

## Sunday, May 28, 2017 - Becoming Love: Posture Matters

Galatians 5:1-6 CEB

Marysville United Methodist Church

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Anyone ever tried to give a child a bath and you rushed them the entire time? “Let’s go, get wet, soap, rinse, no splashing, sit down, stop hitting your sister, don’t drink the water, no you can’t pee in the tub, okay get out.” You got them clean, didn’t you? Mission accomplished.

Then there’s giving a child a bath and watching as they giggle and splash and delight in the way the water moves around them. The water reminds you of your baptism and your identity in Christ. Your heart is at peace. This isn’t just about getting the marker, oatmeal and soccer dirt off your dirty kid. An evening bath can become an act of love for someone who’s unable to wash themselves.

I call this, posture. The way our heart opens or closes towards the opportunity in front of us. **The way we we do things matters more than the things we are doing.** Posture matters.

Relationships or Work -- There’s doing something for somebody else with a huff, sigh, sneer or eye roll. And then there’s doing something for somebody else with grace, care and intention. Either way, the activity got done. But there’s a big difference in the way it got done.

Church -- As our church thinks about adding a third worship gathering this fall, we can grumble, complain and focus on how it affects each of us. Or we can celebrate that the same Holy Spirit that brought us each here to this beloved community is the same Holy Spirit helping others feel so at home in God. And we can move through this season with compromise, grace and an intentional decision to fling the doors wide open for people who long to be welcomed home.

When we serve God and others, our posture matters. The way we serve matters.

I would argue the way we serve is more important than the activity we’re actually doing.

For some of us, it’s tempting to think of serving as an activity we do, instead of who we are.

God is more concerned with our identity than with our activity.

Galatians 5:1-6 --- **Only thing that matters is faith working through love.**

- Bob Goff says it this way: **walk in grace, live in love.**
- They were arguing over the right way to honor God, the rules, religion, doing the right thing -- it’s too bad the Bible is such an old and ancient book and doesn’t apply for our human lives today! People have been getting distracted by the wrong things for thousands of years. This is what we do. And the gospel of Jesus Christ is here to remind us of this truth: All the rules you’ve created might give you a sense of safety and comfort, but they are not true. They’re not real. The only thing that matters is faith working through love.

It can be dangerous when we make serving more about the activity than our heart and posture as we serve. I’ve had many seasons of this. Serving God can become one more thing on the to do list. There’s a good chance if you sense a call to serve in a new way but all you can think is that this means more activity, more to do lists, more stress -- that’s not the voice of God you’re probably hearing. It’s a poor heart posture.

By the way, this is why I’m so insistent when I invite someone into a leadership position or a new ministry that they discern if this is the right season, if there’s energy leading them to this opportunity

and that it's okay to talk with me at anytime if life changes and it isn't their sweet spot anymore. I've seen so many people in so many churches serving in ministries and they're just **done**. They're tired. They want to hand it off, but don't know how. And if someone would pull them aside and whisper, "It's okay. You can stop. Anytime. Well done, good and faithful servant," their shoulders would rest from the weight they've been carrying.

I love starting new ministries and seeing the energy come alive. But it's also life changing to watch someone be released from a ministry (or job or relationships or anything) that is no longer giving them life. Sometimes we just need permission to know this Jesus life is not another activity to add to our growing list. Jesus didn't come to add to our to do list. Jesus came to help us rip up the to do list.

Becoming whole in Christ, becoming a servant to others, moves us from our head to our heart. Serving is not just about the task at hand. It's about the way we engage with the task. We pause from seeing ourselves at the center of the universe, we raise up and value someone else, we allow love to flow through us to other people.

Today, you'll have an opportunity to serve. You could write a card to someone, prepare for Vacation Bible School or clean cobwebs. And you could do this out of guilt or obligation. OR you could serve today because it is the very way the love of God flows through you to our world. And then you'll continue to learn one of the best secrets of the Jesus life: **Loving others is loving God**. Amen.