**ADDRESSING THE ME, MYSELF, AND I FIRST MENTALITY**

***SCRIPTURE READINGS…..***[***Luke 9:57-62***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Luke%209.57-62)***57And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.58And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.59And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.60Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.61And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.******62And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.***

***Prayer….***

**INTRODUCTION**

1. As Jesus went about His earthly ministry, people either wanted to follow Him, or were invited by Him to follow him; yet some desired to do so, but only in their own terms it was as if–they wanted to set the rules and dictate to Jesus that they have a right to do things but only in their own

terms!!

Let us focus on some interesting points about these scriptures and the 3 examples we are given..

***57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, (towards Jerusalem) a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.58And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head***

1. “the man said…***, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.***

The question here is was he really prepared and ready to chart the course that Jesus was treading? Did he ever know what would be involved in making that statement??

This man received a quote and answer from Jesus that he wasn’t quite expecting!

Many Christians have made that decision but did they ever consider the cost involved in following Jesus!!! Jesus told this man….

Foxes have holes…..

Birds of the air have nests….

But I don’t have a nice room, house or apt, or bed, I don’t have a 65 in color Tv waiting for me, as a matter of fact I don’t even have a place where to lay my head down to get a decent hr of rest. Are you sure you will follow me whithersoever I will go? Are you ready to face the ridicule, the suffering, the pain, the anguish, the beatdown, the cross and death !!

I believe Christ gives him a necessary caution, not to promise himself great things in the world, in following him, but, on the contrary, to count upon poverty and meanness; for *the Son of man has not where to lay his head*.

Beloved, If we mean to follow Christ, we must lay aside all the thoughts of great things in the world, and not think upon making anything *more than heaven* of our home!!! This man had placed himself first in the picture!!!

Next person said….

1. Jesus asked him to follow Him, But he answered, "Lord, let **me first** go and bury my father."…***60Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.***

1. Beloved, This **"me, myself and I first"** mentality is fundamentally opposed to Jesus' concept of following Him...
2. His strong demand was that one must "deny himself" in order to follow Him! The reason being Jesus saw what they were all about **“themselves first”** and not Him!!!! So in order to accomplish this Jesus had to set the record straight with them and told them something they weren’t expecting …..watch this…..

[***Lk 9:23***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Lk%209.23)***3And he said to them all***, ***If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.***

Beloved, If the nearest and dearest relation we have in the world stand in our way to keep us from Christ, it is necessary that we develop a zeal that will make us forget *father and mother sister brother uncle aunt you name it!!*

***Beloved this still holds true today, it requires for every individual to assess him or herself take complete inventory of self, and count the cost before making this strong commitment! Listen once you commit you can’t acquit!***

***Where did I hear that before? In other words, There’s no turning back!!!***

***Another person told him Lord I’m ready to make this commitment but…..”Always a but”***

b. "Lord, I will follow you, but let **me first** go and bid them farewell who are at my house."

Here’s what he answered this person…***62And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.***

“*No man, having put his hand to the plough*, and desiring to make good work of his ploughing, will never *look back*, or look behind him, for if he does he will make errors with his plough, and the ground he ploughs will *not be fit* to be sown.

What Jesus was connecting here was that if you *look back* to a worldly life again and don’t take it serious you will be doing the same as Lot’s wife did when she left Sodom, She looked back and became a pillar of Salt, if you do this, *thou art not fit for the kingdom of God*.”

(1.) In other words “your soil is not *soil* fit to receive the *good seed* of the kingdom of God .

(2.) “Thou art not a *sower* fit to *scatter* the good seed of the kingdom if you can’t *hold the plough* straight.” Ploughing is most essential in order to sowing.

Many are not fit to be *given* divine comforts or appointments because their *ground* has not been *broken up*, many are not fit to be employed in sowing who know not how to break up the ground.

Know why? Because when they have *laid their hand to the plough*, many will look back and think of quitting it. Beloved, Those who begin with the work of God must resolve to *go on* with it, or they will make nothing of it.

***JESUS SAID….***

[**Lk 14:26**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Lk%2014.26)**….*26If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.***

He also required that one **"hate**...his own life also"!!!

[Living in today’s type of culture that praises putting self first and then the (**"Looking Out For #1")** type of mentality makes it is easy for Christians to adopt this **"me first"** type of mentality.

