

Caring for the Needs of Others
Lesson 1 – Developing the Heart of a Servant
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Introduction: The heart of a servant comes from becoming a child of God.

- A. Man left on his own will make himself “god” and will treat others as “throw-away” items. (**Titus 3:3-5**)
 1. The essence of conversion is that when one is moved by the compassion and mercy of God that they willfully surrender their will to God.
 2. They now will put God as the center of their lives and not themselves! (**Col 3:1-3**)
- B. Those who are converted to Christ now think and act very differently.
 1. How we think and act towards others is a real mark of conversion.
 2. We now seek to have the same attitude towards others that God and Christ has! (**2 Cor 5:14-15; Rom 14:15; 1 Jn 2:9-11**)

I. The Servant Heart of Jesus

- A. Jesus plainly stated why He came and why His followers need to imitate Him. (**Mt 20:25-28**)
 1. Being a servant goes against everything the world teaches us. “What am I going to get out of this??”
 2. God knows our greatest need is a relationship with Him. He also knows that our greatest joy will come out of serving and giving!
 3. What makes parenting joyful? (**2 Cor 12:14-15; Mt 7:9-12; Heb 12:5-7**)
- B. The essence of serving others is to have God’s purpose direct us in how to think about and how to value others.
 1. Jesus went to the cross as a suffering servant because His pleasure was to do God’s pleasure! “The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands.” (**Isa 53:10**)
 2. This was a lesson that Jesus sought to powerfully instill in the disciples. (**John 13:3-5, 13-15**)
 3. We can easily have a religion that leaves our hearts untouched. We can zealously guard “our time, our money and our values” while making a meager “contribution” to outward religious activity.
- C. The compassion of Jesus.
 1. Jesus taught parables that emphasized compassion. (**Lk 10:33; 15:20**)
 2. He healed others because of compassion. (**Mk 1:40-45; Mt 20:32-34**)
 3. He taught others because of compassion. (**Mk 6:34**)
 4. He wants His followers to have the same compassion and seek to be teachers and to pray for more teachers! (**Mt 9:36-38**)
 5. What is compassion?

Questions

1. How does the world view other people? Why does the world despise being a servant?
2. How does our conversion change how we think about other people?
3. How did Jesus emphasize His life of service and how did He demand that His followers become servants?
4. How should parenting teach us about being a servant?
5. Why are selfish people often unhappy? How does being a servant bring true happiness?
6. What is compassion and how did compassion move Jesus to act?

II. Things that oppose a servant's heart

- A. **Indifference** – Selfishness does not make others need a priority. (**Lk 10:30-33**)
 1. It is very easy to look the other way.
 2. It is very easy to be satisfied with good thoughts and good words but take no action. (**James 2:15-16**)
- B. **Being too busy**.
- C. **"Serving" in order to selfishly gain something**.
 1. False teachers and movements "serve" others in order to capture them. (**Rom 16:18; Gal 4:16-17**)
 2. There are some who greatly advertise their service in order to gain favor with others. (**Mt 6:1-4**)
 3. Consider how the writings of Francis Chan and David Platt are used to create bitterness and division in a local church. There is great fanfare surrounding their activities and a spirit that quickly judges the actions and motives of others.
 4. Consider this quote from a young man who justifies a painful division in a local church and judges the hearts of the brethren they left:

"In fact, I've never met people who are as dedicated to the gospel as they are. Not content to confine their Christian duties to the uses of the pitch pipe or the swapping of church bread recipes, they are constantly present in the community, attempting to share the gospel with the downtrodden. In short, they try to take the gospel literally, not deeming the "easier" verses, such as verses about attending church, albeit vital, important while deeming more "difficult" verses, such as verses about assisting the poor and inviting the lame to one's home, as optional.

- D. **Selfishness** – Can we really put others as more important than ourselves? (**Phil 2:3-4**)

1. Dee Bowman once said, "Sometimes we think 'service' is spelled 'serve-us'."
2. How will we know when this truly becomes how we think?

Discussion

1. What happens to a church when a spirit of selfishness becomes dominant?
2. What is the best test to help us see how we truly think of others?
3. How can I better develop a servant's heart?