

Allison, Lindsey, Kids & Youth Students
Northshore Sunday Morning - FFS
January 31, 2021
9:00am & 10:30am

Sermon:

Alright, let's get into our lesson today and our title today is Back to Basics.

***Title Slide**

There are so many areas that we can focus on when we go Back to Basics.

*Reflecting on youth theme for the year (Linds)

Now, a little insight into what we are doing in kids church. I started to reflect on the year and plan for what we would talk about in kids church. As I planned, thought and prayed about it, it kinda seemed clear that "starting over" was the way to go.

With covid and all the fun things that came with that, I had some new faces in my class. Not new to church, but to my class. I have mostly younger K-2nd grade kiddos now. A lot of time in kids' church and maybe even in church in general, we hear the same Bible stories: creation, Daniel and the lion's den, David and Goliath, the birth of Jesus, etc. I started to think, what about topically? What are some of the basics of a christian life or christian foundation: Salvation, worship, prayer, offering/giving, serving.

***Upward, Inward, Outward Slide**

And I started thinking about the values of our church: Upward Facing, Inward Strong, Outward Focused and this idea of Back to the Basics kind of unfolded. So each month, we are focusing on a different portion of that.

And as Allison (my sister) and I started talking, we realized that we are teaching our students along the same lines and about the same things and we wanted to keep that going with all of you here this morning.

One area that Allison and I agree on for our kids, youth and the church as a whole is being outward focused, specifically in the area of serving others. We would like to unfold this idea of serving in 2 parts: serving within the church, and serving outside of the church.

Today things have looked a little different than normal. We had youth students greeting and serving in the parking lot and at the door, alongside their families. We have Xavion helping his grandpa usher this morning. We have Marnie & Tyler leading from the sound booth this morning. And then we have adults leading in all the various ways that they traditionally do.

If you're attending live in person this morning, maybe you thought that this was just a fun way to incorporate students for the sake of it being a Family Friendly Service. I mean yeah, it helps. We asked our students to serve in these roles intentionally.

I'm going to be a little interactive here and ask you a question. When you think of serving in a traditional sense with the church in mind, what do you think of?

- Volunteering
- Greeting
- Food Bank
- Nursery
- Worship team

Okay, great. I like all of those answers. I am on the same page as you. I think of my work I do with kids, the work you do with our youth, Pastor Dan speaking here, Laurie leading worship, Aaron and Joel serving in the parking lot or on media, etc.

Looking at our church body as a whole, we are keeping our church body strong. We worship best when we are at our best... and we are at our best when we are strong. This falls in line with that Upward, Inward, Outward idea. The second purpose of our church is to edify believers in Christian faith and equip them for service. We are inward strong. We are working together and learning, growing, worshipping, and serving in these various ways within our church. That is what all of our volunteers are doing here today: our kids, youth, and adults.

***1 Timothy Slide**

1 Timothy 4:12 says: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

My takeaway from this verse, I mean, this is a verse I use all the time in kids ministry: is age doesn't matter, and set an example. I work with young people, I work with you kids. Sometimes, I think you kids teach me just as much as I teach you. Students, you are an age. It might be a younger age. You all are a lot younger than me, but that doesn't mean you can't lead and serve.

As we think "Back to the basics," and tackle this idea of service: Kids & youth, etc. You are all strong leaders right where you are today. You don't have to be an adult or have a college degree to serve your church. Some of you have been helping throughout the morning and leading. You're setting an example by how you act, behave, say hi to someone coming in the door. It might seem like a small task, or maybe a big task, either way, there is a place for you to serve, here at Northshore.

I mean, folks, if you want to talk about too young to serve, (or not too young to serve), as I am lobbying for... A perfect example of serving regardless of age is an experience that Avery had a couple of weeks ago.

***Avery Happy Slide**

Yes, I am going to use my son because I think he's pretty darn cute. He's been kind of in a mood and not really super thrilled about being left in the nursery.

***Avery Crying1 Slide**

"Sorry Avery." He knows and loves Jenni and she is faithfully serving there regularly.

***Avery Crying2 Slide**

Well, 1 Sunday, Avery was just in stitches so Jenni got the idea to get him out of the room and do something productive, different. Her, Xochitl, and Avery went into the food bank area and started sorting cans.

I mean, no he can't read. He can kind of identify his foods, but really, at home, we are just mostly working on Disney characters and animals right now.

