

TITLE: Servant Leadership

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PREFACE

Welcome to the Project Discipleship series of materials. These courses were designed to give basic information concerning various topics about our Christian faith in Christ Jesus. People are called by Christ to become His disciple, but to become mature in Christ Jesus we need to study the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15) so that we can bear lasting fruit for His glory. We need to determine in our hearts to take time in the Word of God so that the Word of God can get into us.

The purpose of these materials is to stimulate thought and to foster a clearer understanding of how to be a true disciple and servant for our Lord Jesus Christ. These courses can be used as discussion tools for personal study, family devotion, youth meetings, cell groups, or for the running of a discipleship training school. Our hope is that this information will stir the students and encourage them to go deeper into personal research and study of the Word of God.

Our desire is that these courses will be a blessing to the student to be used as a tool and as a resource that can be shared with fellow disciples of Jesus Christ.

Please feel free to mail or e-mail us concerning other subjects or to just write to us with any feedback concerning the content of these studies. We pray that Christ will draw you into an ever deeper personal relationship with Himself as you study.

Your servants in Christ, Rev. Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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*"Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our **adequacy** is from God, who also made us **adequate as servants** of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life". II Corinthians 3:5-6*

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INTRODUCTION

Servant leadership can be a very broad topic and much has been written on this subject. So, the question could be asked, “Why another book on this topic?” My answer comes from the extensive travels that I have done over the last decade. What I have noticed is that many people are moving away from a community-oriented lifestyle to an individualistic way of living. We have stop saying, “How can I serve others,” to “Who will serve me?”! These changes have caused people, and especially the church, to move away from the original functional basis of the church, which was a spirit of “**serving one another**”. The challenges that pastors and churches have today, is to get people back to investing again in the “one another principle of Christ Jesus”, which is the root and life source of a **servant leadership** heart. One should not wait for others to give and set the example, but we must step out in faith, through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to pour forth not “self-will”, but “God’s will”, upon as many people as possible, with whom we come in contact with each day.

Servant leaders who are true disciples of Christ are called to invest their lives into others around them, producing lasting fruit that only the church is able to yield through unity and harmony, guided each day by the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. My focus in this book is on some key principles from the Bible that might help people in their understanding of the principles that are bedrock to servant leadership.

First, we must make clear that we are servants of Christ Jesus, called by Him out of this world of sin and darkness, to become ambassadors of reconciliation to a lost world (2 Cor 5:20). Christ is our Head and we belong to a Body which is His church (1

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Cor 12:27; Col 1:24). The true Body is one that is built and established on the full Gospel of Jesus Christ. He is the only way, truth and life that we follow (John 14:6).

Jesus Christ was the best example; during communion time with His disciples, Jesus removed His outer gown and, with a bowl of water, washed the disciple's feet (John 13:3-16).

In one form or another we are all leaders. We influence people around us each day by what we say and do. Christ has given us talents and gifts that can be used to either build up or destroy people. He has empowered us to lead as servants. He said that He did not come to be served but to serve.

There is a great need for **servant leaders** today – people who are trained and equipped to serve with their lives no matter the price or cost. The age of grace is coming to an end and the fields are ripe. We are told the labourers are few and that we need to be praying to the “Lord of the harvest” to send out more labourers (Matthew 9:37-38). We need people to step out in faith and believe that God can use them. We should be encouraging all disciples to be equipped and trained to go out to serve our Lord.

Servant leadership is a learned skill and often it evolves from on-the-job training. We learn from our mistakes and make changes to things as we go along. The Bible is one of the best leadership manuals that we can have because we can glean firsthand from people's testimonies and teaching. Their accounts have been kept for us in order to pass on the wisdom which they themselves also learned.

It is the purpose of this study to better equip the reader to become a more effective **servant leader** for Jesus Christ. He has

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sent the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and we are told that when we lack wisdom, we can call upon His name (James 1:5). It is important not to be overcome by fear, but to stand in the power of Christ and to step out in faith. Continue to run for Jesus with all your heart!

If you are a disciple of Christ, you are automatically a **servant leader**. A leader is one who influences another. A disciple is to have a lifestyle that influences others to know more about Christ. The **servant leader** is one who has died to self and has surrendered his will to the will of Christ. We no longer live, but it is Christ living in us (Gal 2:20). We become new creations with old things having passed away (2 Cor 5:17). We must remember that as we lead by example in following Christ, others will follow.

DEFINITIONS AND SYNONYMS

Servant: a person bound to do the bidding of a master or superior; one who must work for another and obey him.
Synonyms: helper, worker, steward, slave, supporter, follower.

Leader: the person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country; a person followed by others.
Synonyms: chief, head, principal, pioneer, front runner, innovator, trailblazer, pathfinder, ground-breaker, leading light, guiding light, torch-bearer, originator, initiator, developer, discoverer, founder, architect, influencer.

SCRIPTURE:

Colossians 3:12-24 (New Living Translation) *“Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tender-hearted mercy, kindness, humility,*

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*gentleness, and patience. Make allowances for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly. Children, always obey your parents, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not aggravate your children, or they will become discouraged. Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything you do. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. **Serve** them sincerely because of your reverent fear of the Lord. Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are **servicing** is Christ.*

The book of Colossians was written by Paul to the church in Colossae. Paul was most likely writing from Rome where he was under house arrest around 60 AD. It also came as a response to what a fellow labourer, Epaphrus, shared with Paul. Epaphrus was converted in the city of Ephesus and went to Colossae to take the Gospel to the Colossians. Out of that effort came a church which he was instrumental in starting (Col 1:7-8 and Acts 19:10). The churches in this area were comprised mainly of Gentile people and the theme of the book of Colossians could be called, "the complete

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adequacy of Christ.” Paul wanted to teach these believers some principles that dealt with things like prayer, supremacy of Christ, the importance of the church, freedom that we have in Christ, the importance of holy living and how we should lead and teach each other. Colossians chapter three set a good foundation stone for what it means to be a **servant leader**.

Servant leadership is always a challenge and the more we advance in leadership the greater the responsibilities and challenges we will face. Leadership can be a very lonely place – there will always be struggles with people who are discontented with what we do.

Our goal as **servant leaders** is to produce lasting fruit (John 15:16). We need to see more labourers and leaders produced for the Kingdom of God and for the work that Christ has entrusted to us. The harvest is ripe we are told the labourers are very, very few (Matthew 9:37-38). Paul wants the church to rest its foundation on Christ and His teaching.

Servant leaders are not born, they are made. We need to understand that most leaders in the Bible were trained and equipped and together worked with each other under the headship of Christ.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

God uses people of various backgrounds to bring leadership to His people. Christ uses our strengths and weaknesses to lead others. When we work within a team, our efforts and effectiveness are enhanced. Christ desires to use us as we are, then move us through an equipping and training process that will mature us into being good leaders. Some examples that we can see are in the

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people listed below:

- Peter:** John 21:15-21
Fisherman
Leader in the church in Jerusalem
Wrote the Books of 1 and 2 Peter
- Matthew:** Matthew 9:9-13
Tax collector
Wrote the Book of Matthew
- Luke:** Luke 1:1-4 & Acts 1:1-2
Doctor (He was a Gentile)
Wrote the Books of Luke and Acts
- Philip:** Acts 8:4-8
Deacon
Evangelist of the Gospel of Christ
Minister to an Ethiopian eunuch
- Barnabas:** Acts 4:36-37 and Acts 11:22-26
Levite
Missionary, teacher and mentored many
other leaders
- Apollos:** Acts 18:24-28
Equipped and well-trained teacher of the
Scriptures
Missionary and teacher
- Paul:** Acts 9:1-22
From Pharisee to an Apostle of Christ

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From one who persecuted the church to
missionary

One who planted churches

Wrote letters to the Romans, Corinthians
Galatians, Philippians, Ephesians, etc.

