



**Belonging to  
Him (Part 2)**

**Belonging to Him...**  
**Belonging to Others**



**He Must Increase**

# He Must Increase

**Most people learn about belonging to God  
when we invite them to belong to us.**

*“No one has ever seen God. If we love one another,  
God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.”  
(1 John 4:12)*

*“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all  
things, endures all things.”  
(1 Corinthians 13:4-7)*

# He Must Increase

## The Challenge of Loving as Jesus Loves

**The beginning of love:**

*“Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39)*

**The end of love:**

*“Love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:12-13)*

# He Must Increase

## The Challenge of Loving as Jesus Loves

### Selfish Love to Selfless Love

Love Your  
Neighbor As  
Yourself

Total  
Self-Sacrifice



# He Must Increase

## The Example of John-the-Baptist

*“They came to John and said to him, ‘Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him.’*

*John answered, ‘A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.’  
(John 3:26-30)*

# He Must Increase

## The Example of John-the-Baptist

*“You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, “I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.” The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore, this joy of mine is now complete.*

*He must increase, but I must decrease.”*  
*(John 3:26-30)*

**He Must Increase**

**He Must Increase, but I Must Decrease**

**IN CHRIST...**

- **I am Accepted.**
- **I am Secure.**
- **I am Significant.**



# He Must Increase

## He Must Increase, but I Must Decrease

*“Among those born of women none is greater than John.*

*Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” (Luke 7:28)*

# He Must Increase

## He Must Increase, but I Must Decrease

*“I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*

*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain.”*

*(1 Corinthians 15:9-10)*

# He Must Increase

## Discovering Our True Identity and Worth

- **We rebel against the notion that our identity and worth could come from anyone but ourselves.**
- **But if life is relationship, if that is our deepest need, then our lives will only find meaning—i.e., who we are and how we should live—by embracing the identity and purpose of our Creator.**

# He Must Increase

## Discovering Our True Identity and Worth

- **The meaning we find in belonging to God is most often made real within the “laboratory” of human relationships—in loving others as Jesus loves us.**

# He Must Increase

## Pursing His Love Together

*“If there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. (Philippians 2:1-4)*

# He Must Increase

## Pursing His Love Together

*“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.”*  
*(Philippians 2:1-4)*

# He Must Increase

## Pursing His Love Together

*“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:5-8)*

**LESS** IS

**MORE**





# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

**Jesus made himself less so that we could see more of God—and so we could belong to him.**

*“The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing.” (John 5:19-20)*

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

**Jesus made himself less so that we could see more of God—and so we could belong to him.**

*“Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”*

*(Matthew 20:20-28)*

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

“Glory befits God because of his majesty, while lowliness befits man because it unites us with God.”

– Diadochos (5th century Bishop)

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

I need less...

- **Selfishness.**
- **Taking myself so seriously.**
- **Finding my worth (or lack of worth) in myself or others alone.**
- **Living life my own way, in my own time, and according to my own plans.**

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

**I need less...**

- **“Saving” my life through the pursuit of comfort, pleasure, and the avoidance of loss.**
- **Ignoring those around me who desperately need God and desperately need me to love them with God’s love.**

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

**I need more...**

- **Realizing that I am nothing compared to God and nothing without God.**
- **Actively seeking God's purpose for my life and living it out.**
- **Finding my identity and worth in who God says who I am when I belong to him.**
- **Finding my identity and worth in loving others as God loves me.**

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

**I need more...**

- **Prioritizing the interests and welfare of others.**
- **Rejoicing in the growth and success of others.**
- **Serving others in whatever capacity is needed, whether large or small.**
- **Regularly joining others in our mutual need for God.**

# He Must Increase

## Less Is More

**I need more...**

- **Living in hope for the day I'll receive more than I could ever imagine.**
- **Rejoicing every time God becomes “more” in me and in those he has called me to love.**



# He Must Increase

## Fulfillment Through Sacrifice



*“[The villagers] went out of the town and were coming to him.*

*Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, ‘Rabbi, eat.’”  
(John 4:30-36)*

# He Must Increase

## Fulfillment Through Sacrifice



*“But he said to them, ‘I have food to eat that you do not know about...My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.’”  
(John 4:30-36)*

# He Must Increase

## Fulfillment Through Sacrifice



*“Lift up your eyes...the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life so sower and reaper may rejoice together.”*

*(John 4:30-36)*

# He Must Increase

## Fulfillment Through Sacrifice

**John-the-Baptist:**

*“The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore, this joy of mine is now complete.”*

*“He must increase, but I must decrease.”*  
*(John 3:27, 29-30)*



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