

# ***SERVANTHOOD***

*THE VOCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN*



***A BIBLE STUDY***

*Original study by:*  
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## DEDICATION:

TO THOSE "HUNGER CORP" VOLUNTEERS  
AND OTHERS LIKE THEM  
WHO HAVE LEARNED THE JOY OF SERVICE  
AMONG THE POOREST OF THE POOR,  
OUR PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

*My thanks go to Jeanne Melville, Andrea Morgan, Debra Hunt, Lisa Leff, and Pastor Don Tack, who have helped with the production of this series of studies; to the two hundred Hunger Corps volunteers, who have more than once urged me to make this series available for wider use: and to my friends and co-workers Bob Moffitt, Bill Moy, and Dr. Tetsunao Yamamor, who have encouraged me to expand this project.*

*To Karla Tesch, who has given most of one summer to editing, typing and making valuable suggestions for the improving of this series, I owe my warmest thanks.*

*To my wife Marilyn, who has demonstrated a servant's heart in her care for our family, I give my love and thankfulness.*

*To the One who has served me by His death, I owe my utmost gratitude*

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*Cover art: by Cruz, a talented Guatemalan young man, gifted by God*

## A MESSAGE FROM SERVANT'S HEART MINISTRY

*Dear Team Member,*

*Welcome to this excellent Bible Study on Servanthood. We pray that your heart will be open wide to receive the insightful and challenging teachings in these lessons, and that your life will be more and more transformed into the image of Christ as we live our lives in service and gratitude to Him Who gave us everything.*

*Because of the busyness of our lives we are very tempted to just add the numerous preparations for your mission trip to your list of things to do. Please do not allow the busyness of life to cause you to neglect spiritually preparing yourself so you can be most effectively used by God and to increase your understanding of what kind of heart and attitude He desires of you. Studying His Word (individually and with fellow team members) is the most crucially important and essential element to being prepared and equipped for your mission trip. Please evaluate and adjust your life to make your spiritual preparation your top priority. God will teach you amazing things!*

*There are treasures in these lessons. And so, these lessons will be most beneficial to you if you make it a priority to prepare each one before you come to your team meetings. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see and understand what you personally need from this study as you prepare to serve in the mission field. As your team gathers together, we hope you will share what you've learned, as an encouragement to each other, so write down your spiritual insights and what the Holy Spirit teaches you.*

*We are thankful to Darrow Miller for his permission to use this excellent Bible Study which will deepen our understanding of servanthood and give us a yearning to be more like Christ as we serve the poor.*

*To God Be All Glory!*

*The Servant's Heart*

# SERVANTHOOD

THE VOCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN

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# INTRODUCTION

1

## THE NEED:

*In March of 1964, Catherine “Kitty” Genovese, age 23, was sexually assaulted and murdered two blocks from her home in New York City. When the police arrived, they discovered that 38 of her neighbors had witnessed her murder...*

*In 1975 Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge won the revolution to ‘free’ Cambodia. During the next three years, nearly half of Cambodia’s population of seven million people was killed, while the Western nations stood silent...*

*In 1984 the world produced enough grain to feed twice the world’s population. Each day of that same year, 35,000 people died of starvation... As the famine raced through Ethiopia in 1984 William Buckley asked, “Why is it taken for granted that we are impotent in the face of children dying in Ethiopia?”... 1*

*In the wake of the Bhopal tragedy in India, Roger Rosenblatt of Time Magazine asked, “Do you feel the deaths of strangers?” 2*

## THE CHURCH:

*In his song, “Asleep in the Light”, Gospel artist Keith Green raised the question:  
“Do you see, do you see, All the people sinking down?  
Don’t you care, don’t you care, Are you going to let them drown?  
How can you be so numb, Not to care if they come?  
You close your eyes and pretend the job’s done.” 3*

*At a recent Bible conference in California, only a handful of the 1500 church leaders gathered chose to attend a mission workshop, while the workshop on the ‘Victorious Christian Life’ was packed. What a critique this is of the values of the church; our focus is on self, rather than on others. We are turned inwards, rather than outwards.*

*The church in the West has often been neutralized by the world’s agenda and value system. We look for self-fulfillment, not realizing the power of Christ’s words that WE MUST DIE TO LIVE AND GIVE TO GAIN. For so many people, the good life – the life of comfort and personal peace – is the goal. But the end of this pursuit is shallow and unsatisfying. And yet we race on, hoping that if we move faster, happiness will come.*

## A RALLYING CRY:

*The fulfillment we long for will never be found in the world’s agenda but only in Christ’s plans. In Luke 19:12-27 Jesus tells the parable of a nobleman (who represents Jesus Himself) who has gone to a far country to receive his kingdom. He gives his faithful servants authority over cities in the land, commanding them to “occupy” it (KJV) or “take charge” (NIV) until he comes. This is the church’s mission: to “occupy” the land” for the coming King. We are to be God’s people. Dr. Tetsunao Yamamori, President of Food for the Hungry, has expressed that we are to be involved in “Symbiotic Ministry” – that is, proclaiming the Good News of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ (evangelism) and liberating men in social, political, and economic shackles in order to establish peace, order, and harmony in all human relationships (social action). 4*

*The key to this “occupation” is you. As the parable in Luke teaches, God has given life, talents, abilities, and gifts to you; and He wants you to use them. Your life makes a difference! It is wonderful. It is grand. Francis Schaeffer was fond of saying, “Like a pebble thrown into a still pond, your life makes ripples that continue FOREVER.”* 5

*Christ will return, just as surely as He rose from the dead. As Luke 19:12 describes, He is in Heaven now, receiving His Kingdom. We, His servants, have been given our task of occupying the land for His return. Each place that you stand as a Christian becomes occupied territory. When you stand and occupy territory, you create a place for others to stand with you.*

## **BACKGROUND:**

*This series of Bible studies is a rallying cry for the Church to awaken and to fulfill her mission.*

*Originally, I wrote the series to encourage a group of Christian high school students from Ohio as they prepared to spend two weeks on a work project in the Dominican Republic. I remembered that a similar experience had shaken me from my slumber. As a nineteen year old college student, I traveled with the students, a pastor, and his wife to Mexico City, where we lived and worked at an orphanage for six weeks. We were fed on \$1.25 per week – we ate the same food that the orphans ate. This period of short-term missions altered the entire course of my life. Of the thirteen that went that summer, eight of us have become more extensively involved in missions.*

*I desired a vision-expanding, life-changing encounter for the Ohio work team; and that is my prayer, also, for all of you who participate in this study. My hope is that it will not merely be a Bible Study but a celebration of our high calling; not merely more information but a trumpet call to action. AS WE AWAIT THE KING, LET’S MAKE THE MOST OF OUR TIME. Let’s hasten His coming by serving Him well.*

## **THE PURPOSE:**

*The purpose of this series is:*

1. To help you understand that **the mission of the Church is to occupy this world for Christ.**
2. To encourage you to see that you are the key: **your life counts.**
3. To guide you in fulfilling your **vocational calling: that of being a servant**

## **THE BASIS:**

*This study is based upon these five profound truths:*

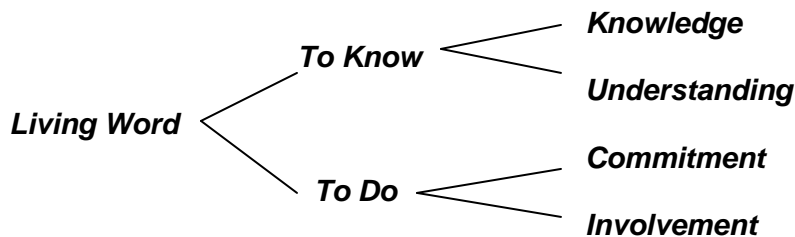
1. We live in a fallen world. Sin has affected all of our lives and all of our relationships. God hates sin and weeps over the brokenness in the world.
2. Christ has come to serve us in His death, providing for our salvation. With His life, Christ shows us how to serve and how to begin the process of restoration.
3. Christ will return to establish His Kingdom, fully restoring all that is shattered.

4. *He has established His Church to fight the forces of darkness and to occupy the land for His coming.*
5. *Individual Christians are the key. He has called us to a basic task: Service.*

## THE FORMAT:

*These will be the six elements in the format of each lesson:*

1. **REVIEW:** *The Review summarizes what has been covered in previous lessons, giving a context for the current lesson.*
2. **PREVIEW:** *This section summarizes the direction of the present study and includes a short outline of the lesson.*
3. **KNOW AND DO:** *Christ always stressed the importance of both KNOWING and DOING the will of God. In our case, this applies to knowing and doing the Word of God. We must both meditate or reflect on God's Word and act upon it. To place a higher value upon either knowing or doing is to strip the Word of its power. "To Know" means to have both knowledge and understanding. "To Do" requires commitment and involvement based upon our knowledge. It may be pictured like this:*



*To merely "Know" His Word is verbalism. To merely "Do" His Word is activism. To "Know and Do" is the proper application of the Living Word.*

4. **STUDY:** *This part is the "Knowing" emphasis. People who put the most into the lessons will also grow the most as a result of the study.*
5. **MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:** *This section challenges the reader to take 15-20 minutes to meditate on and to memorize the theme passage.*
6. **APPLICATION:** *The focus of this section is the "Doing" emphasis – the application of knowledge learned. This section offers a relevant, practical exercise, designed to fit individual growth needs.*

**LET'S CELEBRATE OUR CALLING TOGETHER!**

1 William Buckley, *Arizona Republic*, October 31, 1984

2 Roger Rosenblatt, *Time Magazine*, December 17, 1984

3 Keith Green, "Asleep in the Light" (a recording)

4 Tetsunao Yamamori, "Toward the Symbiotic Ministry: God's Mandate for the Church Today", p. 2

5 Francis Schaeffer, *L'Abri Fellowship*

# THE AMBITION OF MAN

## STUDY 1

### **PREVIEW:**

We use words to define our value system. What words do we use to describe our ambitions? Do they reflect Christ's ambition for us? We will first examine the vocabulary of Western culture as it relates to ambition, and then we will examine Christ's ambition for us.

### **KNOW AND DO:**

In this study we desire to know that our vocational calling is that of being servants; and we begin, consciously, to practice serving those closest to us.

### **STUDY:**

As we have come to Christ, through baptism, we have been given new names: "Sons/Daughters of God", "Children of Light", "Christians", "The Redeemed", "New Creations", and many others. These titles bring identity and joy. As we are adopted into God's family, we receive His name. I am \_\_\_\_\_ (your name) \_\_\_\_\_ Ben (son of) or Bath (daughter of) Jehovah!

There are, however, many titles that do not automatically bring equal joy. Because of the negative understanding we have of these names, we tend to draw away from them. We are "Prisoners" (Eph. 4:1), "Servants" (Phil. 1:1), and "Workmen" (2 Tim. 2:15). Being a "Prisoner" of Jesus Christ is greater than being a person of the world. Being a "servant" of Jesus Christ is actually a greater privilege than being the master of millions.

God's will for our lives can be thought of in terms of His 'general will' and His 'particular will'. His general will (that we be godly men and women) is detailed in the Scriptures. His particular will (Whom will I marry? etc.) is revealed as we pursue His general will. Matthew 6:33 states, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (His general will), and all these things (His particular will) shall be added to you."

Likewise, we find similar counsel given in Isaiah 58:10-11: "...if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed (God's general will), ...The Lord will guide you always." (His particular will)

We ask, "What am I to do with my life; what is to be my vocation?" God responds, "Focus on the Christian's vocation: a servant." What am I to do? I am to serve!

But is this our natural ambition?

### **A. THE IMPORTANCE OF WORDS**

Any society's vocabulary can tell us much about the values of that society's people. In C.S. Lewis' "Out of the Silent Planet", the hero, Ransom, is stranded on a planet where the inhabitants have no words for "war" or "hatred". The absence of these words from the language indicates the absence of hatred or war in their society.

The vocabulary of a society both establishes and exposes its value system. For example: What do we call that which a woman carries in her womb – a "baby" or a "fetus"? The word we choose affects our attitude and behavior toward that child. Also, do we talk about the "sacredness of life" or the "quality of life"? The loss of common usage of such words as "chastity", "truth", "justice", and "guilt" from our culture reflect a profound shift in our world views, value systems, and lifestyles.

To begin our study on Servanthood, we want to examine words used in our culture and discover how these words shape our ambitions.

