

# DISCIPLES ARE SERVANTS

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: LIVING IN PURSUIT

SERIES: DISCIPLE

## BIG TRUTH: DISCIPLES ARE SERVANTS

Galatians 5:13; Mark 9:35; John 12:26; Matthew 20:26; 1 Corinthians 4:1

## BIBLE VERSE: MARK 10:43-44

*"But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all."*

## BIG IDEAS

- Servants do not strive for greatness.
- Servants sacrifice for the good of others.
- Servants lay down their lives for Jesus.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: MARK 10:35-45

## TRANSFORM - LIVING IN PURSUIT

In High School, the Transform Year is an exploration of what it looks like to have transformed influence as we seek to live for a Kingdom that is greater than our own. First, we recognize that we will never be transformed if we are not Living for Jesus. To do this, we must first know who Jesus is by looking at who He says He is (John 8:58), and then look at what the Bible says about how in Him, we live by faith (James 1:6). Next, we recognize that to have transformed influence means that we must live as disciples in pursuit of Christ and His Kingdom over ourselves and our own kingdoms.

## SERIES AIMS



### Every student should know that...

- Jesus is the only source of life
- God's Word is authoritative and applicable for all of life
- To follow Jesus is to pursue a life of sacrifice and surrender



### Every student should feel...

- Thankful for the triune God who is worthy
- Convicted of how deception has led them to disobedience
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone



### Every student should strive to...

- Read through the gospel of John
- Memorize the Bible verse each week
- Implement regular rhythms of prayer and fasting throughout the semester



### Every student should want to...

- Pursue obedience even when faith is a struggle
- Grow in living in step with the Holy Spirit
- Live their lives to glorify God the Father

## GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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**BIBLE VERSE: MARK 10:43-44**

*"But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all."*

**Pursuing Jesus as His disciple means being a servant first.**

*"But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant..."*

- A disciple of Christ learns from Him and imitates His life. Jesus taught that a person would first have to become a servant in order to be His disciple. If a person is to be like Him, that person must lower themselves to the position of servant rather than seeking to gain status or prestige like many worldly leaders.
- Jesus came to the earth setting the perfect example for us of what this looks like. He lowered Himself to be a servant to all. He came to seek the lost and to save them. He did not come seeking high position. Pursuing Jesus means pursuing a life of servanthood.

**Jesus' disciples do not seek greatness, but instead pursue serving Jesus.**

*"But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all."*

- Following Jesus means seeking after Him and seeking to be like Him. As we grow in our love for Him, we will grow in our desire to serve Him. A pursuit of Jesus will result in our growing in understanding that He is our Savior and has given up everything to redeem us. This will lead us to want to serve Him however we can.
- A disciple of Jesus doesn't pursue greatness on this earth because they understand the futility of it. They seek to know Jesus and to serve Him as they invest in their eternal home.

**Jesus' disciples seek to serve others sacrificially.**

*"...and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all."*

- As we grow spiritually, we will not only serve Jesus, we will serve others. Jesus is a servant King and when He lived on the earth, He served others. His disciples will be like Him in serving one another.
- Throughout Scripture, we are commanded to love one another and to serve one another. If we truly desire to be Jesus' disciple, we will serve others sacrificially. We will give up our time, money, and resources to serve other people for the glory of God.

## DISCIPLES ARE SERVANTS

**BIG IDEA #1: SERVANTS DO NOT STRIVE FOR GREATNESS.<sup>1</sup>****[ THIS ]**

Achieving greatness is something that the world holds up as something to be desired and achieved. Even when it is not directly stated, we receive subliminal messages telling us that greatness is the end goal of our lives. Status and wealth are revered and held up as signs of success and achievement, yet God desires something entirely different. Jesus ministered on earth teaching something very different from the world's view of greatness. He taught that to be truly great in the Kingdom of God, a person must seek a lowly position, not the highest position. A person must seek to be a servant, not a king. Not only did Jesus teach this, but He lived it out as an example to the whole world. People who follow Jesus are called to a life of service to Him and others. They are called to set aside their desire for greatness and to cast away any notions they have of being great in this life. Instead, they are to lower themselves to the position of servant and serve others.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**Read Mark 10:43-45. How does the world's ideas about greatness contradict God's?**

The world sees a person who is above others and has achieved wealth and status as a great person. God sees a person who serves others as a great person. The world sees a person who has many people serving him or her as great, while God sees the people doing the serving as the great people.