John Mark: Acts 15:37-41

Young man, somewhat of a legalist,
stubborn, rejected by Paul but later accepted
by him as a fellow missionary. Acts 15:38,
Philemon 24, 2 Timothy 4:11

Lydia: Acts 16:13-15

Business lady
Homemaker

Philemon: Philemon 1:1-2

Slave owner

Epaphras: Colossians 1:7-8 and Acts 19:10

Church planter

This list could go on. Needless to say, God uses men and women to lead His church. They were ordinary people from a variety of backgrounds who allowed Christ to train them for the work that would fulfill His purposes.

Philemon 1:23-25 *Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

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OBJECT LESSON

Yoke: Often when we think of the word "yoke"; we imagine a team of oxen; two individual steers being harnessed together to plough or to pull a wagon. The two individuals become one in purpose and goal – **servant leadership** can be pictured the same way. We become teamed with Christ and other disciples to fulfill the call that He has given to us. He trains us individually and often through others. We can build up each other as we all pull together and encourage our leaders. It takes time, yet, as we let Him mold us, we can become special vessels.

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I Call

It is important that we clearly understand what the call of God is and how it will affect our lives. The call to leadership is not an easy road, but it can be very rewarding. Those who step out in faith and lead others will undergo pressure of all kinds. That is why the call of God must be clear. We must realize that when God calls us into leadership He will also equip, strengthen and guide us by His spirit.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

call: announce, proclaim, to summon, to invoke solemnly, to call God to witness, to summon to a specific work, to call someone to ministry, to arouse someone from sleep. **Synonyms:** announce, awaken, cry out, hail, proclaim, waken, assemble, invite, summon, name, declare, ordain, set apart, consider, think.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the **calling** with which you have been **called**, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were **called** in one hope of your **calling**; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

Ephesians 4:1-6

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CONTEXT

- Paul wanted the Ephesians' church to understand that they were made alive in Christ.
- Paul wanted them to understand that they were to enter into a personal relationship with Christ.
- Paul explained his call of God and how it was to bring the message of grace to the Gentiles and that his ministry had an eternal purpose.
- Paul prayed that their eyes and minds would be opened so that they could understand clearly what Christ had done for them.
- They were told how the body of Christ should work together to function in unity and harmony.
- Paul shared that there were different kinds of calling when it came to ministry and leadership, but the purpose was to prepare others for service.

INSIGHTS

The first step of the disciple in determining his personal ministry is to clearly understand what the call of God is in his life. Leaders will go through many challenges and, if the leader is not sure what God is calling him to do, he can face a lot of heartaches in the different stages of his life. Part of a disciple's call is service. Call and service cannot be separated; we must understand this key principle if we are to become **servant leaders**. True leadership must flow out of a great love for Christ and for what He has done in our lives (Gal. 5:13).

The call of Christ is one of following. We are the sheep and

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He is the shepherd; we are His and His alone. We cannot have room for our own individual wants and desires. We are to be God-conscious, not self-conscious. Our daily walk as leaders will often be confronted by a battle of the "wills". The temptation to do "my will" can be strong, and at times overcomes us, yet that is when we need to surrender to the cross of Christ. He knows our needs and desires (Ephesians 6:7).

Paul often reminded the churches of his call by the Lord. His leadership and writing were in response to that call and demonstrated his love for God's people. A leader should lead out of care and concern for people, and should want to see them grow and be blessed in what they do. King David and King Solomon each had a heart to lead God's people; that conviction came from a personal relationship they had with God (1 Samuel 3:10, 12:20-24, Psalm 2:11, 89:3).

Jesus reminded His disciples that they cannot serve two masters. If they try, they will be pulled apart inside, because they can never please them both (Luke 16:13). We are not to be of this world even though we live in it. We are to focus on the Kingdom of Heaven and remember we are pilgrims passing through.

Our key Scripture, Ephesians 4:1-6 challenges us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. Our actions must line up with our calling. As disciples of Christ, we are to lead with humility and gentleness, being patient and tolerant. We are also to be diligent in preserving unity.

There is a great need to get people to work together; disciples need to see that they are all part of the same body of which Christ is the head. Paul reminds us that, just as there is a oneness in the Godhead, we as leaders should be striving for

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oneness in the body and ministry in which we are serving (1 Cor. 12:12).

RELEVANCE

It is essential to **servant leadership** to make sure our call is based on personally knowing Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord of our lives. This must be the foundation upon which everything else is built. Leadership is guiding people to their call in Christ and helping them to be equipped so they can fulfill that call (1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 1:9).

In our leadership journey, we must ensure that our lives do not lead anyone astray (1 John 3:7). Our actions and conduct affect the people around us. Our call will affect other people's hearts. We need to humble ourselves before God and before others (James 4:10). When we do, He will lift us up and reward us for our faithfulness to His calling.

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Take time to meditate and write out a short testimony on how you were called into being a servant leader. Plus reflect on that as you lead. Who and what am I following? Is my leadership built firmly on the Lordship of Jesus Christ in my life? When He speaks to me, am I faithful in doing that which I have been asked?

Doing and Living:

As a servant leader, in what practical ways am I helping others to fulfill their calling? For whom is this ministry directed and how is it being carried out? Also, how is my leadership helping them and myself to grow and mature in Christ Jesus?

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SCRIPTURES RELATING TO CALL

Matthew 4:18-22 Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was **called** Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, “**Follow** Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and **followed** Him. Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He **called** them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and **followed** Him.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were **called**, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 1:8-9 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and **called** us with a holy **calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ from all eternity,

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen race, A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has **called** you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

2 Peter 1:3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true

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knowledge of Him who **called** us by His own glory and excellence.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

1. Research the call of God on people's lives.
2. Research the different kinds of calls.

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II Devotion

Rootedness is what keeps us firm in our faith and in our walk. Devotedness to the cause is of utmost importance. The lack of devotion makes us weak and vulnerable to the things of this world. We must, as **servant leaders**, be committed spiritually to Christ Jesus' will for our lives. Dedication to something is one the hardest challenges that any disciple faces because it is often "going against the flow". It is where you become a light in dark place for Christ – a light that others can follow. Our devotion will sow seeds that will bring forth a unique harvest for Christ in the future. Your devotional life will not only affect you, but will become the foundation that Christ will use to touch so many others for His Kingdom.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Devotion: adherence, allegiance, commitment, consecration, constancy, dedication, faithfulness, fidelity, loyalty, adoration, devoutness, godliness, holiness, piety, reverence, sanctity, spirituality, and worship; to love, to have loyalty to another, to dedicate oneself to God through prayer, worship and the studying of the Bible, to die to self and to live totally for Christ Jesus as Lord.

