



BECOMING LIKE JESUS Servanthood

Week 8 | Becoming Like Jesus: Servanthood Exercises

Exercise 1 - The Good Samaritan

One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?" The man answered, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!" The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied with a story: "A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. "By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. "Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.' "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man

who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked. The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.” Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.” - Luke 10:25-37

Slowly read the story of the Good Samaritan found in Luke 10:25-37. Become quiet and ask God to open your heart to listen and hear His message to you through this story. Read the passage again imagining you are the Levite in the story. **What are your concerns? Why are you in a hurry?** Now read it again and put yourself in the place of the priest. **What are your concerns? What might the reasons be for you to pass by?** This next time, read the passage as though you are the Samaritan. Imagine: **Why do you stop to help? How do you feel about incurring all the expenses for another’s care?**

Finally, imagine yourself as the person in need. **How do you feel as people pass by without helping you?** Imagine what you feel when the Samaritan stops to help. **What might your feelings be when the Samaritan both helps you and pays for your care?**

Ask God to help you answer: **Who of these characters do I tend to be like most days? How can I grow in seeing the needs of others and taking action to meet them? How can I grow in receiving the service of others?** Be silent and listen for God to speak. Close your prayer with thanksgiving for Jesus’ teaching on caring for our neighbors.

Exercise 2 - Humbly Giving and Accepting Service

Humility is at the heart of a spirit of service in the body of Christ. However, pride often creeps in--both when we serve and when someone offers to serve us. Just think of how often you hear the conversation:

"Let me know if I can do anything to help"

"Thanks, but I think I'm good."

Sometimes, we offer to serve out of a desire to look good. Even more often we refuse to be served out of a desire to look like we don't have any needs.

Do you find this to be true in your own life?

How does this hinder a community of servanthood?

How do you feel when you sincerely offer help to someone and they refuse it?

As you go throughout the next few days, be mindful of opportunities for humble service to others. When you perceive a need, offer a very specific way you can help meet it (not just a blanket "let me know if I can do anything.") When you have a need, humbly and gratefully accept help from others.

When we humbly serve and humbly accept service, we are helping create a culture of servanthood in our church.



Exercise 3 - Serving in Secret

Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. - Matthew 6:1-4

We often truly desire to serve out of humility, but, at the same time, find ourselves hoping to be seen and noticed when we serve.

Is this a struggle for you? Why particularly do you want to be noticed when you give or serve?

This week, plan to serve, give, or donate in some way that is completely anonymous. As best you can, tell no one what you are doing. Pray and ask God to reveal a need that you can help meet and figure out a way to keep it secret. Ask God to help you follow through with this.

How might this practice address an addiction to approval and image management?

How does a correct view of God and your worth to Him change your desire to be seen by others?