**[ THIS ]**

The things we pursue in life are the things we hold dear. We can know Jesus and believe in Him as our Savior, yet fall prey to pursuing greatness instead of Him. A life lived for Him will involve a pursuit of Him. A pursuit of Him will result in a rejection of greatness. Instead, we will choose to humble ourselves and identify with Jesus as a servant. Mark 10:45 teaches us that just as Jesus was a servant, we should be also. This means we will not pursue greatness. Instead of seeking to promote ourselves or achieve status and wealth in this life, we will seek to serve others and better the lives of others as we seek to glorify God and serve Him. A servant of Christ is living for the kingdom of God, not this life. This means a change in focus. A worldly focus produces a life that seeks material wealth and advantage over others. An eternal focus produces a life that seeks to expand the kingdom of God and to put others before oneself. When we are disciples of Jesus, we are servants first.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**What about the idea of being great is tempting to you?**

Often, we pursue our own greatness because like the having people look up to us. We like feeling special and important. We even like feeling better than others. Being a disciple means being like Christ and putting Him before ourselves. Luke 9:23 tells us to die to ourselves. This is the opposite of pursuing greatness.

**Would your life reveal that you pursue serving others or that you pursue to be great?**

Galatians 5:13-14 shows us that a life of serving others is the life God calls His people to live. When we pursue serving others, we are really pursuing Christ. Mark 8:36 reminds us that when we give up ourselves, we actually gain everything.

1. Matthew 20:26: A follower of Jesus does not desire to be great, but to be a servant.

## DISCIPLES ARE SERVANTS

**BIG IDEA #2: SERVANTS SACRIFICE FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS.<sup>2</sup>****[ THIS ]**

Living for the good of others isn't something the world tells us we should do. It also isn't something we do naturally. Being a disciple of Jesus means we seek to be like Him and being like Him means becoming a person who seeks the good of others. We serve Him and others with joy because of our love for Jesus. In order to be a servant, we must first humble ourselves and think of others before we think of ourselves. This is challenging because our flesh natures are selfish and self-centered. In Matthew 10:42-45, Jesus teaches that His people must seek the good of others over their own good. He taught that His people must not use their power or authority over others, but instead, they must be different. Worldly rulers use their power to dictate to others and to promote themselves. They relish the authority they have and put themselves first. Disciples of Jesus serve others first and think of themselves last.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**The world may do acts of service, but their motive is not the same as a disciple's motive. How is a disciple's motive in serving different from the world's motive of serving?**

In Matthew 6:2-3, we are given a picture of what the world's idea of serving others is, but God's idea is different. When a disciple serves, he or she does not expect or desire a reward or even acknowledgement. Instead, they serve out of a love for Jesus and for others.

**[ THIS ]**

Disciples of Jesus serve sacrificially. Jesus is our example in this. When He lived on the earth, He poured Himself out sacrificially and He did so for the good of others. When we give to others and help others, we sacrifice our time, resources, and desires for them. We do this for their good. Just like Jesus did not consider His position as the Son of God as important compared with coming to the world, true disciples set aside their own positions and humble themselves to serve others. Serving requires our all and it requires we die to ourselves and give up our desires in order to look after the needs of others. Sacrificing for the good of others means that we will often go without or allow someone else to have something instead of insisting that we get it. Jesus came to the earth and served others in a sacrificial way. Even when He was tired or hungry, he helped others. He would stop and heal someone even if He had spent all day helping people. As followers of Jesus, we sacrifice for the good of others by leveraging our lives to share the gospel. Instead, of pursuing our earthly desires, we make our lives about making sure that others know about Jesus and have an opportunity to hear the truth.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**What are some examples of people in your church sacrificing for the good of others?**