Prayer: Entreaty, appeal, request, plea to God for an answer or a change to take place in one's life or in the lives of others. There are different kinds of prayers, but all are focused and spoken to God Almighty Himself with the hope that He will do and bring about a sought-after change.

Meditation: Thought, consideration, deliberation, contemplation, reflection, to study. To take time to think or

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reflect on things.

Worship: Respect, esteem, devotion, reverence, ascribing worth, worship is the humble and dependent attitude of the heart towards God demonstrated in our redemptive words and actions towards all. Can be accompanied by lifting up of hands or bowing down before our Lord.

Praise: To extol with word or song, to give thanks through one's mouth or through one's actions (examples: dance or giving of a gift). It can be used to honour both people and God for what they may have done for us. The book of Psalms is a praise book that honors the One True God. The book of Revelation tells us that, in the end times, we will be challenged as to whom we will ascribe praise ... the antichrist or the Lamb of God.

KEY SCRIPTURE

... to secure undistracted **devotion** to the Lord *1 Cor 7:35 NASB*

... simplicity and purity of **devotion** to Christ *2 Cor 11:3 NASB*

CONTEXT

- The Corinthian church, with all its challenges, needed to be reminded that the most important thing they needed to do in their walk with Christ was to commit to an unwavering devotion to Him.
- They were struggling with many things that they had been devoted to in the old life: worldly wisdom verses Godly wisdom, immorality, the suing of each other, plus the whole area of marriage, just to name

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a few.

- They needed to get clearly focused on Christ Jesus and to be reconciled to Him in all things, and to understand that they were in a spiritual battle between good and evil.

INSIGHTS

Now the true root to a strong devotional life is that we commit to be steadfast and anchored in Christ Jesus and His Word. Look at what these two words mean:

Steadfast: constant, dedicated, dependable, established, faithful, firm, fixed, intent, loyal, perseverance, reliable, resolute, single-minded, stable, staunch, steady, unflinching, unswerving, and unwavering.

Anchored: secure, hold firm, root, to fix firmly, giving support and security.

Daily devotion demonstrates to God and to yourself that you are committed to the process of growth and maturity. The heart of the disciple must be wholly devoted to Christ; the only way that this can take place is by studying and applying the Scriptures and by prayer and supplication. This we must keep foremost in our mind because if we do not remain anchored and steadfast to this principle we will be tossed to and fro by every wind of teaching and doctrine. (Eph 4:14; 2 Tim 4:3) Again I cannot stress it enough; devotions are what anchors the **servant / leader's** heart so that when storms and trials come our way, we will be able to have the faith to believe that our lives will hold firm and strong in Christ no matter what life may throw our way.

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Devotional life is looking to Christ as the total author and finisher of all things. Our devotional time should not be taken lightly but should be foremost, before anything else. This is the only way that we can be sure about our walk through the day – with our family, friends, and our work.

Devotions are the lifeline to good spiritual health and strength. Without it we will be weak and sickly. Our spirits need spiritual food. Devotions build you up in Christ, but they also help to build up the body of Christ. Your devotional life will affect yourself, your family, your church and your job. Devotions are not just for your well-being, but for the furtherance of the Kingdom of Christ here on earth. There is a lot riding on your fellowship time with Christ.

David is the best example of one who had a deep devotional life; many of the Psalms that he wrote, I believe under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, reflects this. Let us take a few minutes to see from the Psalms the importance of a devotional life, not only for you, but also for the people for whom you are a servant leader.

These five words below are key to a devotional life that we must have if we hope to be true servant leaders for Christ Jesus; they are the lifeline that gives us the strength and power to both lead and serve others.

Meditation: Psalm 1:1-6; 5:1; 19:14

David tell us that he who meditates on the Word is like a tree planted by a river. This tree will produce fruit in the proper season and its leaves will not wither. We are told that this “tree”, because of its commitment to God, will prosper in all that it does.

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If we want the blessing of God, we must get into the Word and let the Word get into us. There is no other way.

If we allow the Word to take root in our hearts, it will bear fruit of which others may partake. Plus, our tree will bring shade and comfort to the weary traveler who passes by. Meditation takes time, but it also saves time; that investment will bear rewards and blessings never dreamed possible.

Praise: Psalm 9:1; 21:13; 33:2; 34:1; 47:6; 113:3; 150:1

David make a bold proclamation. He states in Psalm 9:1-2, " *I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works, I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High*". He knew what it meant to be before the Lord God His Creator, and all He could do was praise Him. His focus was on God and he desired to serve Him and, from his own thankful heart, lead His people.

Jesus tells the people that it's not what goes into a man's mouth that counts but what comes out (Mat 15:11). Often one does not remember that much of one's speech comes from what in or on one's heart (Prov 23:7). Throughout the day, we need to evaluate what we are saying. Are we praising God and praising others for the good things they do?

Worship: Psalm 95:6; 99:5

Our hearts should be a river of worship and thanksgiving to our God because of what He did for us by sending His Son into this world to redeem us from our sin. That alone should be enough to cause us to worship Him for all eternity, knowing that soon we

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will see Jesus face to face in His heavenly kingdom that He has prepared for us.

A **servant /leader** needs to have His heart filled daily with God, so he can pour out to others from the abundance that he has received. (Matt 12:34-37) “freely you have received now freely give”. (Matt 10:8)

Prayer: Psalm 55:17; 4:1; 5:3; 39:12

David speaks often about how he prays to God. The Psalms tell us He came to the Lord many times throughout the day. He knows that with God he is never alone. I am sure he felt the great burden of leading so many people, and that his daily decisions affected so many around Him. He led a country, but he also led an army of dedicated men who had committed themselves to serve him and the nation. When one leads people, there are great responsibilities that come with it. The actions of teachers and leaders can touch the people with whom they work; such actions also affect the homes and communities in which they live. This is why we should not take lightly the responsibility of servant leadership responsibility lightly - what we say and do can have deep eternal consequences.

Another word for prayer is communication. When two people talk to each other the result is communication. I believe prayer is a two-way street where we speak to God and He speaks to us. The desire of the Father is that we get into step with His will for our lives. As servant leaders, we need to understand that He does have a plan and a purpose, both for our lives as well as for the lives of the people we are leading. Each day we need to get in sync with God’s plan and timing. He does speak and guide us through His Word and through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in our

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lives to teach, direct and encourage us each day; we need to trust that He knows what's best for us.

Devotion / Commitment: Psalm 34:1-22; 73:28

The very definition of the word “devotion” means commitment to a way of thinking and living. Our faith affects all what we think about and do. As servant leaders, this is why we must constantly check our attitudes. We need to make sure that we are devoted to Christ Jesus and His Word, then follow in His footsteps. (Mark 6[”]:34; John 12:26; 1 Pet 2:21)

Again, David's life was one of devotion and dedication. He desired to follow God. This does not mean he was perfect. No, he made many mistakes while on his journey with God. But what was foremost is that he tried, with all his heart, to be a servant leader. Each day he set his heart on God to Whom he was dedicated; this shows in his deep devotional life that we read about in the book of Psalms.

