

MIDDLE SCHOOL IDENTITY IN CHRIST

12

UNITE
I AM CALLED

SERVANTS OF JESUS SERVE SACRIFICIALLY

SERIES:
GOD IS THE MASTER — I AM A SERVANT



Property of Tri-Cities Baptist Church
171 Promise Land Dr. Gray, TN 37615
Chief Contributor and Editor:
Jennifer Thurman / January 2021

UNITE: I AM CALLED

The Unite Year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are given a spirit of adoption as sons (Romans 8:15-16), are made a child of God, and we are also saved into a family- the Church. The Unite Year explores how we are to live as a part of a family, and to live in light of our calling as servants and disciples of Christ. We use our gifts to build up the church as we pursue unity, humility, and gentleness with our brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 4:1-2).

BIG TRUTH: SERVANTS OF JESUS SERVE SACRIFICIALLY**BIBLE VERSE: MARK 10:43-45**

“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. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

BIG IDEAS

- Servants of Jesus don’t use their influence and authority for their own gain.
- Servants of Jesus choose to sacrifice their comfort, control, and ambition by embracing the role of a slave.
- Servants of Jesus follow His example by willingly laying down their lives.

BIBLE PASSAGE: MARK 10:35-45**SERIES AIMS****[KNOW] Every student should know that...**

- They are a servant of Jesus
- They have been forgiven an unimaginable debt
- To be a servant means to lay down their lives

[DO] Every student should strive to...

- Forgive anyone who has wronged them as Jesus has forgiven them
- Walk by faith instead of giving into anxiety
- Be known by their allegiance to Christ and the gospel

[FEEL] Every student should feel...

- Awe at the forgiveness they have experienced in Christ
- Thankful for the grace that brought them from death to life and into God’s family
- Unworthy of the mercy and grace they have received

[WANT] Every student should desire to...

- Be faithful and pursue obedience to God
- Sacrifice their comfort and control for the sake of the gospel
- Be committed to Christ above all else

STUDENT WORKOUT OVERVIEW:

Servants sacrifice for Jesus. This week we will ponder what it looks like to sacrifice for Jesus. We will pray for hearts that desire to serve not be served. We will practice serving others and not demanding to be served.

FAMILY WORKOUT OVERVIEW:

Servants follow Jesus’ example in laying down their lives. This week we will ponder how to discuss with our son or daughter what it looks like to serve and not be served. We will pray for their hearts to desire to serve Jesus. We will lead them to practice serving sacrificially.

BIBLE VERSE: MARK 10:43-45

“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. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Jesus’ servants aspire to serve.

“...But whoever would be great among you must be your servant...”

- Contrary to the world’s idea of greatness, a servant doesn’t aspire to be first or the best. A servant of Jesus desires to be a servant because Jesus is a servant. The greatest thing a Jesus follower can desire is to serve others.
- Jesus taught His disciples that they should not desire or aspire to be first or the greatest. Instead, they should seek to serve one another and others. This is the mark of a true follower of Jesus.

Jesus’ servants are slaves to all.

“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 is radical and unlike living for the things of the world. The world tells us to be first and to promote ourselves. It looks down on those who humble themselves and seek to promote others. Jesus tells us something different.
- He teaches that if we want to be first in the kingdom of God, we will become slaves to all. What this means is that we will humble ourselves every day and seek to serve others. We will make plans that enable us to serve others and meet their needs over our own.

Jesus is the perfect example of a sacrificial servant.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

- Jesus does not ask of His people what He has not already gone before us and done. He came to the earth not to be served by others, but to serve. He laid down His life on the cross that we might be saved. He is the example set before us and who we should set our eyes upon.
- To be like Jesus in our service, we must die to ourselves every single day. We must set aside our desires and needs in order to meet the needs of others. We must be willing to humble ourselves to do unfavorable tasks that are unseen or uncelebrated. We do this because Jesus did this.