Acts 2:45 is probably one of the more popular examples of the early believers sacrificing for the good of others. They are held up as an example of what the church should be and how the church should take care of one another. As we seek to follow Jesus, we will be willing to give up what we have in order to help others.

**Why do you hesitate to sacrifice for the good of others? How can you overcome this?**

2 Timothy 2:3-4 tells us that our sin natures make us selfish. It is our selfishness that makes us hesitate to give up anything to help others. We overcome this by dying to self.

2. 1 Peter 4:10: Disciples of Jesus are gifted to serve one another as they seek to glorify God.

## DISCIPLES ARE SERVANTS

**BIG IDEA #3: SERVANTS LAY DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR JESUS.<sup>3</sup>****[ THIS ]**

In Matthew 10:35-45, two of Jesus' disciples, James and John asked Him for a place of honor in heaven. They wanted to sit on either side of Him. Jesus' answer to their question also taught them a truth about what it means to really serve Him. To follow Jesus, James and John had to learn to be servants. To be His servants, they had to learn to give their whole lives to Him in service. They didn't quite understand what this meant when they asked for places of honor, but Jesus patiently taught them that following Him required everything. If we want to be Jesus' servants, we, too, must be willing to give Him our whole lives. We must reject this world and turn to Him. Being His disciple means giving up the ideas and plans we might have had for our lives and replacing them with whatever God wants for us. We submit to and follow Jesus wherever He leads us. Jesus taught James and John that they would indeed follow Him and suffer as He suffered. They would lay down their lives for His sake, to make His name famous in this world because they were His disciples.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**James and John had some misconceptions about following Jesus. What are some of your misconceptions about following Jesus?**

Often we may think of our service to Jesus as a way to earn honor for ourselves. We are like James and John when we think this. Our service to Jesus is about glorifying Him and giving our lives to Him. 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Matthew 5:16 help us to see that our purpose is to bring Jesus glory, not ourselves.

**[ THIS ]**

Servants of Jesus willingly die for Jesus. James and John may not have understood at first what it really required of them to be His servant, but in their lifetimes, they would come to know and willingly lay down their lives for Him. They suffered greatly for Him and lost their lives for His sake. When we follow Jesus, we are required to lay down our lives for Him. We are asked to die to ourselves and to willingly give up ourselves in service to Him. This isn't something that is done once and then forgotten. Matthew 10:45 shows us that Jesus came to the earth to serve and to lay down His own life for others. He willingly died on the cross that we might live. He does not ask anything of us that He has not done Himself. If we are to truly follow Him and imitate Him, then, we, too, will be willing to die for Him. We are called to a radical, life-long service to Him that is focused on bringing Him glory in every way.

**[ THEREFORE ]**

**Why should we, as His disciples, be willing to lay our lives down for Him?**

Jesus is holy and righteous. Psalm 8:9 and Hebrews 8:1 show us that He is majestic and worthy of our praise. As His disciples, He is worthy of our laying down our lives for Him because of His holiness and the fact that He willingly laid down His life for us.

**Laying down our lives does not just mean being willing to die for Christ's sake. What might laying down your life look like?**

Often, our perspective on ourselves and Christ keeps us from being willing to sacrifice our lives for Him. We think there is some goodness in us that is deserving of a good life, but Romans 3:10 reminds us that no one is good. Laying down our lives means we realize that life isn't always good and we often struggle in this life for the sake of Christ.

3. Mark 10:45: Jesus came to give His life for sinners. His disciples are called to give their lives for Him.