David was devoted to praise God and follow Him wherever he was. *“Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD **with my whole heart**, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation”*. (Psalm 111:1)

Psalm 23: 1-6, speaking from a shepherd's heart, reminds servant leaders to be devoted to the work they have been called to do amongst the people God has called them to lead. The great Shepherd of the sheep has given to us a pattern that we should devote ourselves to as we represent Him as a shepherd / servant / leader to others.

David's prayer was that the Lord would lead and guide

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him, for God was David's Rock and Fortress Ps 31:3). Lastly, David pronounces this all-important truth from his heart: **"For I am your servant"**. (Ps 143: 12b)

RELEVANCE

The disciple needs to live a life of devotion to Christ Jesus. As disciples, we need to be devoted to prayer and the study of the Word. We also need to be devoted and committed to a life of service for Christ. It is a commitment that He makes to us and we need to commit fully to Him. We need to walk in a way that exemplifies our commitment and love for Christ. Devotion to prayer and to reading the Word of God forges a strong chain that holds us firmly to Christ and His Kingdom.

Hear again what David says in Psalms 5:1-3: *"Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my **meditation**. Give heed to the **voice** of my cry, My King and my God, for to you I will **pray**. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to You and I will look up"*. Do you hear the heart of King David, a true servant /leader for God?

REFLECTION

HEARING AND SEEING

What do I see and hear the Holy Spirit saying to me about my commitment and devotional life? As a servant/leader, is my life reflecting to others a life that is sold out 100% to Christ Jesus?

DOING AND LIVING

Whatever the disciple plants will be the type of fruit that he or she will produce. To what are you committed? The fruit you produce will be the result of the seeds you have been planting in

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your heart. What kind of fruit is coming out from my life? What are some of the things that are taking control of my life and what kind of fruit is being produced by my actions?

SCRIPTURE RELATING TO DEVOTION

Acts 1:14 *“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”*

Colossians 4:2-3 *“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains,”*

Psalms 51:10 *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*

I Corinthians 7:35 *“And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.”*

Isaiah 26:3 *“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.”*

Romans 12:10 *“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;”*

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THIS LESSON

1. Take time to study the lives of key leaders in the Bible in order to see how their devotional lives connected them to God, so that they could be used by the Lord.
2. Take time to look at successful leaders around you and see how they devote time for reflection, prayer and personal study.

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III Ministry (Ambassador)

In the New Testament, we are called to be Christ's **ambassadors**, representing His Kingdom here on earth. As disciples, we have become **Christ's Ambassadors**. We no longer belong to this world but represent another land and another King. We are to bear witness to a lost world that Jesus Christ is truly the Lord of lords and King of kings. Our joint **ministry** is to go out with our individual programs and work together on **reconciling** people to God. The Scripture tells us that one of our **ministries** here on earth is to be **ambassadors of reconciliation**.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Ambassador: Mediator, intercessor, peacemaker, (to drink of the peace cup) 2 Cor 5:20, one who passes by Eph 6:19; diplomat, envoy, representative; political representative who speaks and acts on behalf of a nation; often ambassadors carried messages to other kingdoms.

Ministry: office, vocation, to serve others, service rendered or given unto God, to Jesus Christ, and to His church.

Messenger: Envoy, herald, go-between, runner, courier, deliverer, ambassador, one who delivers a letter or some verbal information to another.

Reconciliation: Restoration of friendly relations. To facilitate positive changes in relationships between two or more people. To be a minister who acts as a go-between for the purpose of reconciling two sides, bringing them together into a more positive relationship.

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KEY SCRIPTURE

*Now all things are of God, who **reconciled** us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the **ministry of reconciliation**, that is, that God was in Christ **reconciling** the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses against them, and has committed to us the word of **reconciliation**. Now then, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be **reconciled** to God. **II Corinthians 5:18-20***

CONTEXT

The Corinthian church was still struggling with who they were in Christ, and how Paul fitted into the bigger picture concerning their relationship with Christ Jesus and His church. Paul had just written to them about:

- Christ the light of the Gospel 2 Cor 4:1-6
- The kinds of challenges that they were facing may discourage them, but they should not feel defeated because they have Christ in their hearts. 2 Cor 4:7-15
- The need to understand the invisible things of God. 2 Cor 4:16-18
- That they can have true assurance of faith in the resurrection of Christ Jesus. 2 Cor 5:18
- They also needed to understand and be reminded about the judgment seat of Christ and how one day they would all stand before Him. 2 Cor 5:9-11

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INSIGHTS

As His servants, we lead by serving others, just as He also served and gave His life for this lost world. As **ambassadors**, there are some key points that we need to grasp; these will help us to clearly understand what the ministry of ambassadorship really is.

1. We are called to be **Christ's representative** here on earth. We do not represent ourselves but Another. When we become Christians, we die to ourselves and live for Him. (John 11:25; Acts 17:28; Rom 14:8; Gal 2:20). He is to be our true Lord and Saviour in all areas of our lives.
2. We are called to a **foreign land** (we are passing through this world). This place is not our home anymore; we belong to another Kingdom (Col 4:11). We are Christ's kingdom representatives. We are sent out as His ambassadors throughout the earth to wherever He needs us to be. In this world we are foreigners but in His Kingdom, we are children of God (Matt 5:9; Gal 3:26). We follow His will for our lives and we should go to wherever He calls us.
3. We live under different **laws**. We are governed by the laws of our new homeland, where Jesus Christ is our King (Gal 4:5; Heb 10:16; James 1:25). His laws supersede all the laws of science and of this world. The Bible is our guide; from it we learn how to be Christ's diplomats. The Holy Spirit is also our teacher and encourager. Through faith we can trust that He knows where we can best represent our King.
4. We carry **diplomatic credentials** and papers which govern us and show us how we are to live here on earth as Christ's

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ambassadors. Our papers are the Scriptures (Is 40:8; Heb 4:12) and our credentials are the seal of the Holy Spirit on our lives (Eph 4:30) as well as in our lives (Eph 5:18). We do not go alone; we need to remember that Christ has empowered us as His representatives to speak His truth with much grace and love.

5. Like Paul, we are **ambassador in chains** bound to a new country and Kingdom which has an eternal King, Jesus Christ (Eph 6:19-20). We freely bow before our king and worship Him only. We have become bondservants to Christ Jesus. We may seem bound but in reality, we have been made free from the chains of this world (Rom 8:2). We serve not because of law, but because of His love and grace which He has so generously given to us.
6. Our **goal as ambassadors** is to make known the mysteries of the gospel (Eph 1:9) to all we meet. No matter what the cost may be, we are committed to help bring this wonderful truth to a lost world. We belong to a Heavenly Kingdom where we will one day go and live for all eternity. We will meet with our King that day face to face.
7. Our hearts are driven and **compelled by love** of Christ Jesus (1 Cor 13:1-13). He is our sole motive for everything we say and do. He is the rock and foundation on which we build our lives (Ps 31:3; Is 17:10; 1 Cor 10:4). He is the fortress and strong tower which makes possible our being His ministers and ambassadors here on earth. He was sent to the world because of love (John 3:16) and now, because of love, we are sent out as His ambassadors of reconciliation.