1. In the list below, mark with an "X" those words which you believe best describe the values of our culture – the highest goals for which many people in our society strive:

assistant	large	proprietor
bondsman	last	respected
boss	leader	rich
blue collar	lord	ruler
chief	manager	secondary
director	master	servant
employee	menial	slave
employer	minor	small
first	owner	subordinate
helper	poor	success
inferior	prestigious	superior
influential	primary	underling
insignificant	principal	white collar
		winner

2. What does this tell you about the ambition of our culture?
3. Circle 5 words from the list above which you use most often to describe your own personal goals.

Do your own goals differ from our society's goals?      If so, how do they differ?

If not, what does this tell you about yourself?

4. Did you notice that most of the words in the list are synonyms of two words: "master" and "servant"?

Using a dictionary, look up the words "master" and "servant". In your own words, write a definition of each:

Master:

Servant:

We have looked at these contrasting words and can see that our society defines success in terms of authority, power, and winning. Our society equates failure with laboring, serving and being subordinate.

However, these words do not necessarily conflict. Jesus, the God-Man, was both Lord and Servant. In fact, good leadership is servant-leadership.

**B. KINGDOM VALUES ARE “RIGHT - SIDE - UP”**

1. In Luke 3:4-6 John the Baptist preaches Isaiah’s message concerning the coming Kingdom of Christ. In the Kingdom everything seems to be turned upside-down. More accurately, though, everything is restored to its right-side-up position!

Describe what is to happen to these areas:

Valley:

Mountain & hill:

Crooked roads:

Rough ways:

2. In Luke 6:20-26 (the Beatitudes), Jesus describes those who are blessed and those who are cursed. Notice again how the value system of the Kingdom is so different from the value system of the world. Compare and list the circumstances of the blessed and of the cursed:

BLESSED

CURSED

“Blessed are you who  
for My sake are”...

“Woe to you who are”...

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3. In Luke 6:27-31, the strangeness of the Kingdom continues as Christ teaches His followers a “right-side-up” value system. Describe how we, as Christians, are to treat the following:

Our enemies:

Those who hate us:

Those who curse us:

Those who mistreat us:

Those who hit us on one cheek:

Those who take away our coats:

Those who ask:

To others:

*If these values sound foreign to our ears, they are. Yet, they are the values of God’s Kingdom.*

4. Study Matthew 10:39. In this “right-side-up Kingdom, how does one find life?
5. The value system of the Kingdom stands in contrast to the values of the world. Therefore, the ambition of the Christian is also different from the ambition of the world:

**THE AMBITION OF THE CHRISTIAN IS – TO BE A SERVANT!**

What is a servant willing to do?

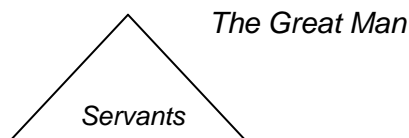
**C. CHRIST TEACHES ABOUT AMBITION**

1. Read Mark 10:32-45.

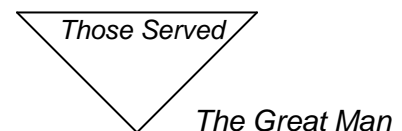
- a. What is the setting of this discussion? What is about to take place? (v.32-34)
- b. What do James and John want Christ to do for them? (v. 35-37)
- c. Why couldn't Christ grant their request? (v. 38-40)
- d. How did the other disciples react? (v. 41)
- e. What is the world's standard of greatness? (v. 42)
- f. What is the significance of the word “instead”? (v. 43-44)
- g. What is Christ's standard of greatness? (v. 43-44)
- h. What is one thing Christ did not come to do? (v. 45)
- i. What 2 things did He come to do? (v. 45)

2. The world describes the great man as one who has the most servants, whereas Christ describes the great man as the one who serves the most people.

The World's Value System:



The Kingdom's Value System:



3. **IN THE KINGDOM VALUE SYSTEM, THE FATHER RECEIVES THE CREDIT FOR SERVICE DONE BY MAN. WHEN HE SERVES, "THE GREAT MAN" CALLS ATTENTION, NOT TO HIMSELF, BUT TO GOD. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

*According to Matthew 5:16, what does seeing a Christian's good deeds cause people to do?*

*How does this benefit the Kingdom?*

4. *Finish this sentence: Christ has changed my understanding of the word "servant":*

*From:*

*To:*

5. *Describe, in your own words, the difference between the world's ambition and Christ's ambition.*

#### **MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

*Take time this month to meditate on and memorize the following:*

***Mark 10:43-45***

***"Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."***

#### **APPLICATION:**

*Pray and ask God to direct you to serve someone. Pray that this would be a person whom you normally expect to serve you. Be specific (a family member, waitress, grocery clerk, employee...)*

**WHAT I LEARNED FROM THIS LESSON:**  
***(what will you apply to your life?)***

# EXAMPLES OF SERVANTHOOD

## STUDY 2

### **REVIEW:**

*In our first study we saw that the ambition of the natural man is to be served; that is, to be Master. By contrast, the ambition of Christ is to serve. He has given us the perfect example of a servant; in fact, He is **The Servant**.*

### **PREVIEW:**

*In this study we want to look at examples of servants. For us to learn to serve, we need to see others serving. We will see these examples of service in God's character; in His incarnation as Jesus Christ, The Servant; and in the lives of Biblical and contemporary personalities.*

### **KNOW AND DO:**

*In this study we desire to understand that God is a serving God. This knowledge should draw us to worship Him.*

### **STUDY:**

*One distinction must be made as we begin – the difference between the “archetype” and “anthropomorphism.” An ARCHETYPE is an ideal model, based upon eternal principles, after which earthly activities are patterned. ANTHROPOMORPHISM, however, is the attribution of human characteristics or behavior to non-human entities.*

*As we speak of God being a servant, we are speaking archetypically, not anthropomorphically. In other words, God is a serving God, and His character is a pattern for our own activity. We are not taking a human activity and ascribing it to God. Instead, we are seeing – in God – a pattern for human activity.*

## **A. GOD THE SERVANT**

*We are told in Scripture that love existed before the world was created. (Read John 17:24) This love is self-sacrificial, “servant-love.” This love is expressed in both His character and in His incarnation.*

### **1. God's Character**

*Both the Old and New Testaments describe God as a serving God. The word “loving-kindness” (Hebrew: HESED) is found over 250 times in the Old Testament. It refers to God's loyal and steadfast love. It describes His kindness and mercy towards us in practical, everyday terms. In the New Testament, the Greek word “AGAPE” is used to describe God's self-sacrificing love, His servant-love. This serving love is found expressed everywhere God touches a life. It is found there because it is inherent in His character.*

*In the harsh environs of the Middle East, the Hebrew people understood this characteristic of God, and thus, made hosting (or serving) a virtue of desert life. The guest was honored.*

*The early church, also, was aware of the serving nature of God and imitated Him by their hosting lifestyles. They opened their homes to strangers and built structures to serve the sick, the dying, and the travelers. We use a number of words in the English language that are related to this hosting (serving) characteristic:*

<i>Hospital</i>	<i>(serving the sick)</i>	<i>Hospitality</i>	<i>(serving the stranger)</i>
<i>Hostel</i>	<i>(serving the traveler)</i>	<i>Host</i>	<i>(serving the guest)</i>
<i>Hospice</i>	<i>(serving the dying)</i>		

- a. *God is our Host. We find this illustrated in two ways in Psalm 23. Read this Psalm. Then list the ways in which God serves:*

*As Shepherd: (vs. 1-4)*

*As Host: (vs. 5-6)*

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- b. *Read John 14:2. Contemplate on what this means in the light of God being a host. Briefly describe your reaction and insight.*

2. *God's Incarnation – Jesus Christ*

*Colossians 2:9 states that "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." What a wonderful mystery! God became man! But what kind of a man?*

*If you were God and could choose to come to earth at any moment in history, at any place, or in any form, how would you come? Wouldn't contemporary human reason say that God should come to earth as a world leader in a powerful country, to a media city like New York, London, or Tokyo? But what did God choose? Two thousand years ago, God chose to come to a small town, Nazareth, in a nation that was not a nation, Palestine. He chose to become incarnate – not in a world leader, but in a servant. The Divine identified with the poor, the nameless, the insignificant.*

- a. *Read Isaiah 42:1-4. What are some of the characteristics of The Servant in this passage?*
- b. *Read John 1:14. "The Word became \_\_\_\_\_ and made His \_\_\_\_\_ among us." It reveals that when God identified with men, He dwelt/lived - pitched his tent - among us. He moved into the apartment complex, the refuge camp, the suburbs, the ghetto.*
- c. *Read Hebrews 4:15. How thoroughly did God identify with man?*
- d. *Read Matthew 11:29. Jesus describes Himself as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in heart."*

e. Read *Philippians 2:1-11*. In verses 6-8 Paul traces the seven steps Christ took from His glorious throne to a humiliating death. Fill in the remaining steps.

1. Being in very nature God

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Taking the very nature of a servant

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

*In these steps, what was the extent of His service? How far was He willing to go?*

f. *Who is Christ serving? To whom did He submit Himself?*

g. *Why do you think God chose to come to earth as a servant, rather than as a world-renowned political figure?*

## **B. MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE SERVED**

1. *Biblical Personalities:*

*Read each of the following passages and describe how each of these persons served or hosted:*

a. *Genesis 24:10-17 (Rebekah)*

b. *Ruth 2:8-17 (Boaz)*

c. *Acts 9:36-43 (Dorcas)*

d. *Luke 7:36-39 (a sinner)*

## 2. Contemporary Personalities:

*C.S. Lewis, as a young man, moved into a one-room apartment at the home of a friend's widowed mother. Without pay, he cared for her as a son for more than 20 years. When he became well-known and she was senile, he continued his care for her until she died. Later in his life a close friend of his, who had two teenage sons, contracted cancer. Because of his love for this woman and his desire to care for her and her sons, he married her. Much joy and grief was shared by this servant.*

*Recently, at a graduate school in Israel, the 30 year old septic system broke down. A volunteer was needed to enter the system with a bucket, to remove many gallons of "sludge". Dr. W., a professor at a Midwestern Seminary, volunteered for this dirty work.*

*Colleen looked out of her kitchen window to find two old men rummaging through her garbage can looking for food. She invited them into her home and served them a warm meal.*

a. *What do these people have in common? What virtue governed their actions?*

b. *Describe a person you know who is a servant:*

c. *Revisit Philippians 2:3-5. What does this passage encourage you to do?*

d. *Even though our ultimate goal is to be used by God to bring the saving message of salvation to the world, how do the sacrificial, menial, ordinary tasks of life relate to that goal?*

### **MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

#### **1 Peter 2:21**

***"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."***

### **APPLICATION:**

*From the insights and teachings you've learned in this lesson, what specific characteristics does God want to develop in your life?*

*Pray for God to enable you to implement more of His servant character qualities into your life. Keep a "Servanthood Journal" over the next weeks to record your successes and failures in this endeavor.*

## **THE SERVANT – KING STUDY 3**

### **REVIEW:**

*In our first study we saw that natural man places a high value on having power – being in authority and in control. Our society defines greatness in terms of authority, power, and winning. In contrast, our culture holds the position of servant with disrespect. And yet, that is our vocational calling as Christians.*

*Our second study pointed out that God is a serving God and that service – contrary to popular opinion – is a sacred trust. When God was incarnate in Christ, He took on the form of a bond-servant (Philippians 2:7). In Christ, we find the epitome of the Servant–King.*

### **PREVIEW:**

*In this study we will see that “Servant–King” is not a contradiction of terms. Jesus Christ embodied all that was royal and all that was menial. Leadership and service are not contradictory. In fact, to be a good leader, one must be a good servant.*

*To put it another way, Christ has created a new order of servant–kings, an order in which kings are to serve and servants are praise-worthy. As we are called to stand in the place where Christ stood, we are called to be servant-leaders. This is not a place of raw power but a place of responsibility.*

### **KNOW AND DO:**

*In this study we will seek to understand that ‘leadership’ and ‘followership’ are complementary. This knowledge should lead to a practice of ‘followership’ in our lives.*

### **STUDY:**

#### **A. THE PRINCIPLE: THE SERVANT – KING**

*While it is obvious that the servant is to be a servant, we do not often think that the king is to be a servant. The one under authority is to serve, but what about the person in authority? Does having a position of authority and leadership excuse a person from serving?*

1. Read 1 Kings 12:1-11. King Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, is seeking advice.

a. What was Jeroboam’s Burden? Request? Promise? (v. 4)

b. What 3 things did the elders recommend? (v.7)

c. What was the counsel of the young men” (vs. 10-11)

d. To whom did Rehoboam listen? (vs.13-14)

2. Does one’s position of authority and leadership negate the need to serve others?

*As Francis Schaeffer often said, “There are no little places and no little people in God’s sight.”<sup>6</sup> The question is not one of size or rank, but of consecration.*

*Is the servant consecrated? If so, then he is “king”.*

*Is the king consecrated? If so, he is a “servant”.*

## **B. AUTHORITY OR RESPONSIBILITY**

1. Refer to Mark 10:35-45. Jesus describes the contrast between worldly ambition and godly ambition.
  - a. How does “the world” define leadership? (vs. 37, 42)
  - b. How does Christ define leadership? (vs. 43,44)

The following chart compares the “world’s leadership” with “servant leadership”.

