

Grow - Pray - Study

Hasting United Methodist Church

SUCCESS

MONDAY 6.23.14 Genesis 12:1-4 “You will be a blessing”

God promised Abraham, “the father of all who believe” (cf. Romans 4:11), “I will bless you.” A common human reaction to a promise like that would be, “I’m special—more for me!” But God had something else in mind. God blessed Abraham so that he and his offspring could pass the blessing on, as verse 3 said: “All families of earth will be blessed because of you.”

TUESDAY 6.24.14 Matthew 23:8-11

“The one who is greatest among you will be your servant.”

In Jesus’ day (as in ours), many leaders (even religious ones) sought exalted, lofty titles. Scholar William Barclay wrote, “The Pharisees liked to be addressed as Rabbi and to be treated with the greatest respect. They even claimed...greater respect than that given to parents, for, they said, a man’s parents give him ordinary, physical life, but a man’s teacher gives him eternal life.” Jesus said his Kingdom was not about high-status titles, but about greatness in serving others.

WEDNESDAY 6.25.14 Jesus came to serve

Jesus’ disciples James and John wanted the highest rank in his Kingdom. (In Matthew their mother made the actual request; in Mark 10:35-45, they made it directly. The effect was the same.) Jesus said neither they, nor the other disciples who resented them, understood what drove his way of life. He wasn’t out for “perks” or prestige. He came to serve, to give his life to liberate many people.

THURSDAY 6.26.14 Matthew 12:15-23 The greatness of God’s chosen servant

The book of Isaiah included four poems in whose imagery God called an unnamed figure “my servant” (Isaiah 42:1-4, 49:1-6, 50:4-9, 52:13-53:12). When Matthew quoted Isaiah 42:1-4 to describe Jesus’ ministry, he echoed Jesus’ belief that he fulfilled the deepest meaning of the poems in Isaiah. As people saw Jesus serving them, they did not think less of him, but rather asked if he might not be the “Son of David,” God’s anointed redeemer.

FRIDAY 6.27.14 John 13:3-17 “I have given you an example”

On the night before he was crucified, Jesus gathered with his disciples and washed their feet. It was a shocking act—washing feet was slaves’ work. Then Jesus told the disciples they were right to call him “Teacher” or “Lord.” His lesson for them (and us) was that when he acted as a servant, he wasn’t abdicating leadership, but redefining it.

SATURDAY 6.28.14 Galatians 5:13-16 The freedom of living as a servant

Macmillandictionary.com defines “freedom” as “the right to do what you want, make your own decisions, and express your own opinions.” The apostle Paul, shaped by Jesus’ definition and model of greatness, called us to move beyond selfish impulses that actually enslave us. “God has called you to a free life,” he wrote. “But use your freedom to serve one another in love. That’s how freedom grows” (*The Message*).

Sunday June 29, 2014: Timothy 6:17-19