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8. Christ has given to us a clear **message of reconciliation to proclaim**. The truth of the Gospel demonstrates how, through reconciliation with Him, we can again be in a personal relationship with Him (2 Cor 5:18; Eph 2:16-18). And this was made possible because of what Christ Jesus did on the cross of Calvary. He made a way for us, He gave us a truth to live by, and He gave us His life as the example that we should follow (John 14:6). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are to encourage people to be reconciled to God.

All disciples are in full time ministry or service for our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul asks the Ephesian church to continue to pray for him as he ministers at various places as Christ's ambassador. He states, *"And for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an **ambassador** in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.* (Eph 6:19-20)

Christ became the perfect atonement for us by dying and shedding His blood on the cross. We were born in trespasses and sin, having the eternal death sentence stamped on our lives. There was no hope, but through Christ Jesus, He made a way; Christ restored our relationship with the Father so that we could come into the Holy of Holies. He clothed us with His righteousness. Now, as disciples, we are to take that message of reconciliation which was given to us and take it out to the world. Like Paul, we are called to be **Christ's ambassadors**.

RELEVANCE

Christ is still calling people to be ambassadors of His, to go out and proclaim the **Good News**. As disciples, we have become

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Christ's ambassadors through faith. It is a position of high honour to represent our King and country in foreign lands. The heart of being an **ambassador** is being a servant with the goal of taking the Gospel of hope and peace to all peoples. To the lost world in which we live, we are to bear witness that Jesus Christ is Lord of lords and King of Kings. Above all else, our hearts should desire to help others to know and understand that Christ is calling all peoples to a place of **reconciliation** - a place where the dividing wall that once separated us is now broken down, giving us access into the vary presence of God. As Christ's **ambassadors** and **ministers**, we stand for what Christ and His Kingdom exemplify.

REFLECTION

HEARING AND SEEING

Take time to reflect on what you think it means to be an ambassador of Christ. Ask yourself, "Do I see how God has called all disciples to be His ministers and do I hear through His Spirit where, for His glory, I am to use this calling as an ambassador?"

DOING AND LIVING

As a servant leader, how am I using that with which God has equipped me to serve others? Have I accepted His calling on my life to be His ambassador of reconciliation to those who live around me? Have I truly committed myself to the area of service to which is He calling me?

SCRIPTURE RELATING TO MINISTRY AND AMBASSADOR

Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the **ministry** of the word.

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Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the **ministry**, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Col 4:17 And say to Archippus, “take heed to the **ministry** which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.

2 Tim 4:5 But you be watchful in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your **ministry**.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THIS LESSON

1. Look at and research the gifts of the Spirit for the church and determine the 2 or 3 that you may have been given by the Holy Spirit.
2. Study the five-fold ministry that Paul writes about in Eph 4:11-12.
3. Research the position of ambassadorship and how it functions in our world today.

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IV Attitude and Character

They say that one's name is as precious as gold but in the Christian community one's **character** is more precious. Our character will determine our ability to lead and influence others. There are many people who were at one time great leaders, but their **character** traits undermined all that they had been or would be. As leaders, we must look in the mirror and examine who we are. Our words and actions must go hand-in-hand if we are to be worthy vessels that the Lord can use to bless and lead others. It does not mean that we are perfect, but it does mean we have to be wise in how we deal with people and things.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Attitude: the way one thinks and acts; showing one's feelings or purpose concerning life. *Synonyms:* approach, outlook, manner, stance, position, mind-set. (KJB uses the word mind or minded 1 Cor 2:16; Phil 2:5; 3:15.)

Character: the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual; a person's good reputation. *Synonyms:* personality, nature, disposition, temperament, mentality, constitution, make-up, attributes, features, qualities, traits, identity, distinctiveness, uniqueness, spirit, moral strength, uprightness, fortitude, strength, backbone, toughness, resolve, will power, firmness of purpose, reputation, name, good name, standing, stature, position, status, image, credibility, acceptability, prestige.

Personality: the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character. *Synonyms:* character, nature, disposition, temperament, temper, make-up, persona, identity, charisma, magnetism, strength of personality, force of

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personality, character, powers of attraction, charm, presence, individuality, attractiveness.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*Let this **mind** be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ... but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a **bondservant**, and coming in the likeness of man. Philippians 2:5, 7*

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven **character**; and proven **character**, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

Romans 5:1-5

CONTEXT

- Paul wanted the Roman church to reflect the righteousness of Christ.
- God was faithful in sending His Son to redeem us and help in our everyday walk.
- Christ was the firstborn, the one to set the example of character that we are to follow.
- Abraham had faith in God and trusted that God cared about all the details of life.

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- Adam's life brought death to all mankind, but Christ came to give us life.

INSIGHTS

Character has, at its foundation, the word **attitude**. Our **attitude** governs how we live and treat others around us. As **servants/leaders** we must always keep in check our thoughts, the way we think concerning Christ, ourselves and those around us. The disciple is a walking filing cabinet of **attitudes**, concerning hundreds of thousands of things. All things we think or say are based on some type of **attitude** that we have come to believe in our minds. We carry around with us a storehouse of **attitudes** about people, places and things. Every noun we know has attached to it a file of either negative or positive thoughts. We have the ability to determine our **attitude** and how it will govern our lives.

Servant leaders have many, many different **character** traits, all of which are built on the way we think ... and our thinking is governed by our **attitudes**. We are what we think; we live out what we believe. Each day we must keep our **attitudes** in check; this is best done through prayer and studying the Word of God. We need help in this area because our flesh and minds are weak. We need to fill our minds with the principles of God's Word, which then becomes a light unto our path (Ps 119:105). The key to a victorious life is to die to self (John 12:24) and live for Christ Jesus and His will. When we surrender to Him, He then seals (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13) us and fills us with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18). The goal is to let His will be done in and through us here on earth (Matt 6:10; Rom 12:2; Phil 2:13-16; Heb 13:21)

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Jesus gave to us a list of **attitudes**, known as the Beatitudes, in the Sermon on the Mount - wisdom proverbs teaching us how we should act and think toward each other (Matt 5:1-11); the disciple of Christ is to have the mind or **attitude** of Christ (Phil 2:5).

Character is what others see in you. The value of honesty and trust is so important. We need to remember that what we think greatly influences our actions. Jesus warned that it was not the things which went into the mouth that were the problem, but what came out of the mouth showed what was in the heart (Matt 15:11-18). He also shared that salt and fresh water cannot come from the same well. You might, on some occasions, be able to hide who you are, yet somewhere in life your true self will come out for all to see.

Jesus taught about people's attitudes and used the religious rulers as examples. He taught the disciples that **character** would be used to build the Body of Christ. We need to remember that we are not all the same. We are all made up differently and our unique differences are what makes the church of Christ strong. Still, our morals are standards that we value as true, values for which we'd be prepared to die. These are the foundation stones upon which we have built our lives. They are truths that the Bible proclaims as God's way of living and which He commands us all to follow.

As unique people, we have different **character** traits. Some we have inherited, some we learned as we grew, and some derive from the culture and traditions in which we live. Finally, some have come through activities like reading or watching TV or interacting with different kinds of people. Some traits can express themselves in good or bad habits. They can be very difficult to change and often we cannot do so in our own strength or ability.

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This is why we need Christ – when He comes into our lives, the old life is put away and we become new creations. We are like a clean blackboard with nothing written on it. Christ begins to pour into us a new way of living, a new truth, a new way of thinking. It is as though we acquired His DNA.