This morning I want to concentrate on some ways we can be guilty of this type of mentality. And what we must do in order to correct ourselves in order to become closer and better followers of Christ!!

1. **In the following scriptures we are shown the kind of Christians we ought to strive to be in**

**pursuing a commitment in walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called into!!**

**We want to take a look at how the early church were able to meet the challenges they were facing in following Jesus!**

***Over in the Book of Acts…We are reminded of they being together always……***

[***Ac 2:42***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%202.42)***; 2And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. It was prayer that locked them in together!!!!***

***Ac*** [***20:7***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ac%2020.7)***; 7And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.***

 ***There was no time limit given to the preacher who is filled with the Holy Ghost!!!***

[***He 10:25***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%2010.25)***25Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.***

***The were in a habit of being together as always!!!!***

**Beloved I believe one area of our Christian walk that we fail in pursuing the walking worthy of the vocation where we are called into… is IN OUR ATTENDANCE...**

 1. The Scriptures just read reveal the example and value of assembling together with other Christians

 2. Yet many will often put personal interests before opportunities to attend services: just to mention a

 few things we sometimes put….before us….

 a. **Recreational outings** before being assembled together with the body of Christ !!!

 b. **Family gatherings**…celebrations, beach activity, picnics, nothing wrong with this but if it steals

 time from being together with the body of Christ it becomes the **me mentality at work !!**

 c. Elective work or school related activities…I always made it clear to my superiors at work,

 Sundays is my day of serving my God at church !!!!

Some choose to stay home and gather with the saints on TV of other churches or Stay home

Just to read or watch some special event on TV.

Beloved let me say this**—A Haphazard attendance for whatever the reason ..is a sign of the "me, myself and I first" mentality!!!!!!**

1. **NEXT IN LINE IS IN OUR CONTRIBUTION TO HELP WITH THE REASON WHY WE HAVE A**

 **PLACE IN EXISTENCE TO CONGREGATE AS A BODY OF BELIEVERS!!!**

Christians are instructed to give of their prosperity to meet certain needs for the church in order for the church to become a successful contributing factor to it’s members and the community!!!

[***1Co 16:1-2***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Co%2016.1-2)***; Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.***

[***2Co 9:7-9***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Co%209.7-9) ***7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.***

Yet in spite of knowing this many Christians will give sparingly because:

 a. They want to spend as much as possible on things for themselves!!! **“Me First”**

 b. They have failed to properly budget their contribution to the Lord !!!

 c. They are burdened with bills for things that are not necessities, but actually luxuries!!!!

 **-- Listen, Negligent giving of our prosperity is a sign of the "me ,myself and I first"mentality**

1. **ANOTHER AREA TO FOCUS IN ON IS IN OUR SERVICE TO ONE ANOTHER...**
2. God has blessed each of us with gifts to serve one another –

[**Rom 12:3-8**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%2012.3-8)***; For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; (this is the me first mentality”) ( this is how to get rid of the me first mentality), but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.4For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:5So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.6Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;7Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;8Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.***

[***1Pe 4:10-11***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%204.10-11)***0As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.11If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: Don’t try to imitate someone you are not, “that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*Listen, this goes to all don’t try to be a superman or a superwoman in the church, just be you, don’t think that without you this church will fail because when one goes down God will raise others to do His will, it’s not all about you, yourself or I !!!!\*\*\*\*\****

 ***Jesus said “I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!!!!***

 2. Yet many make little effort to do their part in the work of the local congregation:

 a. They do not bother to learn the names of the other members in the church!!

 Visitors must be greeted by as many members of the church!!!

 b. They do not seek to find their "gift" or ability God has given them !!!

 c. Many do not attend the prayer meetings; women do not teach classes !!!

 d. Some may attend church, but only to receive, not to give of themselves !!!

And if we want the ministry to grow like it should everyone must be involved in the work of the ministry!!

 **-- Lack of involvement in the church is a sign of the "me, myself and I first" mentality”**

1. **ANOTHER AREA WHERE LACK IS SEEN IS IN OUR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS...**

 1. Christians have duties to members of their physical families

[**Col 3:18-21**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Col%203.18-21)**; *18Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.19Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.20Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.21Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.***

[***Ep 5:33***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ep%205.22) ***33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.***

1. Many families suffer when people seek their own interests above another !!!

 a. When husbands and wives are selfish in their dealings with each other !!

 b. When parents divorce without regard to the impact on their children!!!!

 c. When children fail to honor and obey their parents!!!!

