

How Infants Communicate

- To survive, infants must communicate needs. God created them to make their needs known through crying.
- When hungry, cold, lonely, uncomfortable or sick they can only wail.
- Very disruptive to a family, but since infants can't reason, we are patient and endure.
- It is difficult to imagine, but everyone of us started like this.
- God created us to be self-centered and we were.

A Sigh of Relief

- When old enough to reason and we train them about being patient and considerate.
 - Often, they resist this training.
 - They enjoy being “first of all,” “lording it over” others and being the center of everything.
 - They don’t want to be second, but as part of the *“foolishness bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.”*
- Pr. 22:15
- The farther away they drove this selfishness the more blessed we are today.

Training Children in the Golden Rule

- Wise parents teach their children to say “please,” “thank you,” and “I’m sorry.”
- As a bridge from selfishness to concern for others
- Not just words: Expressing emotions and attitudes
- “**Please**,” because no one is obligated to serve us
- “**thank you**,” to show appreciation for a “**favor**”
- “**I’m sorry**,” to express our genuine regret that we had to inconvenience someone.
- The goal in the training to be as considerate of others as we would like them to be to us.
- This is the essence of the “**golden rule**”

Being Considerate is the Golden Rule

- *Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Mt. 7:12*
Why is this called the golden rule?
- Look carefully at the verse.

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Why is this called the golden rule?
- Look carefully at the verse (*gar* – reason and cause)
- Training into unselfishness is the **entire goal** of the Law and Prophets (OT Scripture)!
- Foundation of all godliness and spiritual maturity.
- When our children say “please” and “thank you” with feeling and we can see they truly care about the needs and feelings of others we can feel confident they are moving in the right direction.
- Parents do their children a great service by this *“training them in the way they should go.”* Pr. 22:6

Some Parents did Better than Others

- In spite of their best efforts, most of us still have selfishness lurking within.
- Once we understand that selfishness violates the golden rule and the entire purpose for OT we can finish the training our parents began.
- If we seldom say please or thank you, it reveals a lot more about our character than we thought.
- If we feel no need to say such things or at least to convey them in other ways,
- we don't have a truly ingrained attitude of our rightful role and place.

A Façade or From the Heart (Genuine)?

- *“If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all,” Mk. 9:35*
- *“whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.” Mk. 10:43-44*
- Testing Ourselves:
- In my heart of hearts where only I know: Exist to serve others or do others exist to serve me?
- If I don't say please is it because I feel entitled?
- Is it not a favor – but their duty and obligation?

Acting as Gentile or “Great” Disciple?

- All infants enter the world as “*lords.*” Parents seek to train them to become “*servants.*”
- We have to complete their duty to become great.
- *"You know that those who are considered rulers over the **Gentiles lord it over** them, and **their great ones exercise authority over** them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever **desires to become great among you shall be your servant.** 44 And whoever of you **desires to be first** shall be **slave of all.** 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. Mk. 10:42-46*

A Foreign Language to the Selfish

- *but whoever **desires to become great among you shall be your servant.** 44 And whoever of you **desires to be first** shall be **slave of all.***
- Only unselfish people who see and care about needs of others can understand this
- If still selfish this is a **foreign “heavenly”** language and incomprehensible.
- How can last of all be equated with first?
- How can serving and being a servant be great? Jesus’ apostles could not yet speak or understand this language.

The Same Night He Was Betrayed

- *Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.** 21 But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. 22 And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" 23 Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing. 24 **Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.** Lk. 22:20-25*
- How could they be thinking like this? So Self-Centered they still only thought of themselves.

Gentile Thinking and Reasoning

- The Law and prophets taught: Put others first.
- They sought what the Gentiles sought:
- “greatest” “exercising lordship” over “weak.”
- *But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.”*
- Great in kingdom don’t seek or take the best.
- Paul could speak the language of Jesus:
- *I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. 2Cor. 12:14-15*

I am Among You as One Who Serves

- Either a reminder or an introduction! Jn 13:
- *2 During supper, ... 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, 4 got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet*
- The basin and towel had been provided but no servant. Jesus waited until the supper started to give one of them a chance. Nobody took it!

Decades Later and Inspired John Knew

- *He loved (agape) them to the end*
- *He knew he had come from God ... going back*
- *Took a towel and basin and washed their feet.*
- *The greater ... lowest act of service ... to the last and lowest servants:*
- *I am among you as one who serves.*
- *They refused because of “dignity” “selfishness” and a desire for “greatness.”*
- *Jesus served them for exactly the same reasons*
- *He gave this example for them to follow:*
- *Not the selfish bickering after the Lord’s Supper*

How Peter Responded

- We don't need anything more than this response to understand the entire scene.
- *He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' 7 Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' 8 Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.'*

The Nature of Footwashing

- *‘Lord, are You washing my feet?’*
- Peter is amazed! In his world, this unheard of.
- *‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.’*
- You can’t understand this now, but in the years to come, as you remove selfishness you will
- *‘You shall never wash my feet!’*
- Peter is the lesser and Jesus the greater. In his world this can never be allowed to happen. Jesus is Great and to manifest that Peter won’t allow it
- *‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’*
- Jesus must reveal this to Peter. If he can’t learn then there is no room for him in kingdom

- Peter still firmly convinced that greatness based upon selfishly taking and not unselfish giving.
- This was why he refused to stoop so low to wash his fellow apostles' feet.
- He saw it as a sign of weakness and servitude.
- This was also why Peter refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet.
- Peter knew how great Jesus was, and in his worldly view of greatness, he could not allow Jesus to serve him like this.
- He thought he was giving Jesus great honor when he said: "*You shall never wash my feet!*"

The Key Question

- *“Do you know what I have done to you?”*
- Obviously did not want: *“you washed our feet.”*
- Answer based on: *“You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.”*
- They knew His greatness, but reminded them as the foundation of His lesson.
- *“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet,”*
- Principle and not the specific action.
- Greater serves the weaker. He taught of unselfish care and concern. a willingness to lower ourselves to whatever extent necessary to take care of those needs.

Jesus Could Not Be Clearer ...

- *“For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”*
- Yet multitudes have never understood.
- No servant is greater than his master. Since Jesus was so considerate of man’s needs that He left His glory in heaven to serve them, and was so considerate of the needs of His apostles that He did a lowly task to serve them, no other disciple is too high to do the same.

A Two Step Process

- First and for many the most difficult is to see and know the truth about our own selfishness.
- We have to see that “*whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them*” “*and just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.*”
- Everything we want to receive from others must be set aside so we can give them to the weaker.
- The more selfish we are as we enter the kingdom, the harder it will be for us to see it.
- Second, after we can finally see the truth **we are only blessed if we then do it.**
- Greatness comes when we remove selfishness and selflessly serve others.