John 15 talks about the Father as the vine-dresser, the one who prunes those branches that do not produce fruit. Our **character** patterns can either produce fruit or prevent the growth of fruit in our lives. The way that **character** is produced in our lives is through the challenges that we face, for when we go through hardships, our true nature comes forth. Paul was trying to teach this to the Roman church. All things that we face are there to polish our **character**. We all have a sinful nature and if we are not submitted to Christ daily, it will show its ugly face to others.

RELEVANCE

If **attitude** is the foundation stone for life and ministry, it is important to take time to reflect on what it is that we are building. Are we building on our own selfish desires or are we living as **servant leaders** under the headship of Christ Jesus, desiring to fulfill and do His perfect will in our lives? **Attitude** and **character** cannot be separated; they are two different sides of the same coin. **Character** traits are something we all have, and they express themselves in a variety of ways. Sometime the best way to find out what our positive and negative traits are is by asking a close friend. Negative traits can be changed but will take prayer and determination to reprogram your heart and thinking. We must give our struggles over to Christ and ask Him to renew us. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to remind and teach us each day how we can change. We must also study the Word of God and learn how others have overcome the same **character** problems. Confession before

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God and others is another way to bring about positive **character** change.

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Take time to reflect on what you think are some of your **attitude** and **character** traits. Also, have a close friend share with you what they see are traits that you may be exemplifying, both positive and negative.

Doing and Living:

What are we doing in our lives to help build new **attitudes** and **character** traits that will bring honour and glory to our Lord? What areas do we need to change? Will I commit to these changes and trust that, through Christ's strength, it will happen?

SCRIPTURES RELATED TO CHARACTER

Proverbs 23:7a For as he **thinks** in his heart, so is he.

Matthew 12:33-37 Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil. But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to

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everyone who is among you, not to **think** of himself more highly than he out to **think**, but to **think** soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

I Cor 10:12 Therefore let him who **thinks** he stands take heed lest he fall ...

Hebrews 13:5-6 Make sure that your **character** is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,” so that we confidently say,” The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?”

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

1. Study the different kinds of character traits that can make up a good life.
2. Look at how character has affected leaders around you.
3. List some people whose character destroyed their ministry or leadership role.

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V Relationships Team

Relationship with others is one of the hardest things to build because it takes time and openness in communication. Communication is important if we hope to build strong **relationships**. The more we communicate, the more we can understand the heart of the other person.

Servant leadership is working with a team of people. People are made up of different characters and abilities and the only way to succeed as leaders is to get to know them as individuals. This takes time and effort; mistakes will be made along the way. Some of our best friends end up being those with whom we have faced challenges. A leader must build a solid team of people in order to be able to move forward.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Relationship: the state of being connected. *Synonyms:* relation, association, link, alliance, bond, interconnection.

Fellowship: friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests; a group of people meeting to pursue a shared interest or aim. *Synonyms:* companionship, companionability, sociability, comradeship, friendship, mutual support, mutual respect, mutual liking, intimacy, association, closeness, togetherness, solidarity.

Team: come together as a team to achieve a common goal: harness together to pull. *Synonyms:* join forces, collabourate, get together, come together, band together, work together, unite, combine, cooperate, merge, link, ally, associate, amalgamate.

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Body: the main part of something; the trunk or main mass of an organism. *Synonyms:* figure, form, shape, association, collection, company, corporation.

Together: *Synonyms:* in conjunction, jointly, conjointly, in cooperation, cooperatively, in collaboration, in partnership, in combination, as one, in unison, in concert, concertedly, with one accord, in league, in alliance, in collusion, side by side, hand in hand, hand in glove, shoulder to shoulder.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters **are one**; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.*

1 Corinthians 3:5-9

CONTEXT

- Paul challenges the people for being on milk and not on mature food. They were living like babies.
- The Corinthians were walking in worldly ways.
- They did not understand the One who they were to be following.
- They needed the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.
- There were many divisions in the church.

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INSIGHTS

Working together as a **team** is easier said than done. People have to overcome their individualism and focus on doing things that are best for the team. We must realize and maintain the corporate vision for which we are working. We must maintain that together we win or together we lose. **Servant leadership** is pulling a group of individuals together to work for a common goal. The deeper the **relationship** to each other, the greater the harmony and unity will be.

There is an acronym that one can get from the word "team".

T	Together
E	Everyone
A	Accomplishes
M	More

This can be illustrated by having one person sit on a chair. Ask another individual to come and pick up the person with the chair. They cannot do it. But if you ask six people to come and pick up the person with the chair, they can do it with ease because they have a common goal and are all working together.

A leader must work at building up the team so everyone can pull in the same direction to get the job done. Following are five principles that a leader should focus on for effective relationship team building.

Relationship Team Oneness: 1 Corinthians 3:5-9

Paul told the Corinthian church that the involvement of different people was necessary to help them grow in Christ. There was not just one person, but a relationship team of people who God

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raised up at different times to minister to them in specific ways. So, Paul planted, Apollos watered, but it was God who gave the increase. We must see that we are God's fellow-workers. We are all on the same team and we are to be one with each other and with God. It is most important to remember to see ourselves as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Relationship Team Mind and Spirit: Philippians 1:27-28

Paul told the Philippian church to conduct themselves in a manner that is worthy of the Gospel. They were to stand firm in one spirit, working as one in mind and heart for the Gospel. He told them to be, as one, walking in faith, and not to be afraid of their enemies. Our walk should be a shining light of the Gospel to a lost world. We as leaders must tap into the oneness of the Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in us and He connects us together as a relationship team. When people see oneness in the church, it bears testimony to the living God Whom we serve.

Relationship Team Character: 1 Thessalonians 5:10-15

Paul said we should live together with Christ. Just like individuals have different character traits, a team also can exemplify a certain type of character. If one member is doing something wrong or sinful it reflects on the whole team or body. For example, if one member is not truly representing Christ, this impacts the team and reflects to the community a certain very negative image that can even become very disastrous to the whole.

Paul taught the Thessalonian believers about the "one another" principle. They are to:

- encourage one another
- build up one another

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- be kind one to another
- love one another
- respect one another
- live at peace with one another
- be patient with one another

(Book of First Thessalonians)

These are all character traits that the relationship team should have, and that the team leaders should be working toward. We need to pray and ask wisdom on how to lead and build God's team which has a "one-another" spirit about them.

Relationship Team Function: 1 Corinthians 12:12-24, Romans 12:4-8

In this area, the leaders need to discern the talents and gifting of each team member. Paul explains to the Corinthian church that there are many members but only one body. Different people have different functions. Their gifts need to work with those of the other team members. We are not to be clones of one another; our differences are what make the relationship team strong. As team leaders, we need to help people understand who they are in Christ, so they will have the ability to help others. At times, when you cannot do the job, you will need to get someone else who can. While Barnabas was in Antioch, a church had been born. Barnabas knew he could not oversee that church, so he located Paul and brought him back to do the work of the ministry. This is a demonstration of body ministry and **relationship servant leadership**.

