

Series: Being with Jesus, a study in the spiritual disciplines

Sermon: Submission & Service

Primary Text: Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:3-4; John 13:1-20

Discussion guide:

- Take some time to look at Rembrandt's "Storm on the Sea of Galilee" (you and others can google it and observe on phones, ipads etc.)
 - What do you notice?
 - Why do you think Rembrandt added the sick man? Metaphorically, what could this mean?
- Do you agree with the statement that self is the god of our culture today? Why/why not?
- Why/how does demanding to get "my way" make one miserable?
 - The world believes that getting what you want is essential to happiness. Is this true? Why or why not?
- Read Ephesians 5:15-21- emph on v. 21
 - What does it mean to "submit" to others?
 - Why does this conjure up bad feelings in our society today?
 - How does submitting to others help one to walk wisely (v. 15) and make the best use of my time (v. 16) and understand the will of the Lord (v. 17)?
 - According to verse 21 what or who is the main reason we ought to submit to one another?
- Read Mark 8:34
 - Part of the definition of submission is to "deny self for the sake of Christ". Why is the idea of denying self so threatening to the world?
 - They fear one would lose their identity if they did this – but Jesus seems to indicate the opposite (see Matthew 16:25). How does denying self for the sake of Christ help us to actually become ourselves?
 - Discuss the following quotes: What is the person trying to say? Does it agree with Jesus' words in Mark 8:34 and Matthew 16:25? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? How does it make you feel?
 - "In reality, Jesus' teaching on self-denial is the only thing that will bring genuine self-fulfillment and self-actualization." – Richard Foster
 - The more we get what we now call 'ourselves' out of the way and let Him take us over, the more truly ourselves we become... - C.S. Lewis
 - "Only when we respond to Christ and follow His call do we become our real selves and come to have personalities of our own." – Os Guinness
 - "...without Christ you don't exist..." - Tony Campolo
- Read Philippians 2:3-4
 - What do these words add to the definition of submission?

- Do these verses (or Jesus' teaching on denying self) promote or encourage self-hatred? Why or why not? (see Mark 12:31)
- What does it mean to look to other people's interests?
 - How do we do this?
 - Why is it hard to do this?
- Why is hidden service an effective way to develop this area of our lives?
- What is the difference between being a servant and choosing to serve? (see Mark 9:35)