	<u>The World:</u>	<u>The Servant:</u>
Identifying with:	<i>the powerful</i>	<i>the people</i>
Defining success as:	<i>having servants</i>	<i>serving people</i>
Focusing interest:	<i>inward (self)</i>	<i>outward (others)</i>
Using symbol of:	<i>chairman’s chair</i>	<i>a towel</i>

Richard Foster, in *Celebration of Discipline*, established a very subtle, but important distinction:

*“We must see the difference between choosing to serve (an activity) and choosing to be a servant (a person/ a lifestyle). When we choose to serve, we are still in charge... when we choose to be a servant, we give up the right to be in charge... we become available and vulnerable.” 7*

2. a. Where do you see yourself in the previous paragraph’s description?
  - b. Is it where the Lord wants you to be?
  - c. What prevents us from becoming a true servant?
  - d. How do you hope to change?
  - e. What steps can you take?
  - f. Say a prayer committing yourself to this goal

*In summary, the world’s leadership desires authority; the servant-leadership of the Kingdom seeks and accepts responsibility.*

**C. BIBLICAL BALANCE**

1. There is a four-fold picture of Christ painted in the Gospels. Four Old Testament Messianic passages correspond with the four Gospel pictures of Christ.

<u>GOSPEL:</u>	<u>OLD TESTAMENT:</u>	<u>THE PICTURE OF CHRIST:</u>
John	Isaiah 40:9	"Here is your _____ ! "
Luke	Zechariah 6:12	"Here is the _____ whose name is the Branch"
Mark	Isaiah 52:13	"My _____ will act wisely."
Matthew	Zechariah 9:9	"Your _____ comes to you."

Each of these describes one aspect of our Lord's character. They are not contradictory. Instead, they form the dynamics of Christ's life:

In the case of the God-Man, we find mystery,  
 In the case of the Servant-King, there is no mystery – only balance.

Truth is finely balanced, as in the above examples of the character of Christ. Like a child's mobile, with all the parts in place, it moves with beauty and symmetry. If one piece is removed, the whole mobile collapses. The issue might be law/grace, freewill/predestination, evangelism/social ministry. Rather than representing uncompromising opposites, these apparent contrasts define the boundaries – the perimeters – for the Christian's life and belief.

2. For an example of living by Christian principles which might appear contradictory at first glance, read Ephesians 4:15.

From this passage, we see that we are to speak the \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. Our lives are to be marked by the perimeters of these two words. They are not the same thing, but they can never be separated.

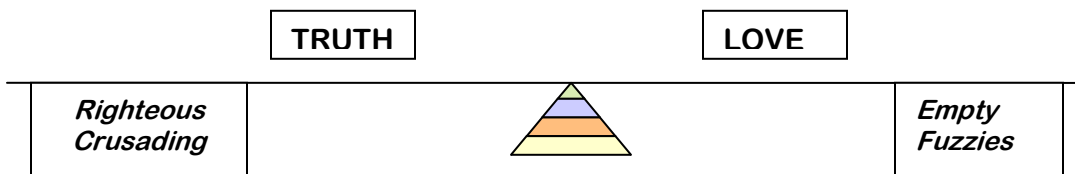


3. We have all been in situations where one side of the truth / love equation is stressed more heavily than the other. In fact, we often live completely outside the perimeters on one side or the other.

a. What is the result of speaking the truth WITHOUT love?

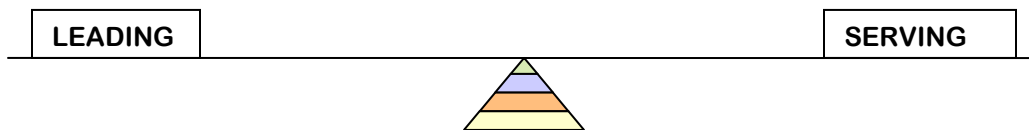
b. What is the result of giving love without speaking TRUTH?

We often live off-balance, outside the perimeters of these balanced pairs, as the following picture demonstrates:



4. *Whenever we operate outside of the perimeters set by finely balanced pairs, we not only lose the principle we are avoiding, but we also lose the principle we are stressing!*
- If we define 'love' only by empty fuzzies, we not only lose truth – we also lose the meaning of love itself, for love can only be understood within the context of \_\_\_\_\_.*
  - By the same token, if we express 'truth' by crusading righteously, we not only mark the loss of love but also of truth, for truth can only be defined within the context of \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Christians are to live within the boundaries of the principles found in Scripture - principles which often seem to be contrasting or conflicting. As Christians live balanced lives within the specific boundaries of serving and leading, we can show forth Christ, the Servant-King, until He comes.*



#### **D. THE COMMON DENOMINATOR**

*To understand the balance of followership-leadership, we must first understand our common denominator as people, standing before God.*

- Read each of the following passages and describe the “leveling factor” shared by all people:*
  - Genesis 1:26-27*
  - Exodus 23:9*
  - Matthew 23:8*
  - Colossians 4:1*

*Francis Schaeffer, in “No Little People”, summarizes the relationship of Christians to one another in this way:*

*“... the basic relationship between Christians is not that of elder and people, or pastor and people, but that of brothers and sisters in Christ. This denotes that there is one Father in the family and that his offspring are equal. There are different jobs to be done, different offices to be filled, but we as Christians are equal before one Master. We are not to seek a great title; we are to have the places together as brethren.” 8*

- The Scripture teaches two things at the same time: All people are equal and All people are different. All are equal in value but differ in role or responsibility.*
  - Read Galatians 3:27-29. Explain the place of equality of men and women in Christ.*
  - In Ephesians 5:21-33, note the distinctive role of:*  
*wife:*  
  
*husband:*

## E. THE ARTS OF LEADERSHIP AND FOLLOWERSHIP

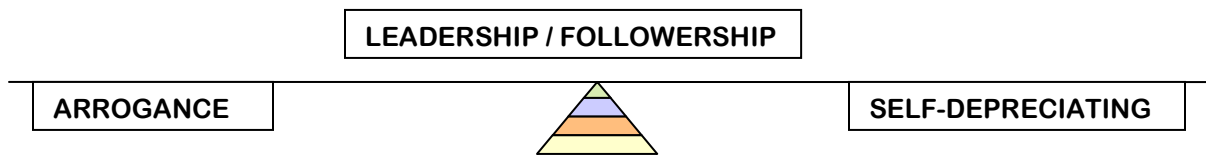
1. All of us are both leaders and followers, depending upon the situation. a) Identify three ways you are a leader. b) Three ways you are a follower. c) Are there situations where you are BOTH a leader and follower?

LEADER:

FOLLOWER:

BOTH:

*An imbalance occurs when we see ourselves in only one role. If I see myself only as a leader, I think too highly of myself. If I see myself only as a follower, I think too little of myself and neglect to appreciate God's workmanship in my life. Our lives are to be lived within a balance of leadership-followership:*



*A good follower will use discernment in knowing how to serve and how not to serve. A good follower is not to be a 'doormat', but needs to know when to say 'No', either for the long-range benefit of the person he is serving or because he has surpassed his own capacity to meet the individual's need. A good leader will use compassion in his leadership, knowing when he is to serve and how. A good leader is not to be a tyrant but needs to know when to say 'yes' – when to serve one of his followers.*

*To be good leaders, we must be good followers, first of Christ and then of one another.*

## F. CHOOSING THE QUIET PLACE

1. Jesus' teaching:

- a. Read Luke 14:7-11. What place does man normally tend to choose? (v. 7)
- b. What is actually the best place to choose? (v. 10)
- c. Write Christ's principle in your own words. (v. 11)

2. Paul's example:

- a. Following Paul's conversion, he did not return to the limelight in Jerusalem. Read Galatians 1:1, and 11-24. Where did he go? (v17)
- b. How long was it before he went to Jerusalem? (v18)
- c. What was he doing during this period? (v. 1,22,23,16)

*When Paul finally went to Jerusalem, it was only for a short time (Galatians 1:18, Acts 9:26-31). He left Jerusalem for Tarsus, where, for the next nine years, he lived quietly. Barnabas, in the Lord's timing, brought Paul away from the quiet place. (Acts 11:22-25)*

Francis Schaeffer summarizes:

*“Jesus commands Christians to seek consciously the lowest room. All of us – pastors, teachers, professional religious workers, and non-professionals included – are tempted to say, “I will take the larger place because it will give me more influence for Jesus Christ.” Both individual Christians and Christian organizations fall prey to the temptation of rationalizing this way as we build bigger and bigger empires. But according to the Scripture this is backwards. We should consciously take the lowest place unless the Lord himself extrudes us into a greater one. 9*

## **G. CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVANT – LEADERS**

1. Read Ezekiel 34:1-6

a. What have these ‘shepherds’ been doing? (v.2,3,4b)

b. How did they not care for the flock? (v4)

2. Read 1 Peter 5:1-5

a. Note the contrast from Ezekiel 34. What are the good shepherds to do? (v2a)

b. How are they to do it? (v2b-3)

c. What is the key to good leadership and followership as described by Peter? (v5)

A Servant-Leader is:

1. A person of vision and creativity, whose sights are fixed on Christ and who will follow Christ to the heights.

2. A person of humility, an enabler of others, and catalyst, one who seeks the quiet place, one who only leads by serving, one who seeks to glorify Christ.

3. A person who is impulsive to move at the Holy Spirit’s promptings, volunteering to meet the needs of others.

## **H. AN EXAMPLE OF A SERVANT- KING: DAVID**

1. Read 1 Samuel 16:6-13. What is the distinction between man’s and God’s assessment of leadership? (v7)

2. According to Psalm 9:1-2, and 40:8, what characterized David as a Servant-King?

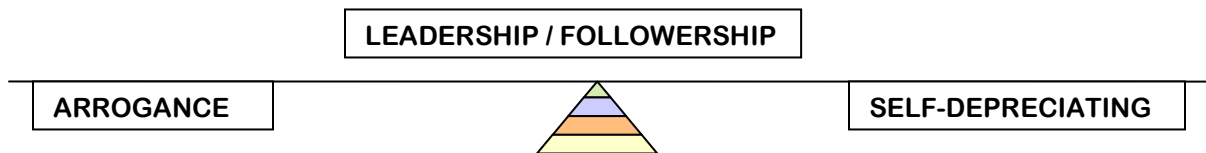
Richard Foster said, “Leadership is found in becoming the servant of all... Christ not only died a cross-death, He lived a cross-life. 10

**MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

*This month, take time to meditate on and memorize this verse:*

**Luke 22:26b**

***Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.***

**APPLICATION:**

*Place an 'X' on the balance beam that indicates your own tendency? Is it a healthy position?*

*Meditate on Colossians 3:12-14. How does it describe the perfect balance between being a leader and being a follower?*

6. Francis Schaeffer, *L'Abri Fellowship*

7 Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, p 15

8 Francis Schaeffer, *No Little People*, pp.19,20

9 Francis Schaeffer, *No Little People*, p. 22

10 Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, p 101

## THE MOTIVATION FOR SERVICE STUDY 4

### REVIEW:

*In our first study we saw that Christ turned the world's value system upside-down. Man's normal goal is to be master, but Christ says that we should aspire to be servants. In our second study we saw examples of servants; God, Jesus, and our fellow man. This was followed by a study on Servant-Leadership.*

### PREVIEW:

*In this study we want to deal with our motivation for service, "Why am I to serve?" This is an age-old question. How it is answered is dependent upon our view of the world, as well as our understanding of the relationship between faith and works.*

*There are three major divisions in this study. In the first division, we will look at the seeming paradox between faith and works. Secondly, we will examine the humanist's response to the question, "Why am I to serve?" Thirdly, we will study the Biblical response to this question of motivation.*

