

SATURATE

Part 4: Servants



Intro

(Read Philippians 2:1-11)

We are in the middle of a sermon series, 'Saturate.' We're going through a book together in our Gospel Communities. The point isn't school, but to practice the habit of reflecting on the gospel daily.

Review

Intro - The Heart of a Disciple

Part 1 - Jesus

Part 2 - Discipleship

Part 3 - Family

Part 4 - Servants

Last week we didn't need an introduction. We say we're gonna talk about family and every parent in the room says "thank goodness, I need help." It's not quite the same with the topic of being a servant. There's just something about it that we intrinsically don't like.

I think our distaste for the idea of serving though, is indicative of our fallen nature. I think we may be missing out on something great.

Or Life is a House

It's not uncommon for us to see something commanded in scripture that runs counter to the way we think and feel though, is it?

It's often explained to us like a house. Our heart and life is like our house. Jesus "Stands at the door and knocks." This is where we get the language of inviting Jesus into our hearts.

Cleaning House

And then we often say things like, "When Jesus moves in, he redecorates." He's gonna get rid of things. Room by room, he's gonna have authority and change it all. (Now we get these mental images of our favorite sofa being coldly tossed out the front door.)

Making Room For Something

What we often fail to ask is, "Why?" Why is he moving stuff? Because he's making room for something better.

Today we're going to look at our identity as servants. There are three things that I want to point out to you.

1. God is Selfless
2. Sin is Selfish
3. Grace Saves Us

1. God is Selfless

Psalm 50:7-13

[7] "Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, your God. [8] Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me. [9] I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds. [10] For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. [11] I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. [12] "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine. [13] Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?"

Do you see what this is saying?

God says in verse 8, "The reason that I rebuke you, the reason that I speak to you and give you the law, is not because I want something from you! "The God who has everything does not need anything from you! God can not gain anything from you.

God Isn't Here to Get Things From You

It's very important for us to realize that God doesn't need anything from us. Jonathan Edwards referred to this as the eternal, perfect happiness of God.

Within God, there is a community of persons, Father, Spirit, Son. All of which are loving, glorifying, and enjoying... not themselves, but each other! God in his nature is other-centered.

Orbiting around someone you love

Imagine there is someone you admire more than anyone else in the entire world. You would do anything for them. Now imagine that this person feels exactly the same way about you, and you enter into a lifelong relationship with them. Sound kinda like heaven? That's cause it comes from heaven.

This is what God has had within himself, but infinitely greater, for all eternity. This is why God is eternally happy (Edwards) Because there is a self-Giving nature at the heart of his very being. God does not seek his own good, but the good of others.

Considering this, why did god

- Create the World?
- Communicated to us through the Bible?
- Demand our worship?

We were created to live this way.

As a church, we don't exist to get anything from you. We are here to give the gospel, to give encouragement, to give instruction. You should come to do the same.

Philippians 2:3-5

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

But we don't, do we?

2. Sin is Selfish

We lost this in the Garden

For the first time in all of eternity... Love was turned toward self, when Adam took the fruit. And when our relationship with God unraveled, our relationships with each other began to disintegrate as well.

Instead of living for others we seek our own good. We love our selves. And we're **never satisfied**.

We are designed to care for the well being of others, as much as ourselves, to give to others (and to God) even if it costs. That is where we find lasting joy. Instead, we have tried to find that Joy and meaning in the gifts. And just like the mana in the exodus, it rots in our hands and leaves us hungry. (Apple really figured this one out.)

No matter how much stuff you get, money you make, respect you earn, it will never be enough. Jesus explains why, It is more blessed to give, than to receive.

The damage done by selfishness is much farther reaching than your personal life.

In Deuteronomy 15, after God gave the law concerning finances and the “tithe” he said, “There will be no poor among you.” That was a promise. If you operate the way I have told you, there will not be poverty!

That's not the case though, we're still fighting world hunger. Something is wrong, and it should be obvious! There is enough food! There are enough resources, yet millions of people die of hunger every year? (Perelandra)

No poor among you

We seem to be under this false impression that world hunger and extreme poverty and giant issues that we cannot fix. This simply isn't true.

- 1990-2000: 14 million children died of hunger per year.
- 2000-2010: 7.2 million children died of hunger per year.
- Extreme poverty has been cut in half in just 10 years through generosity.

According to the most recent Census data and Gallup polls, there are about 181 million adults claiming to be Christians in the U.S. **What could we do with that tithe?**

Potential

We have the potential to serve our community, to preach the gospel, to do such good, to live the kind of life that I really want, the kind of life that God created me for.

But so often, we don't.

When we make our life about ourselves, and try and make us better with stuff, one of two things happens

What will probably happen:

We make our life about getting the stuff, whatever it is. And because this is where we are finding our worth, the stuff begins to rule us. And what almost inevitably happens, we lose it. And with the lost job, home, reputation, marriage, or relationship, we are devastated. Crushed.

But even worse:

We get the stuff. We reach the top. And realize... there's nothing there. And we are devastated. Crushed.

Either way, when you make life about yourself, you will be crushed. You can not love yourself and be satisfied.

The Golden Rule

I think deep down, all of us already know what we should do. We really know what is right. We even have a name for it, "**The Golden Rule**" and virtually every religion on the planet agrees with it. So why don't we?

Because we can't! God ahead, try it for 12 hours.

We can't live a life, completely in the interest of others, to live and die for the good of someone else... And because we can't, someone else did.

3. Grace Saves Us

The First Adam, The Last Adam

1 Corinthians tells us about 2 "Adams." 2 men who came into this world completely sinless. Perfect.

The First Adam was tested in a garden, (Eden) Jesus, whom Paul called the Last Adam, Was also tested in a garden, (Gethsemane) The first Adam knew that he would live with God forever, in perfect harmony, if he obeyed God about the Tree. But he didn't. The Last Adam was also tested by what Paul called the "tree" the cross. And Jesus knew that he would be crushed if he obeyed... and still did.

Why?

Why did Jesus die on the cross? What did he gain? Nothing. It is a profound truth, that God doesn't need us at all.

He died, for us. That's it. God is perfect community without us, and wants us to experience that community as well. That's why he died.

Miroslav Volf

On the cross, God is not setting up the terms of a contract that humans need to fulfill in order to get what they want. Neither is God saying on the cross, "I died for you, now

you've got to do what I tell you and worship." Instead, on the cross God gives himself for you. **God does not make deals. God gives."**

What we see on the cross, is God, centering his life around yours. God the ultimate king, acting as the servant of all.

You are invited into that selfless, perfect family. We can love him because he first loved us. We can serve each other others because we have been served by God himself. We can give freely, because Christ gave it all.