BIG IDEA #1: SERVANTS OF JESUS DON'T USE THEIR INFLUENCE AND AUTHORITY FOR THEIR OWN GAIN.¹

[THIS]

Mark 10:35-45 is the story of James and John asking Jesus for positions of honor. They desired to be in places of honor in Jesus' kingdom. Jesus corrects them and reveals the position that all of His followers should desire and long to have. Jesus explained to James and John that serving was the call of God on every believer's life. James and John mistakenly thought that acquiring a place of honor next to Jesus was best, Jesus taught them that it was best to serve others and to put others before ourselves. Though James and John thought having a position of authority and ruling over others was to be desired, Jesus taught them that the opposite is true. Instead of ruling over others, believers should seek to serve. Believers should not seek to be above others, but to make Jesus famous. They do this by not using any power they have for their own gain.

[THEREFORE]

Read Mark 10:44. How is Jesus' statement different that what the world would say is true?

The world would say that people should follow their hearts and seek to make themselves known in this world. The world would lead people to believe that being number one is what is best. Isaiah 55:8-9 and Romans 11:33 help us see that this idea of being number one is contrary to what God thinks or teaches.

How have you fallen prey to this pursuit? How can you resist this pursuit?

It's easy for us to buy the ideas of the world and to think that there is no harm in pursuing them. In order to resist this temptation, we must do what Proverbs 14:12 and Psalm 86:11 teach us. We must recognize that God's ways are higher and that He is our only source of wisdom.

[THIS]

Jesus' servants do not use any influence or authority to better themselves. They do not use their power for their own personal gain. They may rise in power and even gain authority in this life, but they use it for the glory of God and not for their own sakes. Servants of Jesus do not think of themselves more highly and they do not look at any good thing they achieve on this earth as for themselves. Instead, they humble themselves to be servants and to put others first. They are not harsh with others and they forsake their own rights and privileges in order to serve others. They make their pursuit not their own gain, but making Jesus famous in all of the world.

[THEREFORE]

What are some examples of people using authority and influence for their selfish gain?

Often when we gain authority and power we abuse it. Zechariah 7:10 and Psalm 9:9 speak to an abuse of power and authority and God's reaction to it. Often strangers in our land and poor people are oppressed by those with power and authority. God tells us to not do this as His children.

How can you live to make Jesus famous this week?

As we live for God, we can make Jesus famous. As we tell others about Him and His work on the cross, we will make His name famous. Matthew 5:16 reminds us to live in such a way that our works show others who Jesus is.

1. Mark 10:45: Jesus is the Son of God and yet He did not use His power or authority for Himself. He used it to offer salvation to an undeserving world.

BIG IDEA #2: SERVANTS OF JESUS CHOOSE TO SACRIFICE THEIR COMFORT, CONTROL, AND AMBITION BY EMBRACING THE ROLE OF A SLAVE.²

[THIS]

When Jesus calls us to follow Him, He calls us to give up the pleasures of this life. Being Jesus' servants requires sacrifice. We willingly give up our comfort, control and even ambition to serve Jesus. Jesus told James and John in Mark 10:35-45 that they shouldn't desire position. He taught them to give up this desire and instead to serve Him by serving others. He taught them that they must become like slaves in order to be truly like Him. They must not think of their time, comfort, or desires as more important than others. Instead, they are to humble themselves and put on an attitude and demeanor of a servant. They are to live lives that indicate they serve Jesus first and others out of their love for Him. Sacrificing comfort, control, and ambition is what it takes to serve Jesus. Having a willingness to be uncomfortable leads believers to serve Jesus in a way that brings Him glory because they rely fully upon Him.

[THEREFORE]

What are some challenges to giving up your comfort, control, and ambition?

Dying to ourselves can be hard because our sin nature leads us to believe that we should control our own lives. Giving up control means we walk by faith and often that can feel scary. Luke 9:23 and Galatians 5:24 teach us to die to ourselves daily in order to truly follow Christ. This means setting aside what we feel and think are best for us and instead, allowing Jesus to lead us.

