

SESSION THREE

SERVE



Jesus told us to love God and love others. Love, however, is often misunderstood. (We “love” chocolate, for instance!) To simply say that we love, or even have warm feelings toward someone, is not enough. Loving others means taking action and serving them.

In fact, Jesus told us that when we serve others in practical ways – feeding them, clothing them, sheltering them, visiting them - that is how we show our love for Him. God sees our service toward others as love toward Him.

Beyond that, our service to others may introduce them to the love of God. When we serve them, we break down walls in ways that words simply cannot. We show them that they are not “projects” to us - people we’re merely trying to convert. Rather, they are unique individuals who are loved by God, and one of the ways they’ll believe that is if we show them His love by serving them.

WE SERVE OTHERS IN PRACTICAL WAYS.
THAT IS HOW WE SHOW OUR LOVE FOR HIM.



MEMORY VERSE

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:40





HANGING OUT

Open your group with prayer. Be willing to be real and honest. Remind the group to respect confidentiality; commit to keeping prayer requests and current needs within the group.

1. What opportunities did God give you during the last week to CONNECT with someone who is far from God?
2. Moving from one house to another can be a really stressful time in our lives: a time when we really need others to help us out. How many times have you moved in your life?
3. Share a story (funny or not so funny), about a time that you moved to a new home. Did your friends step up or did they make excuses? Did all your belongings arrive in one piece?



WATCH AND LEARN



Watch the DVD teaching for this session, using this **Teaching Notes** section to fill in the blanks, and record key thoughts, questions, and statements you want to remember or look into further.

SERVE

It's going from being a _____ to being _____.

In the backyard, they are still _____. When you start to serve them, they come _____.

I believe the problem with modern Christianity is that the world sees us as _____ way more than they see us as _____.

2 mission busters: _____ and _____

I honestly believe that the greatest _____ to the mission of Jesus is the _____ of His agents.

FIGURING IT OUT



*If time is short, the questions marked with an * should be given priority.*

1. Most of us hate interruptions, but it is often life's interruptions that provide us with opportunities to serve others. How do you typically respond to interruptions or inconveniences?

2. **Read Luke 10:30-32.** The Priest and Levite are supposed to be the ones living life on mission for God. Has there been a time in your life when you let the comfort and convenience of your daily routine stop you from meeting a need?

3. * **Read Luke 10:33-37.** The Good Samaritan was inconvenienced and had to go out of his way to help the man in the story. Has there been a time when you were willing to step out of your comfort zone to meet a pressing need?

FIGURING IT OUT

4. What are some ways that you've experienced God's love and kindness through the acts of another person?

5. * What are some needs that you've noticed lately - opportunities where you could possibly serve others? How did you respond to those needs?

6. * In order to introduce people to Jesus, we have to genuinely love them - we need to make them not just friends but family. What steps are you taking (or do you want to take) to love people in this way?

LIVING IT OUT

IN THIS SECTION, TALK ABOUT HOW YOU WILL APPLY THE WISDOM YOU'VE LEARNED FROM THE TEACHING AND BIBLE STUDY. THEN THINK ABOUT PRACTICAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE IN THE COMING WEEK TO LIVE OUT WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED.

Read Philippians 2:5. Our goal is to look like Jesus. What does that mean to you?

Read Matthew 25:40, our memory verse. Share with the group any people in your life (co-workers, family, friends, neighbors, etc.) who are far from God and have immediate needs that aren't being met.



What are some skills or resources that God has given you that can be used to meet these needs (e.g., cooking, providing transportation, mowing the lawn, etc.)? If you are not able to meet the needs yourself, do you know someone who could?

We can often find significant opportunities to discover, practice, and improve our capacity to serve in Christ's name in our own home. In what ways are you serving those who live with you under the same roof?

Over the coming week, consider inviting a friend to attend our group or a weekend worship service, and possibly enjoy a meal together afterward.



For more *Life on Mission* resources, visit www.lifeonmission.com.

If you feel God nudging you to go deeper, take some time between now and our next meeting to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own, jotting your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. A great way to gain insight on a passage is to read it in several different translations. You may want to use a Bible app or website to compare translations.

DIGGING DEEPER

READ JOHN 13:1-17

The final meal Jesus shared with His disciples was unforgettable. It's mentioned in all four Gospels, and gets an extended description in John 13–17. Jesus not only taught about the significance of love in everything we do and say, but He demonstrated and highlighted the truth of His words. He definitely practiced what He preached!

1. What did Jesus say with His actions in these verses? What was the main point of His words?

2. Why do you think Jesus was presented with the opportunity to wash the disciples' feet?

3. How did Jesus connect the reality of our relationship with Him to the realities of our relationships with one another?

4. In what way does Peter's response in verses 6–10 parallel how many of us respond to sacrificial service?



DAILY QUIET TIME


Each day, read the daily verses and give prayerful consideration to what you learn about God, His Spirit, and His place in your life. Then record your thoughts, insights, or prayers on the lines below each verse.

DAY 1: “Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26-28).

Spend some time praying and asking God to show you how He wants you to live out this verse in your life. Specifically, who is He asking you to serve?

DAY 2: “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:29-31).

How would someone know by examining your life that this two-part commandment is the driving force in your life?



DAY 3: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God - this is your true and proper worship (Romans 12:1)

How is serving others a way of "offering your body" to God?

DAY 4: "Give fair judgment to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people" (Psalm 82:3-4).

God calls us to not only serve those who can return the favor, but to serve people who are poor and oppressed. How often do you interact with "the oppressed and the destitute"? How is your life insulated from people in this situation?

DAY 5: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35)

As you participate in this small group, what opportunities are you finding to love and serve others?
