

Serve Like Christ

Ready:

“...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life—a ransom for many.” -Matthew 20:28

Set

Growing up in Buffalo, New York, hockey was my sport. I started skating pretty early in life, and it quickly became my dream to play in college and then in the NHL. As seasons went by, I scored more goals and had more assists, and I started getting recognized for my ability to play the game I loved. In high school, I played on multiple teams, winning two national championships and a gold medal at the Empire State games. My senior year, I captained my team to a perfect 40-win season, which resulted in the National Junior B Championship. As I look back on those years, I find myself asking, “Was I the leader that my teammates and coaches deserved? Was I following the example that Jesus Christ had provided for me when He was leading His team of disciples here on earth?”

Jesus Christ was the perfect example of a servant-leader, and He illustrates this for us throughout the Gospels. As you read in the verse above (Matthew 20:28), Jesus didn’t come to be served Himself; He came to serve and to give up His life. Let’s think about that for a moment. Jesus, God’s Son, came to earth to serve others. The King of the universe—the one who sits at the right hand of the Father (Matt. 22:44)—came to earth to serve instead of being served Himself. Pretty unbelievable. One of most powerful examples of His servanthood is found in John 13:1-17: the story of Jesus washing His disciples’ feet.

As athletes and coaches, we can learn several lessons from this passage that can make us better leaders on our teams and better followers of Jesus Christ overall. Take a moment to read this passage. The first lesson we learn from this portion of Scripture is that serving others shows them the full extent of our love (v. 1). The second is that serving starts with humility (v. 4-8) and requires a sacrifice (v. 12). If we keep reading, we find that Jesus also commanded us to serve others (v. 14), and that, by doing so, it would serve as a way of offering blessings from Him (v. 17). Another amazing life lesson that these verses show us in found in John 13:12 in which Jesus finished washing the disciples’ feet. This implies that He even washed the feet of Judas Iscariot, the one who had already betrayed Him (v. 2). What an example for us to follow! We are to serve not only those we love but also those with whom we struggle to love. (See also Mark 12:31.)

Looking back, I have come to realize that I would have been a better teammate and leader if I would have spent more time serving my teammates and coaches. Serving others shows them how much we love them—moreover that Christ loves them. And by doing this, we will be obedient to what Jesus has instructed us to do through His Word and His example.

Go

1. How do you serve your teammates?
2. How do you serve your family, coaches and friends?
3. How do you serve your enemies?
4. What are some new ways you can serve those on your team?
5. Whose feet do you need to wash in order to show them the true love of Jesus Christ?

Workout

Mark 9:33-37 Luke 23:32-34 1 Corinthians 9:19 Galatians 5:13-14 Ephesians 6:7-8 1 Peter 4:10-11

Bible Reference:

1 Peter 4



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