



PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank You for calling us to be disciples of Jesus. We are grateful that You invite us to follow You, learn from You, and be transformed by You. Help us to answer this call with humility and faithfulness. Teach us to lead as Jesus led—by serving others. May our time together strengthen our commitment to making disciples and raising up godly leaders for Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

What is the funniest or most unexpected leadership role you've ever had to take on (even if it was just leading your friends to pick a restaurant)?



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WORD

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 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 your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- Matthew 20:20-28

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

- John 13:12-17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of a time when someone led you by serving? How did it impact you?
2. What are some ways Jesus' leadership style differs from the world's definition of leadership?
3. How can we practice servant-leadership in practical ways in our daily lives?
4. Who in your life could you intentionally invest in as a disciple-maker or mentor?
5. What is one change you can make this week to grow as a leader who serves others like Jesus?

REFLECTION

In Matthew 20:20-28, Jesus challenges our natural understanding of leadership. The disciples, through their mother, seek positions of status, but Jesus redirects them to a radical truth: greatness in His kingdom is marked by servanthood. Similarly, in John 13:12-17, Jesus models this servant-leadership by washing His disciples' feet. He—our Lord and Master—lowers Himself to the most humble task to show us that true leadership is about lifting others up.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, "Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ." To be a disciple is to imitate Jesus, and that includes leading in the way He led—by serving. In 2025, growing as disciple-makers means stepping into intentional relationships, mentoring others in their faith, and modeling Christ-like servanthood in our workplaces, families, and communities. Leadership development is not about titles or influence; it's about making room for others to grow and succeed.

John Maxwell states, "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." If we are to become the leaders God calls us to be, we must first be disciples who learn from Jesus and then make disciples by sharing what we have learned. Being a mentor means walking alongside others, helping them deepen their faith, and equipping them to lead with humility and purpose.

In a world that often equates leadership with power and status, followers of Jesus are called to flip the script. Our leadership is measured by how well we serve. This means bringing the values of God's Kingdom into our everyday interactions—at work, at home, and in our communities—so that others may see Christ in us.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are our greatest example of a servant-leader. Thank You for showing us what true leadership looks like—laying down Your life for others. We commit ourselves to being disciples who make disciples. Help us to lead with humility, to serve selflessly, and to invest in others as You have called us to. For those who have not yet surrendered their lives to You, may they take this moment to declare You as their Lord and Savior. Empower us to live out the Great Commission, making disciples of all nations and glorifying You in every area of our lives. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.