These are all signs of the hurt in the church!!

**BELOVED, LISTEN up, Dysfunctional families, broken down families, unsettled families, DIVIDED FAMILIES, always HURT THE CHURCH where the "me, myself and I first" mentality” exists!!!!**

[Our service to the Lord, His church and our families is greatly hindered by the **"me, myself and I first" mentality”** and is detrimental to our souls those around us. How much better, for us to learn and practice...what Jesus has taught us through His word!!!]

**II. THE "OTHERS FIRST" PRINCIPLE**

 **A. AS EXEMPLIFIED BY CHRIST...**

 1. He came to this earth because He put others first –

[***2Co 8:9***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Co%208.9)***;For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.***

[***Mt 20:28***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%2020.28)***28Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.***

1. We are called upon to put on the same mind or attitude –

***Php 2:3-8Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.4Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.5Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:6Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:7But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:8And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.***

***In other words we are instructed here…..***

 a. To do nothing through selfish ambition or conceit in other words get rid of the **me first** attitude!

 b. To esteem others better than ourselves

 c. To look out for the interests of others

**Jesus showed us the principle of "others first" because this is what He desires in us as well !!!!**

 **B. AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE MACEDONIANS...**

 1. Note their great liberality despite their own poverty –

***2Co 8:1-4 Now I want to tell you what God in his grace has done for the churches in Macedonia.2Though they have been going through much trouble and hard times, they have mixed their wonderful joy with their deep poverty, and the result has been an overflow of giving to others. 3They gave not only what they could afford but far more; and I can testify that they did it because they wanted to and not because of nagging on my part. 4They begged us to take the money so they could share in the joy of helping the Christians in Jerusalem. LB.***

**Notice these things…..**

 2. Why they were able to be so gracious in thinking of others first –

[***2Co 8:5***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Co%208.5)***5Best of all, they went beyond our highest hopes, for their first action was to dedicate themselves to the Lord and to us, for whatever directions God might give to them through us.***

 a. They first gave of themselves to the Lord, then to others!

 b. Notice, it was the mentality of the **"Lord first"** instead of **"me, myself and I first" mentality”**

 that enabled them to put "others first"!!!

1. Their liberal way of carrying themselves continued in supporting Paul to preach the gospel !!!

[***Php 4:10-18***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%204.10-18)***0How grateful I am and how I praise the Lord that you are helping me again. I know you have always been anxious to send what you could, but for a while you didn’t have the chance. 11Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to get along happily whether I have much or little. 12I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of contentment in every situation, whether it be a full stomach or hunger, plenty or want; 13for I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power. 14But even so, you have done right in helping me in my present difficulty.15As you well know, when I first brought the Gospel to you and then went on my way, leaving Macedonia, only you Philippians became my partners in giving and receiving. No other church did this. 16Even when I was over in Thessalonica you sent help twice. 17But though I appreciate your gifts, what makes me happiest is the well-earned reward you will have because of your kindness.18At the moment I have all I need—more than I need! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me when Epaphroditus came. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that pleases God well.***

***ANN MARIE HAS PUT UP A CONCERT TO BENEFIT A CHURCH IN JAMAICA, WILL GRACE CHURCH OF THE FIRST BORN BE THERE TO SUPPORT HER EFFORTS!!!!!***

 4. Putting God and others first ensured that their needs would be

 met –

[***Php 4:19***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%204.19)***19And it is he who will supply all your needs from his riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done for us.***

**-- The Macedonians exemplified the true value of putting "others first" and did not allow the**

***"me, myself and I first" mentality” to overtake them!!!!***

**In closing….**

1. A self-check examination must be done to see if we have the **"me, myself and I first" mentality”**?

 a. If we do, we cannot be Jesus' disciples its that simple!!!

 b. If we don’t, the church and our own spiritual lives will suffer even if 10 percent exist in the church!!!!

2. Do we want to be rid of the "me first" mentality...?

 a. The "me first" mentality will be destroyed when we adopt the "others first" principle

 b. The "others first" principle will be developed as we make "the kingdom of God first" –

[***Mt 6:33***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%206.33)***But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.***

When we truly put the kingdom of God and others before ourselves, then the Lord will see to it that we have the things that we need...!

Beloved, let us all put into practice the works of the Macedonians!