[THIS]

When we embrace the role of slave, we embrace the life Jesus died to give us. It may seem like being a slave is a bad thing, but what is true is that we are all slaves to something. Before we become believers, we are slaves to our sin and this world. After we repent and believe in Jesus, we are called to be slaves to righteousness. This means our lives are lived as a pursuit of holiness. Jesus Himself lived this way. He obeyed the Father perfectly and lived a life of holiness. We must do the same. We must commit our lives to serving Jesus by obeying the Father and serving others. We must give up the ideas of this world and the pursuit of happiness in this life. Instead, we must pursue God's kingdom and seek to be like Jesus in every way. We do this by making much of Jesus in this life and seeking God's glory.

[THEREFORE]

What behaviors help you die to yourself and embrace the role of a slave?

When we die to ourselves, we willingly give up our own desires to fulfill God's purpose for our lives. Romans 12:1 shows us that we do that by thinking of and presenting our bodies as living sacrifices to Jesus each and every day. Romans 6:1-11 also helps us understand that we must die to sin in order to live for Christ.

How is the idea of being a slave a different idea than the world's idea of how we should live?

The world teaches us that we should be free to pursue whatever we want. Scripture teaches that we should die to ourselves and pursue Christ. Romans 6:22 reminds us that being a slave is the way of the Jesus follower. In order to live fully, we must die to this world and its futile ways in order to more fully become like Christ.

2. Mark 10:44-45: Servants of Christ must be a slave to all in order to fully follow Him.

BIG IDEA #3: SERVANTS OF JESUS FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE BY WILLINGLY LAYING DOWN THEIR LIVES.³

[THIS]

Mark 10:45 shows us that we have the perfect example of Jesus to follow. Jesus didn't come to the world to be served by it. He came to serve the world by dying for it. Jesus' example is our guide and it shows us how to truly serve Him. He set aside Himself and put others first. He walked in obedience to the Father and sought His glory. Jesus willingly laid down His life that we might have eternal life. Jesus emptied Himself for others. He met the needs of others and set aside His own physical needs to meet the needs of those around Him. Jesus' example can be followed. He went before us, living the life we could not, so that we can become like Him.

[THEREFORE]

What keeps you from following Jesus' example of service to others every day?

Often our love of our self and the things of the world keep us from following Jesus' example of service. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 teaches us that it is in our sinful hearts to love ourselves and the world. We don't want to give these things up in order to serve Jesus in a radical way.

What are some attitude or behavior changes you need to make in order to follow Jesus' example?

Romans 12:2 and John 3:30 help us understand the heart attitude and behavior that we must put on in order to follow Jesus' example. We must die to ourselves and put aside our own thoughts and ideas about what our lives are going to be. We must pursue Christ first and make His glory our goal in life.

[THIS]

Jesus' example is not an easy example to follow. Jesus came and died for the sake of the world. When we set out to follow Jesus, we must consider His sacrifice and understand that we, too, may be called upon to lay down our actual physical lives in order to make Jesus known. Most people will not face this, but some will. Others will face the challenge of laying down their hopes and dreams for the sake of Christ. This means instead of making our lives about pursuing what makes us happy, we will pursue Christ and live lives of service to Jesus and others. This is a necessary part of following Jesus. We can't make ourselves happy and seek God's glory, but by seeking God's glory we will find joy and happiness that is far greater than anything we could find in this world.

[THEREFORE]

What earthly pursuits can you put away in order to pursue Jesus' example of sacrificial service?

When we put away the pursuit of the American dream and being successful in the world's eyes, we can more fully pursue Jesus and live out His example. Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 119:1-5 help us understand ways we can put these earthly pursuits away in order to pursue Jesus with our whole hearts. When we are pursuing Him with our whole hearts, we are willing to lay down our lives like He laid down His.

3. Matthew 10:39: In order to gain life, we must lose our lives.