synch then other rowers were disrupted, causing the ship to lose speed, endangering the ship.
 - iii. They had to trust the captain. They had no idea where they were going. Their job was to row not navigate. Theirs was a work of obedience, trust, and faith.
 - iv. Theirs was a life of total commitment. They were not concerned about the affairs of the world.
 - v. They had no honor in themselves – only in satisfying the desires of the captain. Paul and other writers use the term “bondservant” to describe the depth of commitment they had to the Lord – Captain.
4. **Why do we see less servants in the body of Christ today?** Consider the Laodicean Church
- a. To begin it is said ad nauseum that 20% of the people in any church do 80% of the work this statistic is so true that it really must be addressed as to why it is true and how we can break the mold of average and ordinary.
 - i. **Laodicea the “Lukewarm” church Revelation 3: 17-18**
17Because you say, **‘I am rich,** have become wealthy, and **have need of nothing’**—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— **18**I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.
 - ii. Many biblical scholars believe that the final church in Revelation represents the final church in human history before the 2nd coming of Christ.

- b. Laodicea represented the complacent or lukewarm church. Indifferent to truth and lies this church had become numb to the world they lived in.
 - i. Spiritual numbness is the dullness to the desires of God and needs of men. This church had become removed from the cares of the struggling in its community and had become wealthy lacking no physical needs.
 - ii. At the dinner or banquet table the Laodiceans would serve either hot or cold drinks, one would be like a medicine the other a refresher but to serve a lukewarm beverage was considered dishonorable.
 - iii. Instead of searching for God persistently and passionately this church became “Spiritually” wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Harsh words from Jesus but it is clear that this church was in an unhealthy place.
- c. **Life Lesson:** The church of Laodicea was so consumed with their personal rights, freedoms, comforts, dreams, and pursuits that they had completely lost sight of God’s will for their lives and the needs of those lost in their community.
 - i. Do we have the heart of God burning within us to serve our communities? Are we willing to give the best we have so that all may know of the love and truth of Jesus that alone can save them?

5. A Pastor’s Concern

- a. As we learned a few weeks ago, each one of us must guard from the cares of this life that rise up with the gospel seed to snuff out the harvest that God intends to produce in our lives.
- b. As the Lord increases each person in due season, we must be careful with our resources, we must determine to protect the purity of devotion to Christ that we possess today. This means the following things.
 - i. Let us be careful to not replace the preaching of the gospel with a different gospel of social rights and endeavors. Our

purpose is the salvation of man not primarily the rights of man.

- ii. Let us be careful not to become stagnant and indifferent to our personal and corporate prayer life as a church. A sign of a church that is humble and reliant on God is its commitment to pray and seek the Lord's face.
- iii. Let us be careful to always welcome the lost community around us to join in the salvation process with anyone who is willing. We must not rely on others to do the work of evangelism, but we must always be willing to share our faith with others.
- iv. Let us be careful to use our favor and resources wisely and not squander them on earthly pleasures when they were given for eternal purposes.
- v. Let us be careful to not become dull to seasons of revival and continue growing daily in our love and devotion to Christ. Refuse to be complacent, never rely on past achievements. Forget the past only to press on toward a better future

6. Conclusion The Holy Spirit will help us to pursue God faithfully and to count the cost to be a true servant of God. We cannot love or serve well alone; we need the daily infilling of Christ's love to lift us out of ourselves in order to give ourselves to the needs of others.