

The Most Important Sermon EVER!

On Sunday, we continued our new sermon series called “The Beauty Of Christ – Living In Me” by looking at the famous story where Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

1. Warm-up Question: If you were 23 years old again, fresh out of school, and God said, “You can be and do anything you want to be or do,” what would you choose?
2. In Jesus’ culture, when guests arrived for a dinner party, it was customary for the host to have one of his/her servants wash their feet. In a desert culture, sandaled feet got dusty, hot, and dry. It felt refreshing to have your feet washed and dried before dinner. In today’s Gospel passage, when the disciples arrived for the Last Supper, there was no servant to wash their feet. Read John 13:1-17.
 - a. What’s the significance of the last phrase in verse 1, where it says, “Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.” Why does John include this detail in his account? What does it add to the story?
 - b. In verse 3, John says that, in this moment, Jesus knew that God “had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God.” Why does John included this detail in his account? What does it add to the story?
 - c. If you were at a dinner with Jesus and he got up and started to wash everyone’s feet, how would you feel? How do you suppose the disciples felt?
 - d. Did Jesus wash Judas feet? What should we learn from that? How do you suppose Judas felt?
3. In our Gospel passage, Jesus invites us to see ourselves – and our role in life – as servants. What he’s saying has nothing to do with our station in life. As Lord and Teacher, Jesus had the most power and status in his social circle. He didn’t give up his role as Lord and Teacher. So, what Jesus is saying here is not about the role we play in life, but how we conduct ourselves in that role. You can have status and power, as Jesus did, and still be a servant. Or you can be a poor maid and still not be a servant. It’s all about whether we have a servant’s heart. To help us better understand, Jeff shared two different paradigms of how people live. Take a look at the graphs on page 3, then respond to the questions below.
 - a. We’re all tempted to live the Egocentric Model, seeing ourselves as the gravitational center of life around which everything should orbit. In this model, the goal is to attract and accumulate as much of what we want as possible. If you were to embrace this model, what are some of the things you would most want to accumulate – and why?
 - b. Jesus calls us to radically reconstruct our vision of the good life to reflect the Love-Centric Model. In that model, God’s love is at the center, and everything else is meant to orbit around love. In this model, we’re just a small part of an

interconnected whole. Our role is to give as much love to God and others as we possibly can, and to receive that love. What is your greatest fear of what might happen to you if you were to live completely within that model?

- c. Why is it so intuitive to live the Egocentric Model? Why is it so counterintuitive to live the Love-Centric Model?
4. In his book “Falling Upward,” Richard Rohr says, “[We all need to become aware of] what we are really doing when we are doing what we’re doing. Two people can have the same job description, and one is holding a subtle or not-so-subtle life energy (*eros*) in doing his or her job, while another is holding a subtle or not-so-subtle negative energy (*thanatos*) while doing exactly the same job. . . . In any situation, your taking or giving of energy is what you are actually doing. Everybody can feel, suffer, or enjoy the difference, but few can say what it is that is happening. Why do I feel drawn or repelled? What we all desire and need from one another, of course, is that life energy called *eros*! It always draws, creates, and connects things.” There’s a lot of wisdom packed in the foregoing quote. What most speaks to you?
5. In each of the following situations, discuss what it might look like to respond with a servant’s heart, as someone who’s seeking to pour life energy into the situation – to give, rather than take. Don’t just grab for the obvious response; think deeply.

Scenario 1. Your boss calls a meeting at work. Some of your colleagues are lethargic, others are cynical, thinking, “Things never get better around here.” If it helps, you can fill out the scenarios with additional details.

Scenario 2. Your spouse, child, or roommate keeps leaving dirty dishes in the sink.