### KNOW AND DO:

*We will come to understand that we have been saved in order that we might serve; and thus, we must be willing to serve even when we don't feel like it.*

### STUDY:

#### A. FAITH AND WORKS

*For years the Church has been divided over the issue of 'faith and works,' or 'law and grace.' Are we saved by our works or by our faith? Do we serve (work) in order to be saved? Are we saved by faith? Therefore, are we free from needing to serve or keep the law? The Bible seems to teach two very contradictory things at the same time.*

1. Read Romans 4:1-8 Paul implies, "We are saved by \_\_\_\_\_" (v5)
2. Read James 2:18-26. James seems to say, "we are saved by \_\_\_\_\_"(24)

*The key to answering the question of motivation for service is found in resolving the age-old question of the relationship between law and grace. To resolve this seeming paradox, we must understand what Christ has done for us. However, let us first see how humanism (man-centeredness) answers the question "Why am I to serve?"*

#### B. HUMANISM

*Humanism – being man-centered – invades the Christian's thinking in one of two ways, giving two different answers to the question "Why am I to serve"? We find these two mentalities expressed in the Church of the first century, as well as in the Church of today.*

1. Answer #1 is **Legalism** (taught by the Judaizers of the early church). This answer says: "I serve (do good works/ keep the law) in order to receive a reward (be saved).
  - a. Read Matthew 6:1-7,16,20. What reward is being sought?
  - b. List ways you have acted to receive these types of rewards:

2. Answer #2 is **Antinomianism** (taught by the Libertines of the early church). This answer says: "I am saved by faith/grace; therefore, there is no need to serve/work/keep the law. Because I am free (saved) already, I can do anything I want."

a. In Romans 6:1, 15a Paul addresses the Libertines. Likewise, Peter addresses them in 1 Peter 2:16. What is his message?

b. List ways in which you may have used Grace as a license in your own life:

### C. BIBLICAL RESPONSE

The Biblical response is in contrast to humanism. Humanism tends to imprison, but God's message to us is that **WE ARE FREE TO SERVE**. The Christian's response to the question "Why am I to serve?" is three-fold. However, each response is rooted in the finished work of Christ.

Let's first look at the foundation for our motivation – the finished work of Christ – and then at the three-fold motivation for Christian service.

#### 1. THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST: The Foundation for Wanting to Serve

a. Read Romans 5:6-11. This passage describes the work of the servant.

1. For whom do some dare to die? (v7)

2. How did God demonstrate His serving love? (v8)

3. How did Christ demonstrate His serving love? (v8)

4. What are the 'titles' given to those who receive Christ's serving love? (v6,8,10)

b. Read Romans 11:30-32.

1. What words does God use to describe 'sinners'?

2. Though we are all sinners, what have we received from God?

c. Read Ephesians 2:1-7

1. What words does God use to describe us? (v1-3)

2. What 4 things did God do for us 'when we were dead'? (v5-6)

3. Why did He do these things? (v4)

d. Think about the word "therefore". What does it mean? How is it normally used?

1. Read 1 Corinthians 6:20. According to this passage, what has God done?

Therefore, on the basis of what God has done for you, what are you supposed to do?

2. Read Ephesians 4:1. The word “therefore” in this case refers back to the Grace of God found in Ephesians 2:5-6 above. On the basis of what God has done for you, what does Ephesians 4:1 say you are supposed to do?
  
3. Read Romans 12:1-2. The word “therefore” refers back to the “mercies of God” in Romans 11:30-32. On the basis of what God has done, what are you supposed to do?
  
4. Read Luke 1:68,74-75. It indicates that we have been \_\_\_\_\_  
so that we might \_\_\_\_\_.

Throughout the Bible we find this concept of “therefore”. Because of the work of Jesus Christ and because of the gifts of grace and faith – therefore we are to work and to keep the law.

The question “Why do I serve?” is tied in with the relationship between faith/works and law/grace. Service does not win our salvation, nor are we free from service because of grace. Faith and works are symbiotic in their relationship – they are different, but they mutually respond to each other and benefit each other. God’s gift of salvation through faith (Rom. 4:1-8) and the outflow of our salvation in works (James 2:18-26), while not the same, are functionally inseparable. **WE ARE SAVED TO SERVE** (as opposed to serving to be saved). Our service is a response to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## 2. THE THREE-FOLD MOTIVATION FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

There are **3 answers** that we Christians can give to the question “Why am I to Serve?”

a. Answer #1 is **THANKFULNESS**. I SERVE BECAUSE I AM GRATEFUL.

1. Read 1 John 4:9-11. “Dear friends, since God so loved \_\_\_\_\_, we also ought to \_\_\_\_\_.”
  
2. God’s serving love is meant to be passed on. Read John 21:15-17. “Do you love me? \_\_\_\_\_, Lord. \_\_\_\_\_ my lambs. \_\_\_\_\_ of my sheep.”

Kefa Sempangi writes in A Distant Grief: “Perhaps you are thinking now that giving is a two-way street, but to tell you the truth, it is a flowing river. It does not stop or return, but only passes on... but it will not be an opportunity to repay those from whom you received, it will be a time to pass your gift on to someone else.”

3. Using your own name, write the first reason we serve:

I, (name) \_\_\_\_\_, am to serve \_\_\_\_\_

b. Answer #2 is **GOD’S DESIGN**. I SERVE BECAUSE IT IS GOD’S DESIGN AND IS BEST.

1. Read Isaiah 58:6-12. According to verse 6, what is the true fast of a worshiper of God?

Isaiah 58:10-12 is a conditional promise. Identify the conditions:

a.

b.

And the promises:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.

2. Using your own name, write the second reason for service:

I, (name) \_\_\_\_\_, am to serve \_\_\_\_\_

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c. Answer #3 is **OBEDIENCE**. I SERVE BECAUSE CHRIST FIRST SERVED ME..

1. Read Galatians 5:13 AND Matthew 20:27-28. What are we called to be?

What are we called to do with the freedom given to us?

God has given His serving love to us, and He desires for us to respond with love. We are not always as we should be, but that does not mean that we are free from the command to serve. The bottom line is obedience, and we are commanded to serve.

2. Using your own name, write the third reason for service:

I, (name) \_\_\_\_\_, am to serve \_\_\_\_\_

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In summary, God has designed us to function best, be all that He wants us to be, and receive His blessings when we are serving others.

**MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION**

1 John 4:10-12 "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us.

**APPLICATION – THE GOAL OF BIBLE STUDY**

How can we demonstrate that we love Jesus?

What is your motivation for serving? (Have you expected rewards?)

# THE CONTEXT OF SERVICE

## STUDY 5

### REVIEW:

In our previous studies we have observed that God is a serving God and, therefore, that there is no conflict between the concept of leadership and service. In fact, a good leader will be a good follower. In the last study, we examined the 3 motives a Christian has for service:

1) Love for the Father, 2) God's Design and 3) Obedience to God and His commands.

### PREVIEW:

In this study we want to examine the context of our service. We want to look at those elements that give definition to our serving. Five points of context will provide a guide for our service.

### KNOW ND DO:

Our goal in this study is to come to know more fully the richness of our inheritance and to allow this new understanding to draw us into serving people whom we may naturally tend to avoid.

### STUDY:

#### A. FIRST POINT OF CONTEXT – A SERVANT BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE

To whom do we belong – to ourselves or to Christ? To understand this first point of context – that a servant doesn't belong to him/herself – let's first look at its opposite, which was expressed by English writer George MacDonald as "the first principle of Hell... that I am my own."

##### 1. Belonging to Ourselves:

A pastor once illustrated the differences between Heaven and Hell. Both have beautiful banquet tables filled to overflowing with food. All the inhabitants of each place are seated at the tables, but they all have stiff arms that cannot bring the food to their own mouths. The ones in Heaven are well fed, but those in Hell are starving. In Heaven each person serves another; in Hell each person is waiting to be served.

In Hell each person's word centers around himself and his own needs. We express that, too, by our actions and thought – "I am the most important thing in the universe, the world, my country, my school, my family, my office, my life." To maintain this preoccupation with self, men create their own gods. (It's all about me)

a. Read Galatians 4:8. "Formerly, when you did not know \_\_\_\_\_, you were \_\_\_\_\_ to those who by nature are \_\_\_\_\_."

Things may have the appearance of gods in that they are the focus of our time, attention, and affection; but, in reality, they are "not gods".

b. Read Jeremiah 16:19-20. What does God call these creations?

c. Read Psalm 135:15-18. What is the meaning of the phrase "Those who make them will be like them?"

d. Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. This passage lists some false gods. Record the substitute gods and/or their attributes. Circle those which cause problems in your own life.

e. Read *Philippians 2:21*. What does Paul say about the condition of many of the Christians who surround him?

f. Read *Romans 6:16,18*. (v16) You are slaves to \_\_\_\_\_ .. slaves to \_\_\_\_\_ which leads to \_\_\_\_\_ or to \_\_\_\_\_ which leads to \_\_\_\_\_.  
(v18) You have been set free from \_\_\_\_\_ and have become slaves to \_\_\_\_\_.

g. The English word 'idolater' comes from the Greek word 'eldololates', meaning an 'image-servant'. We either serve God or we serve images. If we serve these false gods, are we enslaved by them? Owned and controlled by them?

## 2. Belonging to Jesus Christ

"We belong to another, to Jesus Christ" – in understanding this first point of context, we see that a servant's focus, or preoccupation, is on Christ.

a. In *Philippians 2:20-22* what things set Timothy apart from the others?

b. Read *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*.

1. According to this verse, how is our body described?
2. Why do we belong to Him?
3. What is our responsibility to our owner?

c. Read *Galatians 6:14*. According to this verse, what is to be the focus of our lives, the focus of our boasting?

List some of the things about which you boast... maybe not aloud, but they may give you a sense of pride, confidence, and superiority.

d. As you read *Philippians 3:4-9*, note all the things about which Paul could boast (v5-6)

1. What does Paul "count" these things as? (v7-8)
2. In this 'accounting ledger' of Paul's, he lists all his 'human assets' on the liability side of the ledger. What ONE thing does he list as a true asset? (v8)

e. Read *Galatians 2:20*.

1. Who is this verse about?
2. List those things which Christ has done for you:

What is your response to what Christ has done?

- f. *Read Hebrews 12:1-2. In our race of life, what is our focus? How do we keep our focus?*

*Christ is to be our focus, yet we do not cease to exist or be important. We are to live fully and abundantly in Christ, but we are not to serve or belong to false gods.*

**OUR FIRST POINT OF CONTEXT: WE BELONG TO ANOTHER – TO CHRIST!**

**B. SECOND POINT OF CONTEXT – A SERVANT IS A WORSHIPER OF GOD**

1. *Read Matthew 4:10. What 2 things are we to do for God?*
  
2. *More than half of the times the word “worship” is found in Scripture, it is associated with the word or concept of service. Describe the relationship between worship and service:*
  
3. *A woman had a wooden plaque made for her kitchen. It read, “Worship services held here 3 times a day.” What did she understand about her meal preparation?*
  
4. *Read Romans 12:1. What is to be our “logical” response to God’s mercy?*

**OUR SECOND POINT OF CONTEXT: SERVICE IS A FORM OF WORSHIP**

**C. THIRD POINT OF CONTEXT – A SERVANT IS A CHILD OF GOD**

1. *Read Ephesians 1:3-6, which shows God’s kindness to us.*
  - a. *He has chosen us IN HIM that we should be: (v4)*
  
  - b. *We are assured in verse 5 that we are \_\_\_\_\_ into the family of God.*
  
  - c. *According to Ephesians 1:3, what has God given to His children?*
  
  - d. *What does this mean for you?*
  
2. *Read Ephesians 2:4-6.*
  - a. *List the 7 blessings these verses say God has given His children:*

- b. *What does this mean in terms of the way we live?*
3. *Read Romans 8:14-17. The relationship our Heavenly Father wants with us is an intimate one. We are to approach Him as “Abba” or “Daddy”. Ponder on that thought for a moment... The Creator of the Universe wants us to call Him “Daddy”!*
- a. *What does it mean to be an heir? (v17)*
- b. *What does it mean if we are fellow heirs with Christ?*
4. *Read Matthew 7:7-11.*
- a. *List the 3 things a child of God is to do in approaching the Father (v7)*
- b. *What does the Father give the child? (v11)*
- c. *Do you think the thing given is always the thing requested? Why?*

