**ANCIENT PRACTICES SERIES**

**“The Practice of Being a Servant”**

**September 30, 2012**

**Pastor Peter Nikkel**

Mark 9:30-37

**Jesus Again Predicts His Death**

**30**Leaving that region, they traveled through Galilee. Jesus didn’t want anyone to know he was there, **31**for he wanted to spend more time with his disciples and teach them. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of his enemies. He will be killed, but three days later he will rise from the dead.”**32**They didn’t understand what he was saying, however, and they were afraid to ask him what he meant.

**The Greatest in the Kingdom**

**33**After they arrived at Capernaum and settled in a house, Jesus asked his disciples, “What were you discussing out on the road?” **34**But they didn’t answer, because they had been arguing about which of them was the greatest.**35**He sat down, called the twelve disciples over to him, and said,“Whoever wants to be first must take last place and be the servant of everyone else.”

**36**Then he put a little child among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, **37**“Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%209:30-37&version=NLT#fen-NLT-24548a)**]** welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not only me but also my Father who sent me.”

Mark 10:42-45So Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. **43**But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, **44**and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. **45**For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

### Mark 8:35 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.

1. **A servant’s heart promotes the virtue of humility. This frees us from the stress and tension that pride brings.**

### James 4:6 (NKJV) But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

### Humility illustrated negatively:

### Mark 9:32 They didn’t understand what he was saying, however, and they were afraid to ask him what he meant.

### Humility illustrated positively:

### Mark 9:36-37 Then he put a little child among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf[[a](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%209:36-37&version=NLT#fen-NLT-24548a)] welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not only me but also my Father who sent me.”

1. **A servant’s heart frees us from the worry of wanting to be the greatest.**

### Mark 9:33-34 After they arrived at Capernaum and settled in a house, Jesus asked his disciples, “What were you discussing out on the road?” But they didn’t answer, because they had been arguing about which of them was the greatest.

1. **A servant’s heart frees us from a host of negative behaviors and outcomes.**

**Foster’s comparison (modified)**

**Self- righteous Service (Serve on my terms)** versus **True Service (God’s Terms - Servant’s Heart)**

Depends on human effort Relies on divine empowerment

Requires external rewards Nod of divine approval is sufficient

Concerned about visible results Delights only in the service

Picks & chooses whom to serve Serves enemies as freely as friends

Is affected by moods and whims Refuses to let feelings control the service

Set one’s own terms Accepts direction from the others

Temporary Is a lifestyle

Fractures community Builds Community

**Action Step: Let’s resolve to serve with a servant’s heart so we and those around us will have the joy of seeing Christ shine through our lives.**