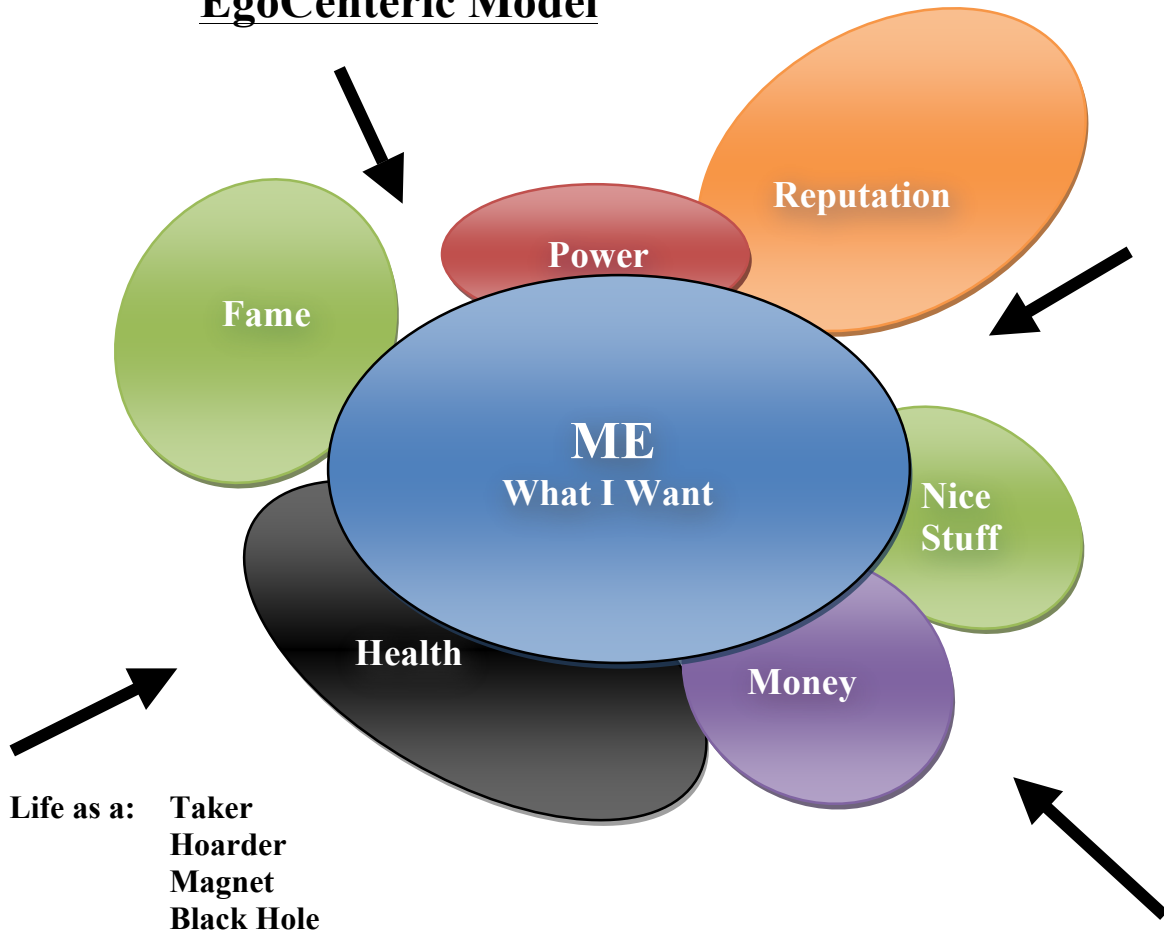
Scenario 3. Someone double crosses you and really hurts you.

Scenario 4. You walk into church on a Sunday morning.

Scenario 5. You get bad service at a restaurant.

6. Living as a servant is counterintuitive, so the question obviously arises: Why should I? What’s in it for me? Discuss what insights each of the following verses offer.
 - a. Proverbs 27:20 says, “Hell and destruction are never full, so human eyes are never satisfied.”
 - b. Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” Luke 6:42.
 - c. Jesus said, “Those who want to save their life will lose it. And those who lose their life for my sake, and the sake of my message, will save it.” Mark 8:35.
 - d. To sum up, how would you answer: Why should I live with a servant’s heart?

EgoCenteric Model



Love-Centeric Model