### **OUR THIRD POINT OF CONTEXT: A SERVANT IS A CHILD OF GOD**

#### **D. FOURTH POINT OF CONTEXT – A SERVANT IS A MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**

1. *Read Ephesians 1:22-23/ Romans 12:4-5/ and 1 Corinthians 12:12-14.*  
*What is the analogy that Paul uses to describe the intimacy of our relationship with one another and with Christ?*

*Because we are children of God, we are part of the same family. The little phrase “one another” is used 48 times in the New Testament to describe how we, as Christians, are to relate within the Body of Christ. We are told, for example to love one another, serve one another, and pray for one another.*

*Because of this: The servant is never alone. He or she should have close companionship, committed relationships, and fellowship throughout life. There should be no “Lone Ranger” Christians.*

### **OUR FOURTH POINT OF CONTEXT: A SERVANT IS PART OF A TEAM, A FAMILY- THE BODY OF CHRIST**

### **E. FIFTH POINT OF CONTEXT – A SERVANT IS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST**

1. Read John 6:38.
  - a. Whose 'will' did Christ come to do?
  - b. Ultimately, what did this mean for His own life?
  - c. What does this obedience give to God?
2. Read each of the following verses, and list some of the ways that we, as servants, are under authority.
  - a. Ephesians 5:21
  - b. Ephesians 6:1
  - c. 1 Peter 2:13-14
  - d. 1 Peter 2:18
  - e. 1 John 2:3-6
  - f. 1 Corinthians 11:3

### **OUR FIFTH POINT OF CONTEXT: A SERVANT IS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST**

#### **F. SUMMARY OF OUR POINTS OF CONTEXT FOR SERVICE:**

- 1. A SERVANT BELONGS TO JESUS CHRIST**
- 2. A SERVANT IS A WORSHIPER OF GOD**
- 3. A SERVANT IS A CHILD OF GOD**
- 4. A SERVANT IS A MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**
- 5. A SERVANT IS UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST**

#### **MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

*Romans 12:1-2a Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

#### **APPLICATION:**

*Are there people, institutions, or positions to whom you have difficulty submitting?*

*How can you demonstrate submission to them this month?*

*Ask God to change your attitude and heart about submitting to them.*

## **THE SERVANT'S SUFFERING**

### **STUDY 6**

#### **REVIEW:**

*In our last study we studied the context of our service. We learned that we belong to Christ and are a child of God. And to show our gratitude to our Heavenly Father we worship Him for Who He is and through being obedient and serving Him.*

#### **PREVIEW:**

*In this study we will examine the suffering found in the Christian life.*

- \* *At issue is not the suffering we bring upon ourselves by our own sinful choices or by self-imposed martyrdom.*
- \* *Likewise, we are not going to deal with the issue of evil in the world. (Evil is responsible for much suffering, but our focus is Christ's suffering and its counterpart in the lives of His followers.*
- \* *We will be looking at the entry of suffering into the world as a consequence of the Fall.*
- \* *We will examine how God can use even the calamities that befall us for good.*
- \* *We will examine Christ's suffering and the nature and 'goal' of suffering for Christians.*

#### **KNOW AND DO:**

*We seek to understand that the suffering we encounter in the Christian life can be used by God to mold us and mature us in Christ. We will look for concrete ways to help minister to someone who is suffering.*

#### **STUDY:**

*Comfort, personal peace, and affluence stand out as some of the most sacred and desired values of Western society. We sacrifice almost anything, including Christ, for this 'good life'.*

*We act as if we believe that if something is comfortable and feels good, then it is good. Conversely, we seem to believe that if something hurts, is difficult, and requires work, then it is bad. Personal peace – the avoidance of struggles and trials – is a high priority. Affluence – having what we want, when we want it – is another of our goals. Unfortunately, these goals of the secular society often become the goals of the Church.*

*Therefore, prosperity and affluence have become embedded in our theology – “God wants the best for His people, and the best is the good life.” There is no place in this theology for the poor, for the Third World, or the Beatitudes. If you don't have the best, it is because you lack faith – you have failed to 'name it and claim it.'”*

*How sad and silly this must appear to the Somali refugee who has come to know Christ. How profane it must seem to the Khmer church inside Communist Cambodia. How this must make our Father weep.*

*Having said this, however, we must also avoid glorifying poverty, suffering, and conflict. We must take care not to react to the 'theology of comfort' by making suffering our goal and source of pride.*

*It is God's ideal that His people have the best, but the best must never be defined solely in material terms. Realistically, a fallen world is marked by suffering. That suffering, however, is not without purpose or benefit.*

#### **A. THE FALL – THE ENTRY OF SUFFERING INTO THE WORLD**

*Before the Fall all that God made was in harmony with Him. In fact, in Genesis 1:3-31, He judged each act of creation by one of two phrases – “It is good” or “It was so”.*

1. Read Genesis 3:1-7. This records the beginning of man's rebellion against God.
2. Read Genesis 3:8-19. We begin to see the consequences of the Fall. The Fall brought pain and suffering into the world.
  - a. How did it affect the woman in childbirth? (v16)
  - b. How did it affect the man in his work? (v17-19)
3. Read Romans 8:18-23.
  - a. What words are used to describe the suffering in the created order? (v22)
  - b. What words describe our suffering? (v23)
  - c. For what are we waiting? (v 23b)
  - d. For what is the rest of creation waiting? (v21)

As we saw in Romans 8:20-21, suffering is normal in the fallen world. As Christians we accept its reality and work and pray against it. We are not to seek it, nor are we to pretend it doesn't exist. As Ephesians 6:10-18 teaches, we are in a battle against the forces of evil; and we need to be equipped for that battle.

Because the Fall has made suffering normal, everyone will suffer. The questions exist: "Do we suffer because of our own folly or because of someone else's? Does suffering produce bitterness or faith, degeneration or growth?"

In *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers said:

"We say that there ought to be no sorrow, but there is sorrow, and we have to receive ourselves in its fires. If we try and evade sorrow, refuse to lay our account with it, we are foolish. Sorrow is one of the biggest facts in life; it is no use saying sorrow ought not to be. Sin and sorrow and suffering are, and it is not for us to say that God has made a mistake in allowing them.

Sorrow burns up a great amount of shallowness, but it does not always make a man better. Suffering either gives me my self, or it destroys my self." 12

## **B. THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

As we have discovered in previous studies, Christ is the Servant.

Mark's Gospel is often called the Gospel of the Servant. In Mark 10:45 Jesus established the theme of the Gospel when He said, "The Son of Man.. came to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." Up to this point in the narrative, Christ's service has been described; after this point in the narrative, His suffering is described.

1. The passage of Scripture which describes the Suffering Servant, Isaiah 52:13-53 is often called the "Fifth Gospel". Read the passage, and list the ways in which the Messiah served in His suffering.

2. *In addition to suffering physically on the cross, Christ also underwent great rejection throughout His life. Read the following passages, and list those persons who rejected Christ.*
- a. *Mark 3:21*
  - b. *Mark 14:27*
  - c. *Luke 22:54-62*
  - d. *John 5:16-18*
  - e. *Matthew 26:47-50*
  - f. *Matthew 27:20-23*
  - g. *Matthew 27:45-46*
3. *Christ suffered for two primary reasons. It is imperative for our life in Christ that we understand both reasons. Read the following passages. Identify the two reasons and describe what each means for your own life.*
- a. *Reason #1: John 1:29 and 1 John 2:2*
  - b. *Reason #2: 1 Peter 2:20b, 21*

### **C. THE GOOD IN SUFFERING**

1. *Suffering is a part of our calling.*
  - a. *Read 1 Peter 2:20-21 and 1 Peter 3:14, 17.*
    - 1) *How does Peter describe this part of our calling?*  
  
*For what do we suffer?*
    - 2) *What are some examples of “suffering for doing what is good” in our day?*
    - 3) *How does this differ from the suffering which the world experiences as a result of the Fall and sin mentioned in 1 Peter 3:17?*
  - b. *Read Philippians 1:29. Of what two things does our calling consist, according to this passage of Scripture?*
  - c. *We are grateful for the first aspect of our calling – believing in Him. What is your reaction to the second aspect of our calling?*
2. *Suffering is a part of our glory.*
  - a. *Read 1 Peter 4:12-16, 19.*
    - 1) *What is to be our response to sharing in the sufferings of Christ?*
    - 2) *In a country where freedom to worship is in our heritage and law, how do we suffer? How are we insulted for the Name of Christ?*

3) *Does part of our suffering include that people ‘take advantage’ of our willingness to serve?*

b. *Read Romans 8:17-18. What will follow the servant’s suffering?*

*As Bible commentator William Barkley has stated, “To suffer with Christ is not a penalty, it is our glory.”*

#### **D. THE GOAL OF SUFFERING**

1. *C.S. Lewis said: “The tortures occur. If they are unnecessary, then there is no God, or a bad one. If there is a good God, then these tortures are necessary.”* <sup>13</sup>

2. *Read Hebrews 2:9-10, 17-18.*

a. *What was God the Father doing to Christ (‘the author of their salvation’)? (v10b)*

b. *What means did the Father use? (v10b, 18a)*

c. *What was the result of this process for Christ? (v 17,18b)*

3. *Read Hebrews 5:8*

a. *What did Christ learn?*

b. *How did He learn it?*

*Notice that suffering can be used as a tool for learning. It can produce growth. Even Christ was ‘qualified’ for leading us because of His suffering.*

4. *Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-33. In this passage Paul recited the areas of suffering which he had endured.*

a. *List Paul’s sufferings:*

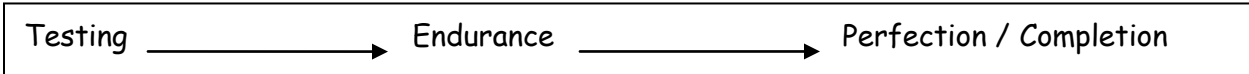
b. *Have you considered suffering to be an expected part of the Christian’s life or something that comes only to the ‘unfaithful’?*

5. *Read James 1:2-4.*

a. *As Christians we don’t seek suffering, but what is our attitude to be when we are faced with trials? (v2)*

b. *The J.B. Phillips paraphrase of this verse tells us that we are not to resent the trials as intruders, but to welcome them as friends. How is this possible?*

*Why are we to have this attitude of joy? Are we trying to be martyrs? No! We are to have this attitude because we realize that God is making us, like Christ, "perfect (holy) and complete (whole), lacking in nothing." (v4)*



*We pray to have the love of Christ, but the only way to have that love produced and exhibited in our lives is to be face with someone unlovely. Similarly, we pray for patience, but the only way to learn patience is in the classroom of tension. We pray for hope, but the only place to learn hope is in a hopeless situation. We pray for humility, but the only time to learn humility is when our lives fall apart. Do not pray to be like Christ and then look for ways to remove your suffering, for the trials and suffering may be an answer to your prayer.*

*Streams in the Desert, a daily devotional book, teaches about the Christian's response to trials:*

*"God uses trouble to teach His children precious lessons. They are intended to educate us. When their good work is done, a glorious recompense will come to us through them. There is a sweet joy and a real value in them. He does not regard them as difficulties but as opportunities."*

*"There are two ways of getting out of a trial. One is to simply try to get rid of the trial, and be thankful when it is over. The other is to recognize the trial as a challenge from God to claim a larger blessing than we have ever had, and to hail it with delight as an opportunity of obtaining a larger measure of Divine grace. Thus even the adversary becomes an auxiliary, and the things that seem to be against us turn out to be for the furtherance of our way... surely, to be more than conquerors through Him who loved us." 14*

*"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18*

*"Kept for nearly a year is the flask-shaped cocoon of an emperor moth. It is very peculiar in its construction. A narrow opening is left in the neck of the flask, through which the perfect insect forces its way, so that a forsaken cocoon is as entire as one still (occupied), no rupture of the interlacing fibers having taken place. The great disproportion between the means of egress and the size of the imprisoned insect makes one wonder how the exit is ever accomplished at all – and it never is without great labor and difficulty. It is supposed that the pressure to which the moth's body is subjected in passing through such a narrow opening is a provision of nature for forcing the juices into the vessels of the wings, these being less developed at the period of emerging from the chrysalis than they are in other insects".*

