

ME FIRST

Rob Robinson

“Look out for #1,” we are told, *“because if you don’t nobody else will.”* #1 being, of course, yourself. But followers of Jesus are called to a different approach to life. We are instructed by Jesus to love others as we love ourselves, to deny ourselves, even to put others ahead of ourselves. *“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*

We usually want to be first. Jesus gives us an opportunity to be first: be the first one to defer to others, the head of the line to serve others. Jesus did more than inculcate such unnatural behavior; he exemplified it. When it was time for someone to step up and wash others’ feet, Jesus jumped to the front of the line. When it was time for sinners to die and pay for their sins, Jesus, though he was no sinner himself, said, *“Here, let me go first.”*

When a big family dinner is over, and the table is full of food to be put away and dishes to be washed, instead of waiting for others to take care of that (usually the same ones, right?), go first. Take the lead in getting that job done, and stick with it until the last surface is wiped and the last cleaned dish put away. When you and another person have a falling out and steps of reconciliation must be taken, you can be the one to initiate it. Don’t coddle your pride with thoughts of, *“If she will just admit that she was wrong, then I might be inclined to consider what I could have done differently.”* You can be the first to say, *“I’m sorry,”* and to mean it, even if a reciprocating apology is not immediately forthcoming. When a need for volunteers is announced in church, such as a need for teachers, workers in the care building, people to purchase toys or food for Christmas Care, rather than assuming that there are always people who will step up and do those things, why not be one of them this time? Even better, why not be the first to volunteer and sign up? Go ahead! Go first. Be #1.

Matthew 22:39, Luke 9:23, Philippians 2:3-4