

## 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

Sermon by Ed Pacht (sermons4layreaders.org)  
presented by John Watson, Lay Reader

Both of our appointed lessons for today bring intimidating messages from the scripture. They speak primarily to those in authority in the church and bear a powerful theme on leadership and responsibility.

This message is not just for those in charge but for all of us.

For every Christian has a calling, and every calling comes with both gifts and responsibilities.

Likewise, every gift and responsibility requires us to have a focused attitude, one that may not come naturally.

In the 80's there was a famous comedian, Rodney Dangerfield, who was known for his oft repeated line; "I don't get no respect!"

Most of us can relate to that line in some fashion, which was probably why he was so popular.

In our second lesson from St. Mark we can certainly see this concept.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to our Lord. We learn in another scripture from Matthew, that they came at their mothers urging. She was proud of her boys and wanted them to be appreciated.

Both men were successful fisherman and had left their business to serve God. They appear to be personable young men of considerable strength and character. It seemed only right and fair that they should be the two most honored assistants in the coming Kingdom.

They should sit on the Lord's right and left.

Were they entitled to the respect that they weren't getting? Perhaps in human eyes, in their mothers eyes certainly and definitely in their own eyes.

But what about in God's eyes?

To Jesus, power does not demand respect.

Leadership does not demand respect.

Position and favor does not demand respect.

Even martyrdom does not demand respect.

To be respected is not, for Jesus, a worthy objective at all but rather servanthood.

Mark 10 verse 44

*"even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto...*

*But to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."*

This is what he came into the world for and that is what he meant when he said

"Follow me"

Listen to the extremely hard words from Jeremiah in our first lesson.

*"Hear ye and give ear. **BE NOT PROUD***

*For the Lord hath spoken.*

*Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness*

*And before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains*

*And, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death*

*And make it gross darkness."*

*"But if ye will not hear it*

*My soul shall weep in secret places for your pride*

*And mine eye shall weep sore and run down with tears*

*Because the Lords flock is carried away captive.*

We are put on this earth to serve mankind

We are called to be servants, We will be judged as servants.

Whether it be bishops, priests, deacons, lay ministers, or officials of any government or business

Or merely as the quietest, least seen witnesses

Our job is to serve both God and those around us be it ever so unappealing or deemed unworthy.

You cannot be the servant of two masters. Serve God by serving others. Reach out to those around you who will see God in your works.

I saw a news story from a few days ago that I wanted to share with you. It took place in Chicago last week. A young lady was standing in line at a local McDonalds. A man in a wheelchair was in the line next to her and she heard him asking the cashier in a weak voice for help. After a few tries to understand, the man was able to communicate that he needed help with his meal. She writes that she didn't think he would help her as the restaurant was crowded and it was during rush hour. But to her surprise and shock, he shut down his register, washed his hands and went over to the table where the man was sitting. He began to cut the man's food for him and help him eat. He had no idea she was taking his picture.

She posted this act of kindness on social media and quickly it was all over the world. She was able to witness a stunning act of kindness unfolding right before her eyes.

In her own words she describes the scene.

The cashier came out from the kitchen, sat down, and began cutting the man's meal and helped him eat.

At that point, the tears started to gather in my eyes. My heart was so appreciative for what he did. I couldn't contain my emotions in the crowded restaurant.

This employee, who put everything on hold for this man, went above and beyond his responsibilities to help this handicapped customer out. That was the kindest and most humble thing I had ever seen.

How many shares and likes can Kenny the cashier get for his awesome service for those in need?

[#McDonald's](#) [#13838](#) [#Compassion](#) [#SocialResponsibility](#)

35 Likes · 11 Comments · 226,970 Shares

In Matthew 25 our Lord tells us.

*And the King shall answer unto them, verily I say unto you. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren. Ye have done it unto me. "*

*Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

Our Lord depicts himself as judging us on this basis.

Did we see Him and serve Him in the ones who needed his touch?

In the words of the prophet we can expect to hear His voice

“Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?”

Let us pray

Lord Jesus, thou who didst come into our midst as a servant

Deliver us from the chains of our pride

Fill us with the spirit of servanthood and grant that we be faithful to our calling.

To serve thee in those around us

And to lead they flock into thy green pastures

Where thou livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit

One God, unto ages of everlasting ages.

Amen.