



## Just a Day? *Live Like a Servant*

September 13, 2015

I had 2 things on my bucket list. #1 = be a grandpa (hopefully, next month)!

#2 = go to the D-Day beaches @ Normandy. I've just returned from there. It was here, and in so many other places in World War II, that **service** men and women gave their lives in service for their country. In last Saturday's Tulsa World, there was an article about an Asbury member, Joe Stall, whose memorial service was last Friday.

He landed in Marseilles, France in October of 1944 and was captured on April 4 after a fierce fire fight in Heilbronn, Germany. He and his fellow soldiers were on a nighttime patrol when they were surrounded. A fierce fire fight ensued. He was forced to surrender. Immediately their German captors lined them up. "They brought out a machine gun and set it up like they were going to shoot them. But a German commander intervened." The prisoners began a forced march for the next 30 days until arriving at a town near Salzburg, Austria. There, their guards abandoned them. Allied forces arrived a few hours later. By the time of his liberation he'd marched some 300 miles. He was so sick with yellow jaundice that he had to be hospitalized. He was awarded a Bronze Star for his role in the fight at the hill. After the war he went on to earn an engineering degree from OU and worked as an engineer with Amoco, retiring in 1985 after 32 yrs and with several patents to his credit. He and Jo were married 61 yrs - and have 5 children: 1; 15 grandchildren & 6 great-grandchildren. Joe **SERVED his country well.**

A week from Thursday I'll speak at a Tulsa area Rotary Club. Their motto: "Service Above Self." They have made an incredible difference in eliminating polio.

Being in the Armed Services, and serving in civic, business and community organizations are wonderful gifts which we honor and celebrate.

To follow Jesus means we are also called to a lifetime of service. It's both an attitude and a behavior. Let's look at today's text:

Mark 10:35-45

*Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."<sup>36</sup> "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.<sup>37</sup> They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."<sup>38</sup> "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"<sup>39</sup> "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with,<sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.<sup>42</sup> Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.<sup>43</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to*

become great among you must be your servant,<sup>44</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.<sup>45</sup> For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." **we want you to do for us whatever we ask** - Wow! What a statement!

After this exchange John's gospel has Jesus washing their feet. He said at the Last Supper:

**John 13:14-17 Now that I, your Lord & Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.**

The heart of the matter is this question: Who's Kingdom are we living for? Mine? God's? Right Attitude – HUMILITY. Right Actions – SERVICE

**Asbury Staff has a list of 3 Core Behaviors:**

**#1 Confident Humility #2 Committed Team Player #3 Genuine Kindness**

James & John violated all of them. They were Confident, but Humility was absent. They were Committed, but to their own promotion, not to "Team Jesus." Shoving in line ahead of others is never an endearing trait. They were genuine in ambition and self-seeking, but not in kindness.

**"You know, Lord, how I serve You with great emotional fervor - In the limelight.**

**You know how eagerly I speak for You - At a women's club,**

**You know how I effervesce when I promote - A fellowship group**

**You know my genuine enthusiasm - At a Bible Study.**

**But how would I react, I wonder, if You pointed to a basin of water**

**And asked me to wash the calloused feet of a bent and wrinkled old woman**

**Day after Day...Month after Month...In a room where nobody saw and nobody knew." (Ruth Calkin) Day after Day...Month after Month.... where nobody saw & nobody knew**

This sermon series is entitled: **"Just a Day?"** It's a rhetorical question – with the obvious answer, "NO!" Jesus' call upon our lives isn't a one-and-done thing. He calls us to take action; there are transactions which need to occur. But there's something far deeper than that – He's calling us beyond DOING some things into BEING some things.

But we've got a battle on our hands – our preference is to serve ourselves. *Get out of my way. I was here first. Who do you think you are?* We are selfish.

**Betty Higgins** wrote an excellent devotional in our Sermon Journal (pg. 11). She described a recent trip to New York City. She was surprised by the responses of the people who served her. Some of the people who had "an attitude" and some who were very attentive and gracious were unexpected. She wrote: **If given the choice between serving & being served, I suspect most people would choose the latter. Serving can be hard & humbling. Some people are demanding; others impatient or unappreciative. Sometimes the work itself is demeaning of exhausting. But JESUS CHOSE TO SERVE. To choose to serve voluntarily in this wicked world & die in the process is the greatest gift humankind has ever received.**" Following Jesus is

counter-intuitive. His agenda seems awkward, backward, unnatural and unreasonable to us. He points to the narrow road. It's hard. Few travel it. The wide road has far less demands. It's the popular choice. He talks a lot about giving, not taking. He told us to pray which seems like an utter waste of time. He tells us to stoop and serve rather than be served. And he didn't just give a nice "Sermon on the Mount," he went to the cross and modeled the most extreme sacrificial service possible.

Our previous sermon series was on paradoxical sayings (seeming contradictions which end up BOTH being true). On the other hand, "Just a Day" is saying that we don't want you just to

serve on “Day of Service.” It’s supposed to be for a lifetime. But, on the other hand, today is JUST A DAY. Today is not a week or a month or a lifetime. And the Psalmist didn’t say, “This is the month that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Instead, he said, “This is the day.” We can’t relive yesterday and we can’t live tomorrow. We ONLY have today. And if you’re not engaged in service today, will you be in the days to come?

The heart of the matter is this question: Who’s Kingdom are we living for? Mine? God’s? Right Attitude – HUMILITY. Right Actions – SERVICE

***“I am like James & John. Lord, I size up other people in terms of what they can do for me; how they can further my program, feed my ego, satisfy my needs, give me strategic advantage. I exploit people, ostensibly for Your sake, but really for my own sake. Lord, I turn to You to get the inside track & obtain special favors, Your direction for my schemes; Your power for my projects; Your sanction for my ambitions; Your blank check for whatever I want; I am like James & John. Change me, Lord. Make me one who asks of you and of others: “What can I do for you?”***

In Reggie McNeal’s book, Kingdom Come, he tells about a man named John who owned a Chick-fil-A restaurant in Charleston, SC. He noticed that a young African-American teen came into the store every day, ordered fries and a cup of water. Finally, John asked the young man “Why?” The teen, named Tim, said it was all he could afford. Stunned, John grabbed a sandwich and they ate together. It began a friendship. John became Tim’s mentor. Tim finished High School (he was on the verge of dropping out). He finished college. He began a business career. And all through his life, John was there for Tim. In fact, John helped Tim become a follower of Jesus Christ. On Jan. 3, 2013 when Senator Tim Scott took the oath of office to become a U.S. Senator from South Carolina he said: “Besides Jesus Christ, I’d like to thank 2 other people for helping me get here: my mamma...and John.” John died 20 years before. He never got to see the impact his life had made upon Tim Scott.

Why should you serve, not for just a day, but for a lifetime? Because it’s Kingdom living....and it gives life. *“Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done...on earth, as it is in heaven.”*