*"I happened to witness the first efforts of my imprisoned moth to escape from its long confinement. During a whole forenoon, from time to time, I watched it patiently striving and struggling to get out. It never seemed able to get beyond a certain point, and at last my patience was exhausted. Very probably the confining fibers were drier and less elastic than if the cocoon had been left all winter on its native heather, as nature meant it to be. At all event, I thought I was wiser and more compassionate than its Maker, and I resolved to give it a helping hand. With the point of my scissors I snipped the confining threads to make the exit just a very little easier, and lo! Immediately, and with perfect ease, out crawled my moth dragging a huge swollen body and little shriveled wings. In vain I watched to see that marvelous process of expansion in which these silently and swiftly develop before one's eyes; and as I traced the exquisite spots and markings of diverse colors which were all there in miniature, I longed to see these assured their due proportions and the creature to appear in all its beauty, as it is, in truth, one of the loveliest of its kind. But I looked in vain. My false tenderness had proved its ruin. It never was anything but a stunted abortion, crawling painfully through that brief life which it should have spent flying through the air on rainbow wings. I have thought of it often, when watching with pitiful eyes those who were struggling with sorrow, suffering, and distress; and I would fain cut short the discipline and give deliverance. Short-sighted man! How know I that one of these pangs or groans could be spared? The far-sighted, perfect love that seeks the perfection of its object does not weakly shrink from present, transient suffering. Our Father's love is too true to be weak. Because He loves His children, He chastises them that they may be partakers of His holiness. With this glorious end in view, He spares not for their crying. Made perfect through much tribulation." 15*

*6. How can this be applied to working with the poor? What message of hope can we give?*

## **E. THE VICTORY THROUGH SUFFERING**

*As servants we will be insufficient for the task which God has given us. But God is sufficient for the task to which he has called us.*

1. *Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Paul had been given a “thorn in the flesh”. This thorn is something which caused him great difficulty and suffering.*
  - a. *According to verse 8, how many times did he pray for it to be taken away? \_\_\_\_  
Did God take it away?*
  - b. *What 2 related promises did God make? (v9)*
  - c. *What 2 reasons does Paul give as to why he is contented with weakness?*
  - d. *How can this understanding affect your life?*
  - e. *God manifests His strength through our weaknesses. Give an example of this in your own life.*
  
2. *How do the following passages say about God’s help for us in times of trial:*
  - Isaiah 41:10*
  
  - Luke 12:22*
  
  - John 15:5*
  
  - 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7*
  
  - Hebrews 13:5*
  
3. *We need to allow God to work with us in times of suffering. We block His work when we refuse to forgive our enemies and allow bitterness to take root and grow. We will not benefit from suffering unless we forgive. What do the following passages teach us?*
  - a. *Matthew 18:21-22*
  
  - b. *Matthew 6:14-15*
  
  - c. *Hebrews 12:14-15*

## **F. THE SERVANT’S SUFFERING: A REVIEW**

*Suffering... it is common to man, because of the Fall. Christ, The Servant, suffered, so that mankind could overcome the effects of the Fall. We are to follow His example and to suffer for His sake. Suffering is a part of our calling, and it is a part of our glory. As we allow Him, God will use our trials for our growth and completeness. We must recognize that, through the suffering, the victory comes. We must recognize, too, in times of suffering, that God the Father has us in the palm of His hand.*

**MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

James 1:2-4 "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

**APPLICATION:**

*Think of an event in your life that caused bitterness.*

a. *In hindsight, what do you think God wanted to teach you through this suffering?*

b. *How could you have responded in a way that would have produced faith and growth?*

c. *Think of a current cause of suffering in your life. How can you allow God to use it for your growth?*

d. *How can you serve someone who is suffering this week?*

12 Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, p 177

13 E.E. Wilder Smith, *Paradox of Pain*, p 7

14 *Streams in the Desert*, September 7<sup>th</sup>

15 *Streams in the Desert*, January 9<sup>th</sup>

## **THE ATTITUDE OF THE SERVANT STUDY 7**

### **REVIEW:**

*In the previous lessons we have seen that our ambition in life is to serve people in the name of Christ. We have seen examples of servants, our motivation for service, and the context of our service, discovering that we are not our own but that we belong to another, to Christ.*

### **PREVIEW:**

*In this study we will focus on the attitude we are to have as servants. It is, of course, possible to serve in a wooden, mechanical fashion ('This is my duty, and I do it only because it is right.') It is also possible to serve with a grudging spirit. But God has made it possible for us to serve with joyful, willing hearts.*

*As we consider the love that God has shown us in His Son, Jesus Christ, we see that we are free to give of ourselves in love. What, therefore, is to be the attitude of our heart and the posture of our lives? Let us pray that God will create in us the mind and attitude of Christ as we serve.*

### **KNOW AND DO:**

*The goal of our study is to learn that attitudes have consequences in our lifestyles, to identify an attitude we need to change, and to begin to seek this change in a concrete way.*

### **STUDY:**

#### **A. HUMILITY OF MIND**

1. *Jesus had an attitude of humility when it says in Philippians 2:6-7 that he "didn't consider equality with God something to be grasped but made himself nothing.. humbled himself and became obedient to death." This attitude of humility – this heart and mind set – is to be ours as followers of Jesus Christ as Philippians 2:5 states:*

*"Your \_\_\_\_\_ should be the same as that of \_\_\_\_\_"*

2. *Look up the Dictionary definitions of the following and also write some words that have the same meaning:*

*a. Pride:*

*b. Humility:*

*According to Scripture's usage of each word:*

*Pride is something to be broken down, it breeds quarrels, goes before destruction, harbors self-righteousness, and is hated by God. (There is a 'good' pride also.. for instance, Paul said to the Corinthians [7:4]: ' I take great pride in you')*

*Humility comes from wisdom, is something we are to seek, and comes before honor.*

3. *Humility comes from having a correct perspective of God and ourselves, while pride comes from having an improper view of ourselves and God. What do the following verses suggest about this?*

*a. Jeremiah 9:23-24*

*b. 2 Corinthians 10:18*

4. *What does God think of a humble person?  
Why does God place such a high value on humility? Read 1 Peter 5:5-6.*

5. *How does one become humble? Check one:  
\_\_\_\_\_ By concentrating on being humble. (Why or why not?)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *By concentrating on Jesus. (Why or why not?)*

*In the first statement we are focusing on ourselves and in the second, by focusing on Jesus we have no thought for ourselves and have the attitude: "Don't see me, see Jesus".*

a. *See James 4:10 and Luke 14:11. What attitude should we have?*

b. *What will the Lord's action be toward the humble and not so humble?*

6. *Read Christ's Parable of the Guests (Luke 14:7-15):*

a. *How did the proud person act?*

b. *How did the humble person act?*

c. *How can you apply this to being part of a mission team?*

7. *Humility comes to a Christian from a preoccupation with One who is greater than ourselves - namely with Jesus Christ.*

*Pride comes from a preoccupation with ourselves.*

*Thinking too highly of ourselves says: 'God can't get along without us.'*

*Thinking too lowly of ourselves says: 'God can't do anything through us.'*

*Both attitudes represent a wrong focus on self.*

8. *Read Romans 12:3.*

a. *What does this teach us about self assessment?*

b. *Taking into consideration all we have studied thus far, have you discovered any unacceptable tendencies in your own life?*

## **B. THE HEART ATTITUDE OF THE SERVANT**

1. *The Servant's Heart Attitude Towards God*

a. *What attitude is expressed in the following verses?*

1) *1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

2) *Hebrews 11:8*

*b. In each of the illustrative passages below, put yourself in the place of the person being addressed. Describe the response of each person to the call of God.*

1) *Luke 1:26-38 (Mary)*

*a. Fear:*

*b. Response:*

2) *1 Samuel 3:1-18 (Samuel)*

*a. Fear:*

*b. Response:*

3) *Acts 9:10-19 (Ananias)*

*a. Fear:*

*b. Response:*

*The servant has a great love for God and a deep trust in God in uncertain circumstances.*

*2. The Servant's Heart Attitude Towards His Ministry*

*a. Read John 8: 50, 54. To whom did Christ draw attention?*

*b. Read John 16:13-14. To whom did the Holy Spirit draw attention?*

*Notice that both Christ and the Holy Spirit were other-concentrated. Their lights did not illuminate themselves – they each pointed to another.*

*c. Summarize what is taught in Matthew 6:1-3, 5-6, 16-18.*

*The Servant's ministry is to be so conducted that it draws attention to God and glorifies the Trinity.*

*3. The Servant's Heart Attitude Towards Other People*

*a. According to 1 Peter 2:9 we are a royal priesthood that declares the praises of him who called you. As representatives of our Lord:*

*1) What is the servant's 'priestly' attitude to be according to Hebrews 5:2?*

*2) Towards what types of people is this attitude directed?*

*3) What is your natural attitude towards this type of person?*

*4) What must you realize to have a Godly attitude?*

*b. Read Matthew 9:35-38. What attitude does Jesus exhibit in this situation?*

- c. Read Luke 10:30-37. List how the self-centered religious people and the other-centered Samaritan responded to a need.

Self-centered:

Other-centered:

The two words used to describe the Samaritan's response are "compassion" and "mercy". These words denote sympathy, kindness, graciousness, tenderness, helping the weak, sick or poor, pity, and having steadfast love.

The servant is to have an attitude of compassion for those he is serving. In verse 37b Jesus says, "Go and do likewise."

#### 4. The Servant's Heart Attitude Towards Possessions

- a. Read Acts 20:33-35. What describes Paul's attitude towards:

1) Other people's possessions? (v33)

2) The use of his own possessions? (v34-35)

3) Who is more blessed? (circle one) The giver or The receiver

J.R. Tolkien, in his series of fantasies, took this Biblical teaching seriously when he discussed the Hobbit's custom at a birthday celebration. In the book, the person who is celebrating his birthday gains great pleasure in having a party in which he gives a gift to all his friends.

- b. Read Hebrews 10:34. This is a most remarkable passage.

1) What is to be a servant's attitude when his possessions are stolen?

2) Why is he to have this attitude?

Too often, we are possessed by our possessions. God intends us to "keep the flow going". We are to be channels of His blessings, rather than reservoirs!

#### 5. The Servant's Attitude Towards Circumstances

- a. Read Philippians 1:12-14. Paul has been imprisoned for approximately five years, the last two in Rome. Yet, he stands above his circumstances! List the positive things Paul sees in his imprisonment:

- b. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and Ephesians 5:20. When are we to give thanks?

#### 6. The Servant's Attitude Towards Fellow-Workers

- a. Read Acts 19:18 and James 5:16. What do these passages indicate is to be a habit among Christians?

- b. List the attitudes we are to have towards others, based on Ephesians 4:1-3 and Ephesians 5:21

*The attitude of the servant towards fellow workers is to be one of confession, mutual submission, and seeking unity.*

**MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

*Philippians 2:3-5 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

**APPLICATION:**

*“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.”*

- 1. Identify those areas of pride in your life (focusing on yourself) which prevent you from focusing on Christ.*
- 2. Pray that God will give you the heart attitude of a servant.*
- 3. Seek someone in need this month, and like the Good Samaritan, show them compassion and mercy.*

## THE CONDUCT OF THE SERVANT

### Study 8

#### REVIEW:

*In our study on motivation for service, we saw that our lives as servants stem from the grace of God – we have been saved so that we can serve. In our study on the context for service, we learned that we are children of God, children who not only are to live in the power of that relationship but are also to imitate the Father. In our last study, we saw that we are to have the same attitude as ‘The Servant’, Jesus Christ.*

#### PREVIEW:

*All of these studies lead us to our present subject – that of the conduct of the servant. What is our behavior to be like? What is to be our moral character?*

#### KNOW AND DO:

*We will know that we are to affirm a godly lifestyle before a watching world. We will identify one area in our own lives in which we will begin a new habit.*

#### STUDY:

*These are important questions for servants living, as we do, in a particularly amoral society. Our ‘moral’ slogans abound: “Do your own thing”... “If it feels good, do it”... “Do whatever works” ... “Have it your way”...and “Think of Number One!”*

*Are we, as Christians, free to live by these philosophies? Can a person have the vocational calling of a servant and, at the same time, morally resemble the world?*

*This man-centered (humanistic) attitude of moral relativism has, unfortunately, pervaded the Church. Our lives as Christians have been affected in at least two ways:*

- 1. We often (consciously or unconsciously) accept the world’s standards of behavior as our own. And / Or:*
- 2. We often overreact to the world’s moral relativism by creating our own moral relativism. If we do this, our Christianity becomes a series of do’s and don’ts which are not established by Scripture.*

*Servants of Christ must not mimic the world in moral conduct, but they also must not overreact by creating their own rules of conduct. Servants of Christ must seek to imitate the conduct of Christ, the Godly Man.*

#### A. CONTRASTS OF THE SERVANT’S CONDUCT

##### 1. The Servant’s conduct vs. the Natural man’s conduct:

- a. Read Titus 3:1-5 and contrast the conduct of the godly man with that of the natural, ungodly man:

<u>GODLY</u>	<u>UNGODLY</u>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.