Anyway, Jenni would check canned food for expiration dates, hand them to Avery to give to Xochitl for one pile, or he would toss them in a box or something like that for another pile. Granted, it probably took way longer to sort 20 or so cans than it would have been if Jenni did it solo. But that wasn't the point. The point was introducing him to this idea of serving and providing him a role to serve in his church. Okay, yes, the main reason was to get him distracted and redirected so he wasn't upset all service BUT, he was given the opportunity to serve. That is what we want to instill in our students. There is a place and a job for them to serve their church.

***Proverbs 22:6 Slide**

Proverbs 22:6 is another verse that is really the foundation for all of children's ministry: "train a child in the way they should go, an even when they are old they will not turn from it." Let's train kids up in this way. Let's partner together to train them, in the way they should go.

There is a place and a role for our students to serve outside their church as well.

***1 Timothy (MSG) Slide**

Another version of the Bible, in that 1 Timothy verse, says, "Teach believers with your life: by word, by demeanor, by love, by faith, by integrity." and those descriptions tie nicely into Lindsey's take on servanthood.

As we jump into this idea of servanthood, serving and what that looks like, let me start by saying more often than not throughout scripture Jesus demonstrated servanthood outside of a church or synagogue type setting.

***Feeding 5000 Slide**

***Fisherman Slide**

***Woman at the Well Slide**

Feeding the 5,000, providing fish in the fishermen's nets, even his encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. In all of these ways, Jesus was serving others by using the gifts and talents God gave him to glorify him. If we take this a step further, even, there were moments Jesus publicly spoke to the crowd that was outside of this church setting.

I think we can learn something from this example, that serving, being a servant of Christ extends further than the boundaries of the church building. Being a servant of Christ is something we carry with us throughout our entire life. Of course, we choose whether or not we want to be a servant of Christ, let me challenge us all with this: servanthood is heart oriented. Servanthood is about serving your local church community, doing homeless outreaches together and hosting food banks at the church. But servanthood is also what takes place outside of the church, when your church community isn't around to see it.

We are looking at this verse in 1 Timothy that tells us to not let age be a reason why we don't serve. Kids and youth, do not let anyone look down on you because you're young. I'd also like to take this a step further for the adults today, in saying, do not let age, gender, race, or political stance be a reason why you don't serve outside of the church building. If we are only ever sharing Jesus' kind servants' heart with the people inside the church building, we are never reaching the people outside of the church who don't know Jesus yet. And this starts with the kind of mindset we have. As I mentioned earlier, serving is heart oriented.

Have you ever had an orange that looked really great on the outside but once you unpeeled it and actually bit into it, it wasn't sweet at all?! When our hearts aren't in the right place, sometimes we look more like that orange. Serving starts with a shift in our mindset. A shift from "I'm doing this to make myself look good" to "I'm doing this to better represent Jesus" and then we are truly serving with our hearts Jesus-focused. Kids and students, when you're interacting with your siblings or your friends (over zoom chat) are you being kind? Are your actions sharp, and mean? Or are your actions loving like Jesus? The way that we interact with other people, our attitudes, what we post on social media all reflect the position of our heart and whether or not we are serving.

***Matthew 6:5-6 Slide**

Scripture says it this way in Matthew 6:5-6, "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Now, this particular verse

is talking about prayer but I think we can apply this same principal to all areas of life. We must shift our mindset.

If I can encourage us all with one thought: after we leave this building today, as we take on this next week and all of the craziness this world is bringing our way lately, let us really reflect on the actions of Jesus. And then ask ourselves, is what we're portraying to the world, demonstrating Jesus? Folks, at the end of the day, the way that we carry ourselves and the way we serve others is either representing Jesus or it's not.

Response Tune - Allison

We have asked Laurie to come and close us out with a song. Just to give us a few moments to reflect on where our mindset is. We aren't asking you to come back totally changed next Sunday. We just really want to challenge and encourage a mindset of servanthood. It takes time. It takes one little seed of being challenged, or knowledge to start growing, and then to change our mindset, and change our actions. How are we serving? How can we be serving differently?

Ya know when I'm preaching and teaching, whether it's here or upstairs with my kiddos, I am often challenged. I know some stuff. I've got some stuff together. But there's a lot of ways that I'm growing and learning too. Taking this idea of servanthood everywhere I go, is a little intimidating. Am I really, outward focused?

When I'm at the grocery store, I'm really inward focused. I just want to pick out my groceries. I want everyone to please obey the 6 foot distance rule and I want the self-checkout line to move faster. I'm not often thinking about my attitude or how I am serving or carrying the attitude of a servant.

***Title Slide**

So today, I'm challenged.

That is O-KAY! None of us are perfect. We are always growing and changing.

Let's go ahead and take these moments and reflect on our own personal call to action, our own, "So What?" before we leave here today.