# Me First!

*Sermon taken nearly exactly from* [Mark Copeland](http://executableoutlines.com/text/lk9_57.htm) *who credits an article entitled "The Me First Syndrome" by Wayne Jackson.*

1. Introduction
   * + - 1. As Jesus went about His earthly ministry, he invited people, yet some desired to do so on their own terms – Luke 9:57-62

“Lord, let **me first** go and bury my father.”

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

We have this issue here – I know I have it!

* + - * 1. This "me first" mentality was fundamentally opposed to Jesus' concept of following Him...

He demanded that one "deny himself" to follow Him – Luke 9:23

He required that one "hate...his own life also" – Luke 14:26

Living in a culture that promotes and praises putting yourself first it is easy for Christians to adopt this “me first” mentality. Consider some ways we can be guilty of...

1. THE “ME FIRST” MENTALITY
   1. IN OUR ATTENDANCE...
      * + 1. The Scriptures reveal the example and value of assembling together with other Christians:

Acts 2:41-42 HCSB – “So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about 3,000 people were added to them. And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers.”

Acts 20:7 – “On the first day of the week, we assembled to break bread…”

Hebrews 10:24-25 – “And let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our worship meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”

* + - * 1. Yet many will often put personal interests before opportunities to attend services:

Recreational outings (fishing, hunting, golf, marathons/5K, etc.)

Family vacations or outings (plane tickets, cruise boarding or lengths, drive time, etc.)

Work related activities (special assignments, conventions, “emergencies”, deadlines, etc.)

School related activities (sports, trips, homework, projects, extracurricular, etc.)

Health (staying home to ward off a cold or get more sleep so you can be fresh for…)

We all understand things happen sometimes. Perhaps you know your body well and know it is as simple as I can miss this service or the next three services. There may be an occasions where you cannot get away from work. However, are these occasions regular? Are they planned? Could you have influenced them to be away from service times?

Police detectives look for clues to solve crimes. When they find a clue, it is logged as evidence. The evidence itself does not determine guilt or innocence, but leads them to a suspect. Once all evidence is collected it is brought before a judge and jury and guilt or innocence of the suspect is determined.

Haphazard attendance is evidence the “me first” mentality exists

* 1. IN OUR CONTRIBUTION...
     + - 1. Christians are instructed to give of their means (income) to meet certain needs – 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Gospel: 2 Corinthians 9:1-14

Needy Saints: Acts 6:1-6 – Widows “Indeed”, Romans 15:25-26 – Churches with saints in need

* + - * 1. Yet many will give sparingly because:

They do not see the abundant need

They want to spend as much as possible on things for themselves

They have failed to properly budget their contribution to the Lord

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

They want to retire in ease

Negligent giving of our means is evidence of the “me first” mentality

* 1. IN OUR SERVICE TO ONE ANOTHER...
     + - 1. God has blessed each of us with gifts to serve one another – Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:7-11
         2. Yet many make little effort to do their part in the work of the local congregation:

They do not learn the names of the other members

They do not seek to find their “gift” or ability God has given them

They do not teach classes

Men do not prepare for and attend the business meetings

They may attend church, but only to receive, not to give of themselves

Lack of involvement in the local church is evidence of the “me first” mentality

* 1. IN OUR FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIPS...
     + - 1. Christians have duties to members of their physical families:

Colossians 3:18-21 – “Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

Ephesians 5:22 ESV – “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”  
Ephesians 5:25 ESV – “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her…”  
Ephesians 5:33 ESV – “However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

* + - * 1. Many families suffer when people seek their own interests above another:

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

Divorce – destroying families whether or not children are involved, if children are involved not considering the impact on the children

When children fail to honor and obey their parents

Dysfunctional families is evidence the “me first” mentality exists

Our service to the Lord, His church and our families is greatly hindered by the “me first” mentality, and is detrimental to our souls those around us. How much better, for us to learn and practice...

1. THE “OTHERS FIRST” PRINCIPLE
   1. AS EXEMPLIFIED BY CHRIST...
      * + 1. He came to this earth because He put others first:

2 Corinthians 8:9 ESV – “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”

Matthew 20:28 ESV – “…even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

* + - * 1. We are called upon to adorn the same mind or attitude: Philippians 2:3-8

To do nothing through selfish ambition or conceit

To esteem others better than ourselves

To look out for the interests of others

Jesus exemplified the principle of “others first” that He desires in us

* 1. AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE MACEDONIANS...
     + - 1. Note their great liberality despite their own poverty – 2 Corinthians 8:1-4
         2. Note why they were able to be so gracious in thinking of others first – 2 Corinthians 8:5

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

The mentality of “Lord first” instead of “me first” enabled them to put “others first”

* + - * 1. Their liberality continued in supporting Paul to preach the gospel – Philippians 4:10-18
        2. Putting God and others first ensured that their needs would be met – Philippians 4:19

The Macedonians exemplified the true value of putting “others first”

1. CONCLUSION
   * + - 1. If you were to stand before the judge, is there enough evidence to prove your guilt of the “me first” mentality?

“me first” – you cannot be Jesus' disciples

“me first” – the church will suffer

“me first” – you will suffer

There shouldn’t even be enough evidence to bring the case before the judge!

* + - * 1. Do we want to be rid of the “me first” mentality?

The “me first” mentality will be destroyed when we adopt the “others first” principle

The “others first” principle will be developed as we make “the kingdom of God first” – Mathew 6:33 ESV  
“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness…”

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! (Matthew 6:30-33; Philippians 4:19)

* + - 1. 2013/10/20 Oak Ridge coC w/o PowerPoint