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Relationship Team Purpose and Goal: 2 Corinthians 6:1

Paul called us as to be workers with Christ. The **servant leader** must set the direction for the relationship team. It is his job to keep the relationship team focused on that purpose and goal. Leaders must have clear in their minds and hearts what God is calling them to do in the harvest fields where they live. We are all missionaries. Some leaders will lead people in other countries, some will work in their local neighbourhoods. Again, Paul reminds the church that we are all fellow workers, sinners saved by God's grace, and called by Christ to be ambassadors of reconciliation. The road map of ministry is given to us throughout the Scriptures; the leader is responsible to study that road map and convey those instructions to others on the team.

RELEVANCE

You may struggle to become a relationship/team leader, but take heart! The body of Christ works to support each of its members. You lead, but are also being led. Allow the work of the Holy Spirit to flow through you. Servant leadership is important because it looks out for the welfare of the whole. God uses people on your team to help you to grow as a leader. Some of your team members may seem like thorns in your flesh, but in the long run you will be a better leader because of them. We need to keep committed and not grow weary in serving in this ministry (Gal 6:9). As a leader, you are responsible to stay on track, serving with all your heart, not to glorify yourself but to glorify Christ Jesus.

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

As I think about this chapter, what is God saying to me

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about my relationship/servant leadership skills? As I work with others and reflect on what is happening, do I see a spirit of oneness and unity or do I see barriers and relationship challenges that keep us from moving forward?

Doing and Living:

What changes do I need to make in the way that I lead others? What am I doing to help myself become a better leader? What am I doing to build strong relationships within the team that God has put around me?

RELATED SCRIPTURES FOR THE LESSON

1 Corinthians 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

Romans 12:4-8 For just as we have **many members in one body** and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are **one body** in Christ, and individually members **one of another**. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if **service**, in his **servicing**; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the **body of Christ**; until we all attain to the **unity** of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to

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the fullness of Christ.

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in **one spirit**, with **one mind** striving together for the faith of the gospel;

1 Thessalonians 5:9-18 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage **one another** and build up **one another**, just as you also are doing. But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labour among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with **one another**. We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for **one another** and for all people. Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

1. Analyze a local sports team to determine their strengths and weaknesses.
2. What is the purpose of having different positions on a team?

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VI Ministry of Equipping & Mentoring

We are all called to be **ministers**. A **minister** is one who serves others. If we are leaders, we have the responsibility to help others do the work of the **ministry** with the best tools possible. The goal of a **minister** is to be constantly **equipping** himself in the best way possible, for the work of service. As we take in we can give out. Freely we have received so freely we can give (Matthew 10:8). But ministry is a two-way street, where we learn and grow (take in) so that we can be prepared to help mentor and nurture others (give out).

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Ministry: With or in proximity to another person or other people, in combination, the performance of any service or function for another; a person or thing through which something is accomplished. *Synonyms:* with each other, in conjunction, jointly, conjointly, in cooperation, cooperatively, in collaboration, in partnership, in combination, as one, in unison, in concert, concertedly, with one accord, in league, in alliance, in collusion, side by side, hand in hand, hand in glove, shoulder to shoulder

Equip: to supply with resources, fit out, to provide for. To provide with what is necessary, useful or appropriate. *Synonyms:* provide, furnish, supply, issue, arm, endow.

Mentor: *to teach with understanding, to equip others with life tools, to give guidance and counsel.* *Synonyms:* guide, tutor,

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KEY SCRIPTURE

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, **equipped** for every good work.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17

*But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your **ministry**.*

2 Timothy 4:5

CONTEXT:

- Paul encourages Timothy to remain faithful in Christ Jesus.
- Timothy was to remember how he was called by God for service.
- Timothy was encouraged to stick to the pattern that Paul had laid out for him.
- Timothy was encouraged to train and equip others.
- Timothy was reminded of the importance of the Gospel and confessing Christ as Lord.
- Timothy was warned about what will happen in the last days.
- Timothy needed to keep firm and faithful to the word of God.

INSIGHTS

We must see that there is a great need for **ministers**; Christ called them labourers (Matt 9:37-38). Things cannot get accomplished if people do not get involved. We need to **equip**

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ourselves and take that which we have learned to **equip** others also.

Pastors, shepherds, and ministers are all to be **servant leaders**. We are to be leaders who protect, feed and nurture the sheep. In Psalm 23:1-6 David teaches us how we are to minister to those whom God has entrusted to us. Christ is our Chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4), but we are His under-shepherds, keeping our ears and eyes open concerning those whom God has called us to serve.

There are at least seven different areas in which leaders must be **equipped**. We are **equipped** through prayer, study, service, observation, action, response and evaluation.

Simply teaching people and giving them tools is still not sufficient for true understanding on their part. To ensure that they understand we need to be in a mentor relationship with them so that can see, learn and practice their discipleship walk as servant leaders alongside you. Paul taught Timothy and Titus both through his writings and by being with them, as well as by having them minister along with him. Then he released them out into the church to be Christ's servant leaders.

Prayer

Communication with God is fundamental to shaping **ministry**. We become connected to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Who are the great teachers of all things. James told the disciples that they “have not because they ask not” (Jam 4:2b). James teaches that if we lack wisdom we are to ask of the Father and He will give it to us generously (James 1:5). Solomon asked God for wisdom and God gave him that and much more (1 Kings 4:29). We are to seek God first and the rest will fall into place (Matt 7:7). A

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leader must be a person of prayer, leading others into change; when we pray, things do change. In a powerful way, Jesus exemplified the importance of prayer in the disciple's life. Prayer **equips** and prepares us for the ministry that lies ahead. We are told to have an attitude of prayer each day. (1 Thes 5:17; Acts 6:4; Rom 12:12; Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6).

Study

A leader must also be a person who studies God's Word. As David said in Psalm 1, we must be people who meditate on God's Word. The Scriptures are there to give us knowledge and understanding. They bear testimony of a living God who desires to live and work through people. The Word is also a sword to be used in a spiritual warfare. (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12)

We must continually grow and that means making time for study (2 Tim 2:15). If we do not have time to study, we cannot lead people. The Word is our sure foundation – we must know and understand it if we are to use it to **equip** others in the body of Christ (2 Tim 2:2).

A leader is a reader!

Serving

To understand what it means to be a leader we must be willing to first serve under other leaders, people who are seasoned in the **ministry of servant leadership**. We become **equipped** more quickly and we learn from other people's mistakes. It is like getting on-the-job training. People will help you to learn if you are willing to first serve. This is why many schools have internship programs – people can be mentored by others before they begin their own ministry. Christ set the example of servant leadership during the Passover, by washing the disciple's feet (Matt 13:5). He

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also told people that He did not come to be served but to serve others. (Matt 20:28)

Observation

We can also be **equipped** by watching how ministry is done in other places. God works through a variety of people; various ministries can show us new things. We get fresh ideas for the work we are responsible for leading. God wants us to depend on others, asking questions and seeking advice. We are to be doing things together as a body, helping one another in the ministry and doing the work of service for each other. (Rom 12:1-11)

Action

Another way of developing is by stepping out and doing. It is said that practice makes perfect! We need to be active in doing so we can learn from our own mistakes. We can read and study and even pray but the best things are learned through on-the-job training. Ask others where you can get involved and start off by doing little things. Some of the best leaders have been those who have worked their way from the bottom up.

