

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

Gifted - Part 2 Gifted to Serve

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Introduction

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. Is it any wonder that Christians seek to emulate Jesus by serving? Since the Church's earliest days, there has been concern for the needs of the community. Effective ways of serving into that space have been the hallmark of Christian charity for centuries – it is hard-wired into the spiritual DNA of the family of God. It is how we show the love of God in a broken world. The workings of the Spirit of God in our lives mature us towards acts of selfless service in some capacity, which is representative of Christ, and evidence of Christ in us.

Read Matthew 20:25-28

1. Slavery was part of the social order within the Roman Empire, therefore serving others was looked down upon. In this passage, Jesus flips the perceived 'natural order' by teaching that this is not the way we are to live. Do you believe our attitude today towards serving has reached the level Jesus espouses in this passage? Why?
2. A servant is one who executes the commands of another. A slave is a bondperson to another's will. What is Jesus saying about the way we should live? What should our motive and attitude be as we do this? (Consider Matthew 25:40.)
3. Mother Teresa said, "I see Jesus in every human being. I say to myself, this is hungry Jesus, I must feed him. This is sick Jesus. This one has leprosy or gangrene; I must wash him and tend to him." What practical steps can we take to cultivate this same instinctive approach when we serve others?
4. Consider Acts 20:35, then have people share their experiences of serving voluntarily. How did it make them feel? Did they learn anything about themselves and/or did they grow spiritually whilst serving? Can anyone share how serving in one way has been a stepping stone to serving in another way?

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Read John 13:3-5 & 12-17

5. What do you understand Jesus is saying regarding how or why we should serve? Why is verse 3 so important in the context of Jesus' actions? Why is it important that we know who Christ is to us when serving, and how does it make a difference?
6. Pastor Dale stated, "If you choose not to serve, the body of Christ [the Church] is poorer for you not taking that step." Why do you think this statement is true? Each of us is uniquely gifted and our journey with Jesus makes us part of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12, 18). In what area of giftedness has God best used you to serve in the past? Are you using this today? Is He calling you to serve now in this area or in a different area?

Respond

All of us have gifts and abilities that were given by God and are being developed by the Holy Spirit. They were not given exclusively for our entertainment but were given for service. Take a moment to think, then share one way in which you could, or feel called to, serve in the Church or community, that you are not currently doing. What step could you take this week to move towards making that happen?