**Study Series: Spiritual Disciplines**

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**Lesson Title: “Serving…for the Purpose of Godliness” (pp. 130 - 139)**

February 14, 2021 Session 11

**The main point of this lesson is:** Believers are called to serve the Lord in their giftedness with proper motivation.

Focus on this goal: To help adults weigh their reason(s) for serving or not serving God.

Key Bible Passage: Joshua 24:15

To the Leader:

1. **Keep** the spiritual disciplines poster you created for Session 6, Step 1 (p. 78) displayed throughout this entire study.

2. **Compile** a list of ways adults can serve in regular, ongoing ministries in your church; **consult** church leaders for ideas if necessary.

During the Session

**Step 1. Introduction / Discussion Starter**

**Ask:**

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, (1 being not at all), how would most people rank the importance of receiving good service?
2. In your opinion, what qualifies as good service?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would most people rank the importance of being a good servant?

**State:** The world might not think it’s important to be a good servant, but God does. Believers are expected to serve for the purpose of godliness.

**Step 2. Day One – Every Christian is Expected to Serve, Part 1**

**Read** the Day One paragraph (p. 131) that begins, “When God calls the elect to Himself ….”

**Evaluate** why service is a costly discipline (see first paragraph of Day One, p. 130).

**Analyze** what service might look like inside and outside the church.

**Ask:** Why must service be a spiritual discipline?

**Use** Day One remarks (pp. 130-131) to add to that discussion.

**Ask a volunteer to read** Mark 10:35-41.

**Explore** how all the disciples displayed barriers to a lifestyle of service.

**Discuss** Day One, activity 2 (p. 131).

**Recall** the direction of every spiritual discipline identified in Romans 8:29.

**Ask:** How does the spiritual discipline of service move us further along in that direction?

**Read** the main point of this lesson (p. 140), **emphasizing** the phrase “with proper motivation.”

**Declare:** Even if we take all the right actions of service, we’re not exercising the spiritual discipline of service if our service is occasional, convenient, self-serving, or improperly motivated.

**Determine** some wrong motives for serving.

**Explain** Days Two and Three examine right motives for serving.

**Step 3. Day Two – Every Christian Is Expected to Serve, Part 2**

**Request adults identify** the most supreme motive for serving.

**Discuss** Day Two, activity 1 (p. 132).

**Brainstorm** how believers today can “wash feet” where they live, work, worship, and play.

**Encourage adults to identify** motivations for service evident in 1 Samuel 12:24.

**Invite a volunteer to read** the Day Two margin/pull quote (p. 132).

**Invite volunteers to share** great things the Lord has done for them.

**Encourage adults to identify** the motivation for service in Psalm 100:2.

**Ask:**

1. Does that mean we’re only supposed to serve when we’re glad to, and not when we’re tired or uncomfortable?
2. How can we serve God with gladness despite our feelings?

**Step 4. Day Three – Every Christian Is Expected to Serve, Part 3**

**Request a volunteer read** Isaiah 6:6-8.

**Determine** what motivated Isaiah to be so eager to serve.

**Read and discuss** the Day Three margin/pull quote (p. 134).

**Read** John 13:1-5.

**Explain** the task of washing feet fell to the lowliest of servants in ancient culture. Jesus had regularly taught His apostles about servanthood, but apparently none of them had learned the lesson because none was willing to take on that menial task when they gathered to celebrate Passover. So Jesus demonstrated that service is motivated by humility.

**Invite responses** to Day Two, activity 1 (p. 135).

**Read** John 13:6-8.

**Challenge adults** that exercising the spiritual discipline of service will at times mean they must allow others to serve them.

**Discuss:** How does it take just as much, or more, humility to be served than to serve?

**Request adults identify** from Galatians 5:13 what is at the heart of service.

**Analyze** why love is the greatest fuel for service.

**Step 5. Day Four – Every Christian Is Gifted to Serve, Part 1**

**Discuss** Day Four, activity 1 (p. 136).

**Identify** the two most important points related in 1 Peter 4:10 (p. 136).

**Remind adults:** God never gives believers a command He doesn’t equip us to obey. The God who expects us to serve, also gifts us to serve.

**Guide the group to analyze** the difference between spiritual gifts and natural abilities.

**Determine** how believers can use both to serve God and others.

**Explore** ways believers can discover their spiritual gifts.

**Invite responses** to Day Four, activity 2 (p. 137).

**Brainstorm** ways participants can serve in regular, ongoing ministries in your church, adding to the discussion with the list you compiled beforehand. (**See** “to the Leader,” p. 140.)

**Step 6. Day Five – Every Christian Is Gifted to Serve, Part 2**

**Ask:** What must we understand about service if we’re going to stick with that discipline, and why?

**Read** Colossians 1:29 and relate the meaning of “contend” and “strenuously.”

**Ask:** Why would Paul agonize to the point of exhaustion to serve God?

**Invite a volunteer to read** Colossians 1:25-29.

**Determine** the purpose and power of Paul’s hard labor.

**Ask:** How have you discovered that the most difficult work of service is usually the most meaningful?

**Read and discuss** the Day Five margin/pull quote (p. 138).

**Analyze** the relationship between the spiritual disciplines of worship and service.

**Step 7. Live Out the Lesson**

**State:** Christians should be known for our good service, which means we must commit ourselves to the spiritual discipline of service.

**Read** Joshua 24:15.

**Ask:** What specific steps can we take so we can echo Joshua’s commitment to service?

**Request adults prayerfully reflect** on Day Five, activity 2 (p. 139).

**Close in prayer.**