

Forward in Service

PA asked me to address moving forward in service as someone with a little history here at RAG

RAG has always been a church with a strong percentage of people willing to serve

#'s of RAGers currently serving in the church 81 different individuals it takes a lot of people willing to work together in service for Jesus' church to reach its potential

My son Jon serves at a church in VA 5 campuses probably between 5 to 7 thousand people on a weekend – He serves as the director of academics for their college

He also gets called to fill in nursery or a children's ministry position regularly

There will always be more work to be done than the number of workers – Jesus said the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers.

The health and effectiveness of any church is conditional based on the number of the ministers it has, which are not the pastoral staff but those who call RAG home they are living in Jesus' spiritual house know as RAG

Benjamin Franklin said, "Some people die at 25 but aren't buried until 75."

Jesus gave us the key for that not to be true of us

God never created anything to simply exist but to demonstrate His glory and goodness which includes each of us

Both Matt and Mark record this account

Matthew 20:25-28 (NIV)

²⁵ Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,

²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus draws a contrast between this world and His kingdom

Most of the times when there is a failure in leadership in the church it is because they start to believe their press clippings or have the wrong idea about leading in the kingdom

What does it mean to be great in the kingdom of God?

"Servant of all"

Mark 9:35 (NIV) arguing of who is greatest

³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

In the OT one of the most common titles given to those hero's of the faith is, "servant of the Lord"

Service is not doing what you want but doing what is needed

Moses didn't want to go back to Egypt

Peter ask the Lord to leave him because he knew his sin

Think about Jesus He did what was needed and what no one else could do:

He redeemed humanity from sin

Follow me – gave all of us a purpose and direction

Women caught in adultery – compassion and forgiveness

Rich young ruler – correction and opportunity

5000 – Chick file

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

There is a work that God has prepared for you that no one else can do and God lets us choose whether we will serve or not

What is the most important attitude for a servant?

"Humility"

From the beginning to the end of the bible this attitude is a requirement to walk with God

Micah 6:8 (NIV)

⁸ He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

As a follower of Christ we must maintain a humility that is easy to lose
King's kid vs servant of the Lord

Some of the words used to describe humility; lowly, poor, afflicted

One way it is not describe is weak – being humble is not weakness or being a doormat or low self-esteem

It is "strength under control"

Think about the strength Jesus demonstrated on the cross

At any point from Judas' betrayal to the moment He breathed his last He could have said Father the price is too high

He could have called a legion of angels, but He didn't

Romans 12:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Why is this so important to Jesus?

Jesus knows us so when he gives us a direction it always has a purpose behind it

Why does Jesus want us to tithe, actually it is give generously? He doesn't need the money but He knows it is the only way for us to break the hold money has on us.

Good cents budgeting money is God's greatest competitor – Jesus tells us you cannot serve two masters God or money

Luke 16:13 (NIV)

¹³ "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

Serving others is the way to
Overcome self-centeredness

Mark 8:35 (NIV)

³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

When we choose not to serve we stunt our spiritual growth and remain infants in Christ

III. My early ministry

I am still amazed at how self centered I can be so I have to serve some where some how

What will you do with it?

Jesus tells us that he came to serve not to be served and give his life

We all have a choice are we going to be consumers or givers of the life God has given to us

It is Jesus and His blood that redeems us, but it is our service that helps others come to faith in Him

Gospel –Jesus came not to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many

Because of what Jesus did we can be accepted, received, forgiven and welcomed into God's family

I know that we are working on a number of opportunities this year to serve our community

Service day; senior citizen gathering; VBS

We have an opportunity, you don't have to pray about you just need to say yes I will serve you Jesus

Handout to create a data base for volunteers

Follow up to handout

Matthew 25:44-45 (NIV)

⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'