



Life Group Study Notes

"Servitude"

Sr. Ps. James Lowe - November 27, 2016

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- Have you ever served as a volunteer for a non-profit organization? If so, what organization?
- Have you ever been especially well served by a volunteer? What did they do for you?
- When was the last time you had to make a sacrifice to serve someone else?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Servitude is defined as the state of being a slave or completely subject to someone more powerful. Servitude is often viewed as a bad thing. But God calls each of us to serve him unconditionally. This is not bad for us, but actually is good for us because he is good and has designed us to reflect his own servant's heart.

Mark 10:42-45 ESV *And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

- Do we willingly give our lives in service of others, or do we seek to get others to serve us?
- Do we voluntarily serve, or do we avoid serving?
- Do we only find fault and complain, or do we seek to be a solution to the needs we see?
- God saw our dire situation, our great needs, and also saw our unworthiness. Yet he did not sit back and simply say we deserved all of our problems. He got up, entered our world, rolled up his sleeves, and served us in the way we needed most, sacrificing his life for our redemption.
- Do we stop, think, and appreciate what he's done?
- Do we respond to God by offering ourselves back to him to serve him in the ways that please him?

Romans 12:1-8 ESV *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and*

individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

- We are to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God. We are to express this by serving others.
 - Paul has written about God's mercies in spite of our sinfulness. He has written of God's provision through Jesus, who has provided for our justification, our sanctification, and our eventual glorification. God has provided everything we need for our ultimate redemption. He has given us his Son and his Spirit. Therefore, we should offer ourselves to God in service to others.
 - God's good, acceptable, and perfect will includes serving others with whatever gifts, talents, and abilities we have.
 - How we think about and evaluate ourselves should include whether or not we are faithful in using our gifts, talents, and abilities to serve others. God considers great those who give their lives in service of others. Those who fail to serve others are considered by God to be of low standing in his kingdom. They will receive less rewards and honor in the age to come.

Romans 12:9-13 ESV Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

- Our service should be characterized by all of these qualities mentioned by Paul.
 - Our service should spring from hearts that genuinely love those we serve.
 - Our service should be free from the stain of sin.
 - Our service should be done in such a manner that we honor and respect those we serve.
 - Our service should be done with our best effort, because we do it for the Lord and not only for the benefit of others.
 - Our service should attend to the needs of others and not merely consist of what we feel like doing.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related point for discussion.

- What are some of the important qualities needed for a volunteer to be a great servant of others?
- What do volunteers need from their leaders in order to serve others well?
- What adjustments do you need to make in your life or in your attitude in order to become a great servant in the eyes of God?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Ask God to produce a conviction in each of us concerning the high, noble status of a servant, and to produce a deep desire in us to aspire to be great in God's eyes as his servants.
- Ask God to lead each of us by his Spirit into greater service of others in terms of action and quality.
- Ask God to deepen your belief that he will greatly reward you in the age to come for every act of humble service you render to his people and others in need.