Notice in verse 5 that we are saved by His grace and mercy, not by our conduct. Notice, too, that the ungodly man is humanistic in his approach to life. He says and acts like there is no God.

## 2. The Servant's conduct vs. the Hypocrite's conduct:

- a. The hypocrite's conduct is radically different from that of the servant. His conduct differs, too, from that of the ungodly man, in that the hypocrite says that there is a God... but he doesn't act like it. The hypocrite is self-deluded; he claims to know God but is not obedient. Real hypocrisy is saying that something is true and then acting as if it were not true. To 'bear the stamp of Christ', there must be a relationship between what we profess to be true and how we live.

If we are honest with ourselves, we find that we are often in the category of the hypocrite. Read Luke 18:13. We must cry out, with the tax collector:

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

- b. The following excerpt is from *Shadow of the Almighty*, by Elizabeth Elliot. She first quotes the Apostle John (see 1 John 2:3-6) and then writes about the godly principle of obedience exemplified by her husband, Jim Elliot, a martyred missionary.

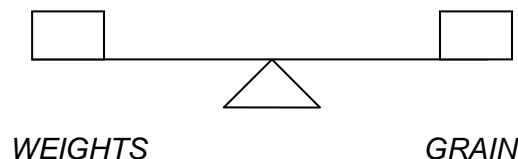
*"It is only when we obey God's laws that we can be quite sure that we really know Him. The man who claims to know God but does not obey His laws is not only a liar, he lives in self-delusion. In practice, the more a man learns to obey God's laws, the more truly and fully does he express his love for Him. Obedience is the test of whether we really live 'in God' or not. The life of a man who professes to be living in God must bear the stamp of Christ."* 16

Jim Elliot's life has been portrayed in the movie "The End of the Spear". He embodied a life of obedience. Obedience leads to knowledge. Obedience is the expression of love to God. Obedience means that we live in God. And if we live in Him, our lives bear the stamp of Christ.

## B. THE SERVANT'S CALLING – TO WALK WORTHY

1. The Bible uses the phrases, "walk in a manner worthy" and "conduct yourself in a manner worthy." "Walk" or "conduct" refers to a lifestyle. Our lifestyle, or conduct, is to be worthy of something.

"Worthy" is from the Greek word "Axios"... literally meaning 'deserving', 'comparable', or 'worthy'. In English "Axis" means a point of balance. Picture a scale. One side of the scale holds the market item (grain, for example). The other side holds the weights.



Both the merchant and the buyer want to make sure of the 'worth', or value of the market item.

2. God calls us to 'walk worthy' of His gift of Grace.  
Read Ephesians 4:1-3 / Philippians 1:27 / Colossians 1:10 / and 1 Thessalonians 2:12.  
What attributes does a life that walks worthy have?

How would walking worthy affect our Lifestyle and Conduct?

3. Read the following passages and fill in answers to find another way of seeing the relationship between God's calling and our lifestyles (our worthy walk)

*Ephesians 1:4 God has chosen us to be...*

*Ephesians 4:24 and put on the new self of ...*

*God's conduct is in harmony with His own character. If we are in harmony with God through Jesus Christ, it will be reflected in our conduct. The servant is free, through Christ, to 'walk worthy'.*

### **C. THE NATURE OF THE SERVANT'S CONDUCT – GODLINESS**

*Paul's first letter to Timothy is a letter from a mature father-like Christian to a young Christian 'son'; from an old servant to a young servant. In this letter God is showing us the nature of the conduct of the servant's life through the lives of Paul and Timothy.*

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:14-15. Why is Paul writing this letter to Timothy, the young servant?
2. Read 1 Timothy 4:12. Even though Timothy is a young man, there is every reason for people to look up to him. Paul encourages Timothy to be an example of a godly person. In what areas does Paul call Timothy to be an example?
3. In terms of godly conduct, the discussion in this letter takes place in two areas – General character and Relationships.

a. *General Character:*

*Paul has instructed Timothy to find godly men to be leaders of the church in Ephesus. In these instructions, he lists those moral-spiritual qualifications of godliness. Because Paul uses these character qualities as standards for godliness, they may be considered desirable characteristics for ALL servants, not only leaders.*

- 1) Read 1 Timothy 3:1-9. List these godly character qualities in your own words:

b. *Relationships:*

- 1) Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2 In your own words, describe the Christian's conduct in these 4 basic relationships:
  - a) Older men
  - b) Younger men
  - c) Older women
  - d) Younger women

## D. DEVELOPING THE SERVANT'S CONDUCT

*Godliness is not something that happens automatically. It takes time, effort, and practice. God's Holy Spirit is present, within the believer, providing the power, the motive, and the example. But the believer's responsibility is to cooperate with God as He transforms you into His servant.*

### 1. The Method:

- a. Use a dictionary to study the words "disciple" and "discipline". Write a definition.

*Disciple:*

*Discipline:*

- b. According to 1 Timothy 4:7-8, how are we to learn godliness?

*Of what value is it?*

- c. What is the relationship between Discipleship – Discipline – and godliness?

### 2. The Process:

- a. God has given us a 3-fold principle for practicing godly conduct.

*In each of the following passages, Paul describes the 3-fold process for changing from that which is ungodly to that which is godly. Outline each passage:*

Romans 12:1-2

1)

2)

3)

Ephesians 4:22-24

1)

2)

3)

- b. Combine the information from these above passages to write your own 3-fold relationship:

1)

2)

3)

**MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

*Ephesians 4:1-3 "As a prisoner for the LORD, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*

**APPLICATION:**

1. *The personal Evaluation at the end of this lesson is a composite of the relational characteristics which are mentioned in 1 Timothy 5:1-2 and the characteristics of godliness which are mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:1-9 and Titus 1:5-11. It is to be used for an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in your own life. If you want to you can duplicate these (before you fill yours out) and have a close friend and/or family member fill one out.. ask them to be candid!*
2. *Using the forms, pick one area of weakness in your conduct and apply the 3-fold principle which you discovered in Section 2D.*
  - a. *Name the ungodly practice that is to be PUT OFF:*
  
  - b. *Name the godly practice that is to be PUT ON:*
3. *Pray for God's help, and ask a friend to encourage you!*
  
4. *What do the forms tell you about your greatest strength?*

*How should you use it to help others?*

## PERSONAL EVALUATION

Place an 'X' between the words on each line denoting your tendency. For instance: Are you Patient: always, often, sometimes seldom, or never. If your 'X' is more toward Never, you believe you tend more to be Impatient.

### General Character:

Are you: 

ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
--------	-------	-----------	--------	-------

<i>Patient</i>	<i>Impatient</i>
<i>Wise</i>	<i>Unwise</i>
<i>Moral</i>	<i>Impure</i>
<i>Pleasant</i>	<i>Confrontational</i>
<i>Reputable</i>	<i>Untrustworthy</i>
<i>Generous</i>	<i>Covetous</i>
<i>Attentive</i>	<i>Inattentive</i>
<i>Hospitable</i>	<i>Inhospitable</i>
<i>Structured Household</i>	<i>Unstructured Household</i>
<i>Just</i>	<i>Unjust</i>
<i>Self-controlled</i>	<i>Undisciplined</i>
<i>Holy</i>	<i>Unrighteous</i>
<i>Highly regarded</i>	<i>Disreputable</i>
<i>Peaceful</i>	<i>Contentious</i>
<i>Slow to anger</i>	<i>Quick-tempered</i>
<i>Other-centered</i>	<i>Self-centered</i>
<i>Seeker of the Kingdom</i>	<i>Lover of money</i>

### Relationships with:

HIGHLY RESPECT	RESPECT	SHOW LITTLE CONCERN	NO INVOLVEMENT
----------------	---------	---------------------	----------------

<i>Older men as fathers</i>
<i>Younger men as brothers</i>
<i>Older women as mothers</i>
<i>Younger women as sisters</i>

## THE PERSON WE SERVE

### STUDY 9

#### **REVIEW:**

*In the previous study we have examined what our lifestyle is to be as servants of Christ and how we can begin to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.*

#### **PREVIEW:**

*As we approach the end of this series, we focus on the two big questions – ‘Whom do we serve?’ and ‘How do we serve?’*

#### **KNOW AND DO:**

*We will come to understand that we are to serve every kind of person. We will identify someone outside our normal circle of friends whom we can serve in a practical way.*

#### **STUDY:**

*In Bob Dylan’s song “Slow Train Coming”, he observed the spectrum of mankind and concludes that, no matter who you are “You gotta serve somebody. It may be the devil, or it may be the Lord; but you’re gonna serve somebody.” 17*

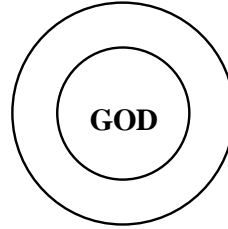
*The Apostle Paul made the same assessment 2,000 years before. We are, by nature, a self-serving race. In Christ, however, we find a Man who came to serve others. As His followers, our service is to be other-centered. We are to first serve our Creator and Redeemer; secondly, we are to serve our fellowmen.*

#### **A. PRIORITY #1 – SERVING GOD**

1. Read Psalm 100.
  - a. Whom are we to worship and serve? (v2)
  - b. How are we to serve Him? (v2)
  - c. Why are we to serve Him? (v5)
  
2. Read Colossians 3:23.
  - a. In what manner are we to perform our service?
  - b. For whom are we to do it?
  - c. For whom are we not to do it?
  - d. In what things are we to work ‘as unto the Lord’?
 

1) In some things	4) In the fun things
2) In the things that we feel like doing	5) In the things which guarantee success
3) In things for which we get recognition	6) In all things
  
3. As we learned, our highest motive for serving should be thankfulness to God for His Love.
  - a. Read 1 John 4:19. We love, because:
  
  - b. Read Colossians 3:17. Whatever you do, whether in \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, do it \_\_\_\_\_ in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to \_\_\_\_\_

The center of our first, primary circle of service is GOD



**B. PRIORITY #2 – SERVING THE FAMILY**

1. The Family of God:

a. God establishes a priority in our service to fellow Christians. Read Galatians 6:10, and 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15. What is God's priority?

2. Our 'Human' Family:

a. Read Ephesians 5:22,25 and Ephesians 6:1-4. Fill in which family members serve and who they serve.

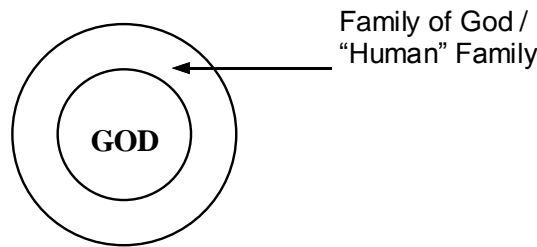
W \_\_\_\_\_ serves H \_\_\_\_\_ and H \_\_\_\_\_ serves W \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_ serves P \_\_\_\_\_ and P \_\_\_\_\_ serves C \_\_\_\_\_

This is summarized in Ephesians 5:21, which says:

b. Read 1 Timothy 5:4,8,16. How important is it to God that we take care of our families?

3. While our initial focus of service is on God, our second circle of service is the Family – the family of God and our human family:



**C. PRIORITY #3 – SERVING OUR FELLOWMAN**

Our third priority of service is to our fellowman – to those outside the family of faith.

1. Read Romans 1:14-16.

a. To whom is Paul under obligation?

b. What is Paul's motivation?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. How has this truth affected Paul's lifestyle?

3. Read Galatians 5:13-14. We are free in Christ.

We are not to: \_\_\_\_\_,

but we are to: \_\_\_\_\_.

