

If you watched the Super Bowl this year- more specifically the commercials- you might remember seeing this ad entitled, *Go First*, for

Cars.com... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xF47Kkk16VQ>

One of the popular ads for the 2011 Super Bowl was a comical Cars.com ad titled "Go First." In the first scene, a king wearing a crown sits at a banquet table with others feasting, laughing, and talking around him. As the king lifts a spoonful of soup from his bowl, he suddenly calls out, "Poison checker!" Presently a man at the king's side takes a spoonful of the king's soup, pauses, gets a sour look on his face, then keels over and falls to the floor.

The ad's narrator says, "Sometimes it's better to let others go first so that we can learn from their experiences."

In the second scene, two scientists wearing white lab coats and dark goggles sit before a control console in a laboratory. Their attention is focused on two closet-sized glass chambers. A man who is a test subject stands in one of the chambers. With a confident look on his face, he gives a thumbs-up to the two scientists, who proceed to turn a dial on the control console. The test subject disappears from the one chamber and reappears in the other chamber—only with his appendages rearranged. With the arm that is where his right leg should be, he once again signals a thumbs-up.

In the final scene, two cowboys, guns in hand, are hiding behind a rock. The one cowboy tells his partner, "See if it's clear." The partner stands up from behind the rock and is promptly hit by three arrows in the chest and abdomen. As if nothing had happened, he kneels again and reports, "Nope, ain't clear."

"Sometimes it is better to let others go first so that we can learn from their experiences."

This morning, and throughout our Lenten journey, we're going to learn from Jesus. We're going to learn in practical ways how we Love God and Love Others.

Singer Josh Wilson learned that *saying* he loved God and loved others or simply *saying* a prayer for those who were devastated by the floods in Nashville last year was not enough- he had to do something. And so he did, he started following the example of Jesus and began to serve. That became the basis of his song, *I Refuse*, which you saw at the beginning of the service today.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6md9teDFMU>

Our goal with this Lenten series is to see the disciples of Jesus at Linglestown Life refuse to sit around and wait for someone else to do what God has called us to do- to serve the needs of the least, the last and the lost. And next week we will be sharing how we will make that happen with a day of service on the afternoon of Palm Sunday, April 17.

Jesus went first. He led the way; teaching his disciples how to be servants- how to walk in his steps. In John 13:15 after washing his disciple's feet, Jesus says, "For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you."

On another occasion Jesus disciples were arguing with one another about who was the greatest. Jesus response to them was simple: *If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.* Mark 9:35

To follow in Jesus steps means committing to living by the example which Jesus set. That means that we think like Jesus thought. Act like Jesus acted. Have the same attitude, or mindset, that Jesus had.

The Apostle Paul explains that attitude of Jesus in Philippians 2:5-11.

- ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
⁷ but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!
⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

What Paul is describing here is something that most of us don't understand. We look at life from a perspective of upward mobility. But Jesus example is that of downward mobility. Jesus, rather than climbing the ladder, was moving down the ladder for the purpose of giving God glory and for the purpose of serving other people.

If we are going to understand what it means to walk in his steps we need to dedicate our lives to the downward slope that gives God glory and serves the needs of others. It didn't get much more downward than where the staff found themselves this past week. We were shoveling horse manure at the Capital Area Therapeutic Riding Association in Grantville. (Pics on my facebook page) We were there learning about this great ministry and getting a first hand look at where some of you will have the opportunity to serve on the afternoon of April 17. But we were also learning that loving others sometimes means getting your feet dirty. We got out of our comfort zones and stepped into 'it,' literally, because that is what Jesus would do.

Notice, where Jesus begins in the passage that I read from Philippians 2: he starts at the top. Jesus is God, a part of that mystery we refer to as the Trinity. You don't get any higher on the ladder than Jesus!

But notice what he does next, Jesus lets go- he loosens his grasp on that top rung of the ladder. Jesus, in an act of humility, came willingly from the top of the ladder down to the bottom.

I think at times this is the hardest thing for us to do. When we are prone to reaching higher and holding on for dear life when we get where we are going; it is hard to loosen our grip.

But serving others is a great way to let go.

Jesus let go, he became a man; he laid aside those divine aspects that would keep him from becoming a man. Jesus became like us so that he could serve us. And that service included giving his life on the cross.

