



IDENTITY

SESSION 4

- **Main Passage:** Mark 9:33-37
 - **Purpose:** To understand that Jesus requires us to be servant leaders.
 - **Session Snapshot:** Jesus calls believers to be counter-cultural. One of the most explicit examples of this in the Bible is the contrasting of worldly leadership and Christian leadership. As Christian men, we live in the tension of trying to advance in our careers and provide for our families while following Jesus at the same time. We get two very different messages from the world and the Word. In this lesson, we will explore Jesus' example of leadership by learning how to become a servant.
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GETTING STARTED

Kick-off your time together by introducing a new theme or reviewing what you did in the last session.

FIRST, explain to your group that they will be beginning a video series on identity that is part of a larger study on what it means to pursue a masculinity that is centered in Christ. Remind them that the world sends many messages about what it means to be a man, but we must look to Christ and strive to imitate His example in our context.

Spending time in review is always an important aspect of discipleship gatherings such as this one. Ask someone to remind the group of what you studied in the last session. Allow time for men to share any meaningful takeaways from what you covered.

FINALLY, if there are no questions or other input, open your time of learning in prayer, then transition into the *Digging In* section of your leader's guide.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

FIRST, you may want to remind your group of the basic structure of your time together. Remind them that you'll be watching a 10-15 minute video, followed by a short discussion of the video, with a few minutes in Bible study to close out your time together. Encourage men to take notes as they watch the video.

THEN, play the video. You can access the video by logging into your Iron Hill Press account.

When the video is over, lead men in a short discussion based on what Rick covered. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or consider asking some similar to those below:

- **What does the world tell us we must do to be great?**
- **How does this contrast with what Jesus told His disciples?**
- **In what way(s) did Jesus model servant leadership?**
- **Why is servant leadership looked down upon in our current society?**
- **In this video, Rick spoke a lot about a husband's role in his family. His question was, "Are you the type of man that puts your needs before everyone else's, or do you put your family first?" When was a time that you found yourself being selfish with your wants and did not put your family first? What was the result?**
- **What does being a servant leader look like outside your home? How can you model servant leadership in your workplace? The ballfield? Your neighborhood? Your community?**
- **What two contrasting words would you use to describe the world's definition of greatness and God's definition? (example: selfish and selfless, first and last, etc.)**

FINALLY, transition into the *Opening the Word* portion of your time together by saying something like the following:

- **As we explore Jesus' way of leadership and greatness, let's take a few moments to look at various passages that explain practical ways of being a servant leader.**

OPENING THE WORD

Spend time going deeper into a specific concept Rick introduced in the video.

FIRST, explain that you're going to take a more in-depth look at several of the passages mentioned in the video. Have someone look up each of the following passages:

- Mark 9:33-37
- Matthew 20:20-28
- 1 Peter 2:24
- John 13:1-17

THEN, read or have a volunteer read Mark 9:33-37. When the volunteer has finished, direct their attention back to the word "servant." Ask the group if their version of the Bible has any different word for servant. Then, lead the group in a brief discussion. Ask something like:

- **Why do you think it was important to the disciples that they decide who the greatest was?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **What was their answer to Jesus when He asked what they were discussing?**
 - Answer: This is kind of a trick question because they were silent. However, Jesus knew what they had been discussing, and He answered the question they didn't even have to ask.
- **Why do you think they didn't answer Jesus' question?**
 - Answer: They were probably ashamed because they were looking at things through a worldly stand point and not a godly one.
- **Why did Jesus bring a child into the conversation?**
 - Answers will vary. Children were viewed as lowly. Children were weak. Children could not offer anything in return for being served. Jesus was expounding on the previous sentence where He said the greatest must be a servant of all—even little children like this one.
- **Why is it important to serve those who cannot offer anything to us in return?**
 - Answer: Serving the helpless, helps us to have pure motives for serving. If we serve people who will reward us for our service, then we miss the point and are only serving ourselves. Our selfishness then becomes disguised as service.

NEXT, have someone read Matthew 20:20-28. Then, ask:

- **Based on verses 25-28, what was the purpose of Jesus mentioning the Gentile rules in His explanation?**
 - Answer: He was showing the contrasting worldviews of leadership. You might want to explain that at this point, the disciples still thought Jesus was going to establish an earthly kingdom rather than an eternal kingdom. Christ-followers should be set apart in how they lead, and this was Jesus' way of showing an example of the stark differences.
- **Why is this important for us to understand?**
 - Answer: There will be a tendency for us to want to gain success and climb the corporate ladder and view people as ends to means rather than view people as those whom we should serve.

THEN, explain that this next passage is when Jesus washed His disciples' feet. Peter didn't want Him to wash his feet because he thought that that was beneath Jesus to do such a thing. Then have someone read John 13:12-17.

- **Why was it necessary for Jesus to model servanthood to the disciples?**
 - Answer: Because our fleshly nature is always in opposition to God's desire, we have to be shown and told how to do things Jesus' way. Serving does not come naturally to us; we have to be taught how.

This was Jesus' way of modeling how to serve each other.

- **Read verse 17 again. What contrasting words does Jesus use to drive home His point?**

- o Answer: Jesus was a masterful teacher. He contrasts "knowing" and "doing." It is not enough to just know how to serve others—we must do it.

FINALLY, have someone read 1 Peter 2:24. Then, ask:

- **Based on this verse, how was Jesus' death on the cross the ultimate act of service?**

- o Answer: He put our need for salvation before His desire to live. The litmus test for determining whether you're a godly leader is to ask if your motives are selfish or selfless. A godly leader will be a selfless leader.

Ask if there are any questions and if there are none, transition into *Accepting the Challenge*.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

Focus your group's attention on one key takeaway from your time together.

FIRST, explain that you want to challenge the group to focus on one main takeaway from this session. Say something like:

- **Whenever we're faced with a concept like we have been studying today, it forces us to respond in evaluation. As we wrap up our time here, there are three different questions we can ask to evaluate ourselves:**

- 1) "What areas in my life am I leading selfishly as opposed to selflessly?"
- 2) "When have I been guilty of only serving the people whom I can benefit from?"
- 3) "What would I have to sacrifice to become a better servant leader?"

Allow the group to consider where they find themselves on this spectrum of evaluation. If it feels appropriate, allow there to be some discussion about the kind of evaluation they find themselves considering.

FINALLY, encourage men to process these questions in the week to come. Challenge them to listen to what God is trying to tell them, and to respond accordingly. If there are no more questions or input, close your time together in prayer.