

THE BIG IDEA: The kingdom is served through vessels of clay.

The Take-Off

5 weeks ago we started this series based on Jesus' prayer for the kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven, and we made a simple statement that has life-changing implications: if the kingdom comes, it should change how we walk, who we walk with, where we walk, and what we do when we get there.

This series has challenged me and I pray it's challenged you, and this morning is no exception.

I made the statement 2 Sundays ago that the truth that the kingdom is IN us could radically change the way we live, and 2 of the ways it changes us is in where we walk and what we do when we get there.

These are the 2 things I want to focus on as we close out this series.

If we carry the kingdom (and we do), then that truth changes where we walk and what we do when we get there.

Why? Because through the Holy Spirit, the king is in us, and that means that we go where Jesus went and we give what Jesus gave.

First up? **We go where Jesus went.**

1. We go where Jesus went

- a. Where did Jesus go?
- b. **Unexpected places.**
- c. Luke 2 / Born in a dirty stable full of animal sounds and smells.
- d. John 4 / Talking with an adulterous woman at a well. Drinking water SHE gave him.
- e. Luke 7 / Having a sinful woman cry on and then dry his feet with her hair.
- f. Matthew 8 / Touching a leper
- g. John 8 / Standing between a shamed woman and the religious men shaming her
- h. Matthew 27 (and others) / Sinless on a cross bearing the sins of the world
- i. Jesus didn't go to the easy people or the expected places
- j. Jesus went to the unexpected places
- k. So must we, because we carry HIM within us, because we are HIS hands and HIS feet
- l. The religious leaders of his day didn't get it. Religion today won't either.
- m. In **Matthew 9:10-11**, we find Jesus in one of those unexpected places again, and we see the "holy" men - they'd be like "church" people today - asking his disciples why he was hanging out with bad people.
- n. Did you catch the way they insulted the disciples? "Why would HE hang out with people like YOU?!?"
- o. Jesus said the people he came for were the sick - the ones usually in the least likely places
- p. Those are the places that a kingdom of light shines the best
- q. [Christine Caine's 4 year old daughter with a flashlight from Walmart]
- r. We go to unexpected places today because Jesus hasn't stopped looking for the lost, sick, and hurting
- s. Why? **Matthew 9:12-13**

2. We give what Jesus gave

- a. It's not just about changing where we walk because we could show up in unexpected places but do expected things - go to a bar and call people drunks or go to a buffet and call people gluttons
- b. Jesus showed up in unexpected places and then did the unexpected - he served
- c. **Mark 10:45** / In response to a power play, Jesus said to serve
- d. He served identity to the woman at the well
- e. He served eternity to a thief on a cross
- f. He served humility to his disciples with a basin and a towel
- g. Everywhere Jesus went, he served, and because we carry the kingdom, **we give what Jesus gave** to the people we find when we get to the unexpected places
- h. We give them **unexpected service**. Here's why that matters.

3. We bring what Jesus brought

- a. [The man at the stop sign who had the right of way but waved me to go first]
- b. Sometimes we serve with all the wrong motives: we think we're better, or we want to feel better

- c. In a really strange twist, serving can actually make us feel proud (and not in a good way)
- d. Like somehow we earned what we've been given
- e. That's where the Corinthians were at the end of 2 Cor. 3 - they'd received a new covenant, they were IN!!
- f. So Paul laid out what true serving does in [2 Cor. 4:6-10](#) / it strips us away in order to reveal the light
- g. When we serve, we decrease and **we bring what Jesus brought: unexpected power.**
- h. We've said it so many times, but we need to say it again: the early church grew because they served the people who hated them, when it was unpleasant and uncomfortable, and yet that is what revealed the all-surpassing power of God IN them.

The Landing

The kingdom is more service and less steamroller.

When we carry the kingdom to unexpected places and give unexpected service, the result will be less of us and more of God's unexpected power flowing through us.

Serving does that like nothing else can.

Serving empties us of ourselves, opens us up to others, and positions us to be used by the Father.

Here's how we're going to close: I'm going to unashamedly call you to serve.

I'm going to tell you that you'll never be more like Jesus than when you serve.

I'm going to challenge you to consider that the King who came to serve didn't suddenly decide to be served when he took up residence in you.

If he served, you serve, because that's how the kingdom comes here as in heaven.

Here's how we'll respond: in a moment a slide will be on the screens with a keyword and a number to text it to.

When you do that, you'll take the first step toward living out this message.

Let me read Matthew 5:14-16 to you from The Message, pray for you, and then let you respond.

Let's pray.

[\[Serve keyword image\]](#)