And because Jesus did it, look what God the Father did to honor him: In verses 9 through 11 we have one of the most majestic pieces of Scripture: "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

In I John 4:12, it says this: "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." *[This is going to be our memory verse for Lent]*

Somehow we're supposed to embody God's love. John says that no one here has ever seen God. But if we love one another, God abides in us. If we could love each other the way God wanted us to, someone who doesn't even know God, who has never seen him, should be able to walk into this room and see the love of God. As Jesus embodied God in the flesh, we are now that incarnation of God. People aren't going to see God, but if we would love each other the way God called us to, they would see God's love in us, and they would actually get a glimpse of him.

Does your life look anything like Jesus? Can you say like Paul was able to say, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ"? Based on the way you are living, do people want to imitate your love for others? A lot of people can talk the talk. A lot of people have knowledge about God; but does your life look anything like the life of Jesus? In Hebrews 13:7, it says, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke the Word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith." Do you look like Jesus? Do you serve like Jesus? Do you love like Jesus?

Francis Chan told the following story about a man named Vaughn and the impact this man had on the lives of others.

"A few years ago, a missionary came to our church and told a beautiful story about sharing the gospel with a remote tribe in Papua New Guinea. At the end of the story this missionary said, "I should really give the credit to Vaughn, my former youth pastor who loved me and inspired me to live for Christ and share the gospel with others."

The next week another guy came to our church and he challenged us to start sponsoring kids living in poverty. The second speaker also concluded by saying, "I'm involved in this ministry because of my youth pastor, a guy named Vaughn." I found out those guys were from the same youth group!

Then the next week another speaker named Dan told us about his ministry at a rescue mission in the inner city of L.A. After Dan's talk, I casually mentioned, "It was so weird: the last two weeks both of our speakers mentioned how much impact their youth pastor, Vaughn, had on them." Dan looked surprised and then he told me, "I know Vaughn. He's a pastor in San Diego now, and he takes people into the dumps in Tijuana where kids are picking through the garbage.

I was just with Vaughn in Tijuana. We would walk in the city, and these kids would run up to him, and he would show such deep love and affection for them. He'd hug them and have gifts and food for them. He'd figure out how to get them showers. Francis, it was eerie: the whole time I was walking with Vaughn, I kept thinking, *If Jesus was on earth, I think this is what it would feel like to walk with him.* He just loved everyone he ran into, and he would tell them about God. People were just drawn to his love and affection." And then Dan said this, "The day I spent with Vaughn was the closest thing I've ever experienced to walking with Jesus."

Hearing that story made me think, would anyone in their right mind say that about me? *Would anyone say that about you?* ... As I thought about all this, I prayed, "Lord, that's what I want. That's what I want to be known for. I want to be known for someone saying, "Wow, he's a lot like Jesus."

This week, there are two things you need to do. First, clear your calendar for April 17. Second, begin asking yourself each day "How can I be like Jesus today in serving someone else?"

Remember that serving others may mean letting go... getting dirty. Just remember Jesus example and have the same attitude that Jesus had.

I Refuse Josh Wilson www.joshwilsonmusic.com

Sometimes I, I just want to close my eyes
And act like everyone's alright
When I know they're not
This world needs God, but it's easier to stand and watch
I could pray a prayer and just move on
Like nothing's wrong
But I Refuse

(Chorus) I don't want to live like I don't care
I don't want to say another empty prayer
Oh, I refuse to sit around and wait for someone else
To do what God has called me to do myself
I could choose not to move
But I refuse

I can hear the least of these, crying out so desperately
And I know we are the hands and feet of You, oh God
So if You say move, it's time for me to follow through
And do what I was made to do
And show them who You are
Chorus

*I refuse to stand and watch the weary and lost cry out for help
I refuse to turn my back and try and act like all is well
I refuse to stay unchanged, to wait another day to die to myself
I refuse to make one more excuse*
Chorus

Day of Service – Sunday, April 17

Jesus Went First

Mark 9:35 *If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.*

Philippians 2:5-11

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to the glory of God the Father.

Memory Verse

"No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." 1 John 4:12

Imitate Jesus

Hebrews 13:7

The Story of Vaughn

"The day I spent with Vaughn was the closest thing I've ever experienced to walking with Jesus."

Would anyone say that about you?

Check out past sermons and hear them on our website www.LingletownLife.org under the communications tab.