4. The parable of the Good Samaritan is recorded in Luke 10:25-37. An expert in Jewish law tries to trap Jesus. He asks, "What shall I do to have eternal life?" This is an Academic question. What he meant was: "What one thing must I do to have eternal life?" Jesus returned with another question: "what is written in the law?" The man responded from Deuteronomy 6:5, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength." And with Leviticus 19:18, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Christ acknowledged that the lawyer knows the correct answer to the Academic question (Luke 10:28). But he does not leave it at that. A mere intellectual understanding was not sufficient for the lawyer, nor is it for us today. We may not assume that all is well if we have the correct Academic answer. Jesus says, "Do this and you shall live." His response is not Academic, but Practical. In the original language it means: "I command you to love God and your neighbor continually – every moment of every day – and you shall have eternal life." Is this possible? No.

But still trying to qualify himself, the lawyer asked Jesus to define 'neighbor'. If Jesus defines it as 'my best friend' or 'the guy next door', he figures he still has a chance. Jesus then tells the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The first two 'good' Jewish leaders approach the broken and ceremonially unclean Jew and ask themselves, "Is this my neighbor?" and answer, "No.!"

The Samaritan sees the injured man (his natural enemy), and has compassion for him. His question must have been: "What if this man is my neighbor?"

- a. Which questions do you tend to ask when you see or hear of an 'undesirable' person in need?
- b. What thoughts may people have if they are trying to justify not helping a person in need?

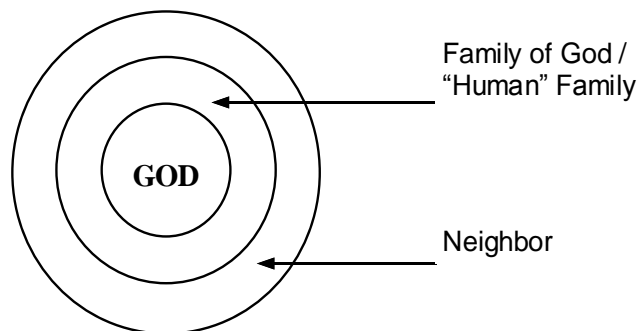
5. Read Luke 10:36-37. The lawyer had asked, "WHO is my neighbor?"

Jesus asked, "\_\_\_\_\_ of these do you think \_\_\_\_\_?"  
(Who proved to BE a neighbor!)

Jesus changed 'neighbor' from a passive person to an activity. He changed it from an Academic to a Practical operation: 1) to neighbor 2) neighboring 3) being neighborly. In verses 36-38. Jesus implies that the 'neighbor' is not the wounded Jew, but the Samaritan, because he was 'neighboring'. He described the activity of the Samaritan.

"Who is our neighbor?" The needy person whom God brings across our path? "Who is the needy person's neighbor?" **WE ARE, AS WE SERVE HIM AND HELP HIM WITH HIS NEED.** We are not to have 'savior complexes,' thinking that we are to deliver all the people in the world from all their problems, but we are to obey God in responding appropriately to the genuine needs and opportunities for service that He gives us.

Our circle of service now looks like this:



## D. FURTHER UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE NEIGHBORS WE SERVE

Within the circle of service to our neighbors, we are specifically commanded to serve the stranger, the outcast, our enemies, and the poor and needy.

### 1. The Stranger

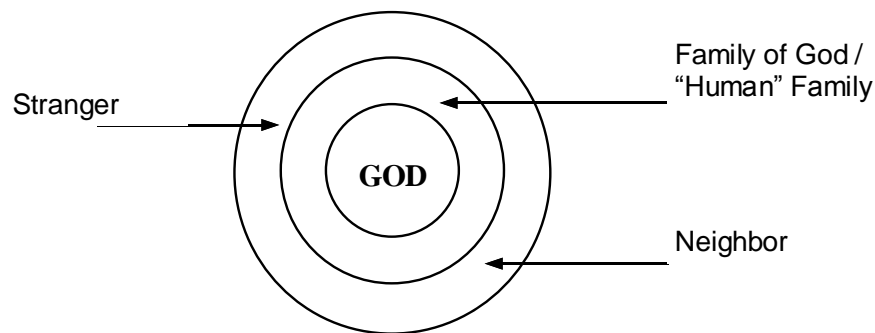
- a. Use a dictionary to define and give synonyms for:

Hospitality:

- b. The Greek word for 'hospitality' is 'philoxenos.' The meanings of the two Greek words is:  
1) Philo- lover of, fond of, friend of, have affection for 2) Xenos- foreigner, alien, stranger

- c. What is the difference between our concept of hospitality and the Biblical concept?

- d. Service to our neighbors includes service to the stranger:



### 2. The Outcast

- a. Read Acts 10:9-14, 28.

1) As a good Jew, what was Peter's attitude towards a Gentile? (v14,28)

2) When Peter heard Jesus tell about the Good Samaritan what should he have learned from that illustration?

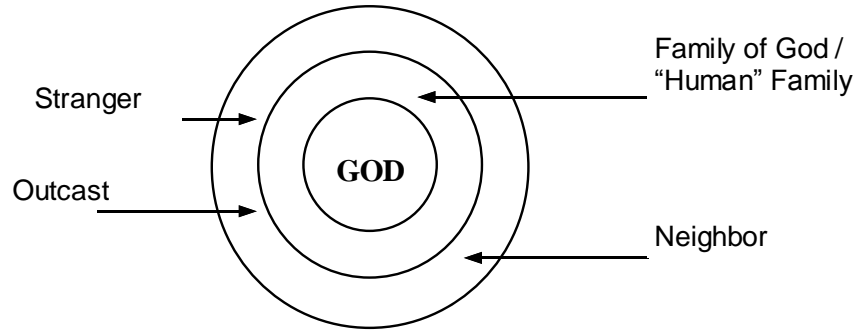
3) Does Acts 10:28b indicate that Peter learned that lesson?

Are we, also, sometimes slow to comprehend the truths of God?

- b. Identify some of the people you consider 'unclean. (may be people with particular lifestyles or beliefs, people from certain ethnic, social, or racial backgrounds, people with certain illnesses, problems or limitations, or people of specific age groups.

If you have difficulty in these areas, God wants to give you a willing heart to serve the 'outcasts' in your life! Pray and Ask Him to change your heart.

c. Within the third circle of service is the Outcast, the “unclean” person:



3. Our Enemies

The servant’s call goes beyond serving those he hasn’t met (strangers) and those with whom he may not relate well (outcasts). Christ calls us to a lifestyle that the world terms ridiculous – He calls us to love our enemies! It is one thing to love our friends, but it is quite another to serve those who hate us. It is worse, yet, to discover that God wants us to serve and love people we don’t even think we like!

Our Lord describes the servant’s mentality in the Sermon on the Mount. Read this description in Matthew 5:10-12, 43-48. The servant is to go beyond reciprocity.

a. Reciprocity: happens when two people have a mutual, similar exchange of emotion and action with one another.

1) The humanistic Jew’s view is stated in Matthew 5:43 and in verses 46-47

\_\_\_\_\_ your neighbor, \_\_\_\_\_ your enemy.

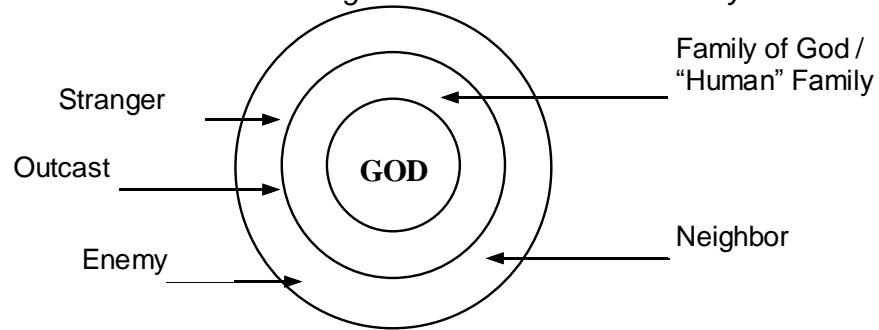
Love those \_\_\_\_\_ and greet only \_\_\_\_\_

b. Christ’s call is beyond reciprocity to “Agape”, which is a giving, one-way love. “Agape” love requires us to serve people unilaterally, whether or not they serve or love us. Christ wants His followers to be initiators of love and service... not retaliators. In Matthew 5:44 Christ uses the little-big word “But” to introduce His teaching. What does He teach about our relationship to our enemies?

c. Look at Luke 6:27-31. In these verses we find 7 possible adversaries. Contrast Man’s Natural Response (retaliation) with the Godly Response (initiating love and service):

<u>TYPE OF PERSON</u>	<u>MAN’S RESPONSE</u> <i>(Retaliation)</i>	<u>GODLY RESPONSE</u> <i>(Initiating Love &amp; Service)</i>
Enemies	<u>Loathe</u>	_____
Haters	_____	<u>Do good</u>
Cursers	_____	_____
Abusers	<u>Take revenge</u>	_____
Beggars	<u>Avoid</u>	_____
Thieves	_____	<u>Don’t ask for goods back</u>

d. Within the 3<sup>d</sup> circle of service to our neighbors is service to our enemy:



#### 4. The Poor and Needy

Many times, the Bible teaches about our responsibility to the poor and needy. God has deep love for the poor and needy, and we have a well-defined call.

a. Read James 2:14-17. How are we to deal with a physically needy person?

b. Read James 1:27. What are 2 categories of people who need the help of the Body of Christ?

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_

Does God expect us to serve them?

c. Read Isaiah 58:6-7. What other needy people is God concerned about?

God accepts this, also, as service to Him. In fact, He calls this "the kind of \_\_\_\_\_ He has chosen."

d. Read Matthew 25:34-36,40. What categories of poor and needy people does the King mention?

1) As we serve the needy, we are doing something necessary in the eyes of God. Are we doing something more than what it appears? If so, what?

2) Jesus does more than love the needy. He identifies with them. What does that mean?

Sister Teresa of the Sisters of Mercy describes the persons they serve:

*"The poor, the unwanted, the dying: for us they are Jesus. Because God cannot tell us a lie – and Jesus said: 'This is my Body. Whatever you do to these least of my brethren, you do to Me.' So we touch Him twenty-four hours a day in His broken Body, in His often terrible disguise... we touch Him with our compassion."* 18

e. What are the effects of NOT serving the poor and needy? (Matthew 25:45-46a)

f. *These are the benefits of serving the poor and needy:*

- 1) *We have been obedient to God and have served Him.*
- 2) *The people we serve are not as needy as they were.*
- 3) *The needy may understand new ways to help themselves and others.*
- 4) *They may become Christians.*
- 5) *We may learn much from them.*
- 6) *From Isaiah 58:8-11*

7) *From Matthew 25:46b*

g. *We have learned that we have been called to serve the poor and needy and that this is:*

1. *faith in action*
2. *pure and undefiled religion*
3. *the fast He has chosen*
4. *a service to nobody other than the King Himself.*

h. *The Stranger, the Outcast, our Enemies, and the Poor and Needy. All are made in the very image of God Himself. They are all to be encompassed by the outer circle of those who have need. They are our neighbors.*

#### **E. SUMMARY: WHOM DO WE SERVE?**

*We have seen that we serve God, our fellow-believers, our families, and others in need.*

1. *Our service to man is simply a manifestation of our gratitude and love for the Father and the Son.*
2. *The natural man seeks to restrict the boundaries of service. (What is the very least amount of service required here?" and "What claim will I receive for doing it?)*
3. *Christ, however, turned things upside down and taught that service knows no boundaries. ("How much service may I do?" and "Whom may I serve?")*

#### **MEDITATION AND MEMORIZATION:**

*1 John 4:19-21 "We love, because He first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God" yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And He has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother."*

#### **APPLICATION – THE GOAL OF BIBLE STUDY:**

*Would a watching world know that you serve Christ by the way you relate to God, your family, believers, strangers, outcasts, the needy, and people who seek you harm?  
How would you like to communicate your faith to a watching world?*

*Pray and ask God to direct you. Ask His Holy Spirit to show you the people He wants you to serve.*

1. *Think of someone outside your circle of friends:*
  - a. *A Stranger (someone you don't know)*
  - b. *An Outcast (a person or group against whom you are prejudiced)*
  - c. *An Enemy (someone with whom you have a broken relationship, tension, bitterness, or ill feelings – perhaps a family member, friend, team member, or authority figure)*
  - d. *A Needy Individual*

2. *Pray for this person or group of people. Ask God to help you serve them this week. If you have broken relationships with them, be willing to ask forgiveness from them and from God. Follow through with forgiveness and service. You may want to ask others to support you in prayer or service.*

17 Bob Dylan, "Slow Train Coming"

18 Teresa of Calcutta, p 69