Response

Equipping must include the strength and courage to step out in faith and to take a risk, sometimes even into the unknown. There are times where we cannot lead others until we have moved beyond our comfort zone. Willingness helps us to overcome fear and builds confidence in how God can work through us. He will go before you with the Holy Spirit's guidance. This means trusting that God is able to lead you and keep you from all harm.

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Stepping out in faith broadens your horizons and helps you experience things that God can use to help others in the future. No experience is a waste of time. It can be a training ground that can produce a great harvest.

Evaluation

After Jesus had sent out the seventy, they came back and shared all that had happened. Paul and Peter bore a testimony of what God had done through their lives. They answered questions about the things that they had done and taught others. Every leader needs accountability and a covering because we do not function alone. We are not islands unto ourselves. Leadership reporting can be very healthy and is a great tool in becoming **equipped** for service.

The key is to be faithful with what God has entrusted to us. If we are not faithful and obedient, He will not give us more to do, but may take away even that which we were given. The parable of the talents teaches this truth (Matthew 25:14-30). Three leaders had worked with the master. The master left, but on return he evaluated and found out that only two had been faithful; there was one who was not willing to use what he had been given. God is more interested in your trying (and even failing) than in your doing nothing at all.

We need to make sure that we are becoming **equipped** according to God's will and purpose for our lives. Many people receive training and never use it. We need to help people take the next step. If they do not use what they have been given, often they lose it. God entrusts us with ministry so that we will be faithful to go out and use it for His glory.

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RELEVANCE

Paul told Timothy to **equip** others who would be faithful in going out to teach other believers. Leaders need to work with people who desire to get involved, become trained and **equipped** and then use that which has been planted in their hearts. We are to be **leaders/ministers** of the Gospel of Christ. Our lives will always be a time of learning, growing and maturing. God wants our lives to always be producing fruit. A **servant leader** has work to do until he goes home to be with Jesus.

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

When one looks back over one's life, what does the Holy Spirit reveal to us concerning the ministry in which we have been serving? What comes to your attention concerning ministry/servant leadership? This may take some time, but one needs to be honest in seeing the good, weak and bad concerning how we have served others.

Doing and Living:

What are you doing in your leadership role to help **equip** others? Do you have an **equipping / training** program in your church? How are you personally involved in **equipping** others?

SCRIPTURES RELATED TO MINISTRY

Acts 6:4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the **ministry** of the word.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of **ministries**, and the same

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Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the **ministry** of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, **equip** you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

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RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

1. Research and study other ministry plans for equipping.
2. Develop a program that can equip other servant leaders for ministry.

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VII FRUIT

To be filled with the Spirit means that the believer will demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in his or her life. The New Testament pattern for living is set in Matthew 7:16: “You will know them by their fruit.” The first evidence of being filled with the Spirit is godly living. God wants mature Christians, who manifest the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23: “*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*” (Christian Worker’s Handbook. Billy Graham. P158.). We are challenged by God not only to be fruit inspectors, but more than anything else, to be producers of fruit.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS:

Root: the portion of the plant that grows below ground and functions as an organ of absorption; a basic cause, source or origin (social, ethnic or cultural); rooted - fixed or firmly established. Synonyms: source, origin, beginning, genesis, foundation, heart, essence, ancestors, heritage, birthplace.

Vine: any climbing or trailing woody-stemmed plant, sometimes bearing fruit, as coiled about a support (such as grapes).

Branch: a stem growing from the trunk or a limb of a tree; to spring off or out from. Synonyms: limb, arm, offshoot.

Fruit: represents the mature edible product of a plant; “offspring,” or the “fruit of a womb,” of any creature; the “product” or “result” of an action. Synonyms: product; result; reward; earnings.

Sap: fluid that carries nourishment; active strength of the body. Synonyms: life blood, life source.

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Graft: to insert a shoot from one plant into another so that they join and grow together; the point of union. Synonyms: implant, splice, affix, insert, join, transplant.

Abide: bear, endure, dwell, remain, last. Synonyms: remain constant, continue, endure; remain fast, firm or permanent; persist, be steadfast, survive.

KEY SCRIPTURE:

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

CONTEXT: Galatians 5:1-21

- Paul's focus in chapter 5 was to get the Galatians to walk by the Spirit.
- He explained Christ's desire to set believers free from sin.
- They were not to be focused on physical circumcision but circumcision of the heart.
- Everything they did was to be seasoned with love.
- Paul exhorts them to use their freedom from sin to serve others.
- They needed to walk by the Spirit, be led by the Spirit and demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit working in their lives.

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INSIGHTS:

Only a mature plant is able to produce fruit. The mature plant has germinated from a seed, produced roots and above-ground growth; only then, in due time, when the plant is mature, will it produce fruit. So, we can see that producing fruit is a process of time, nurturing and maturing. The Bible tells us that we were once a wild branch and were producing fruit of the world, but then one day we invited Christ into our lives and, at that moment, He grafted us into Himself (John 15:4). His life and strength began to flow through our “branch”. The life of the Holy Spirit would become the sap binding us to Christ and, in time, would produce what we call the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). This is only one unique fruit, carrying within it all kinds of characteristics. Also, this fruit is produced through relationship – as we abide in God and He abides in us. The stronger the relationship, the more fruit will be produced.

The fruit is the by-product of a healthy, maintained tree. The branches must have an unrestricted relationship with the trunk and with the roots if they hope to produce any type of fruit. The life comes from the roots, flows out into the branches, and in due time produces fruit containing within it more seeds to produce more trees and more fruit. The fruit nourishes those who pick it and regenerates those who want to plant. We are told that we will be known by our fruit, whether we are disciples of Christ or disciples of the world (Matt 7:16).

The fruit of the Spirit includes character qualities that God possesses which the Holy Spirit imparts to us as we live in trusting obedience to God (*The Holy Spirit*, Anders, P146). Nine qualities embody the fruit of the Spirit. Billy Graham, in his book titled *The*

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Holy Spirit, observes that this one fruit is characterized by nine specific pieces that can be divided into three clusters of three.

- 1) Love, Joy, Peace (God first)
- 2) Patience, kindness, goodness (others second)
- 3) Faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (self third)

We can see that we start by putting God first, others second, and ourselves last. We see this concept also with the idea of Joy. If you want to experience true joy, you must follow the same pattern that the word itself spells out: **J**esus first, **o**thers next, and **y**ourself last. The purpose of that fruit can be twofold. First it is to nourish others, and second, it is there to produce more plants. It is not there for the benefit of the tree. The only benefit that the tree gets is having the **JOY** of producing fruit, of seeing and having the **JOY** of others eating from it, and having the **JOY** of watching it producing more fruit.

There are three important steps that we must implement if we hope to see the fruit of the Spirit flowing in and through our lives.

1. We must consciously surrender ourselves to the Holy Spirit. Ask yourself: Have you ever realized that you belong to God, that your body is the actual residence of the Holy Spirit? Have you ever offered your body (life) to God as Romans 12:1 demands?
2. Next, we must see ourselves as having died to sin but having become alive to Christ. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me... and the life which flows out through me is of Christ Jesus.
3. Then, we determine by faith to bring ourselves under the Lordship of Christ. This happens progressively as we bring our

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minds under His control. Our actions respond to the Spirit's control over our thoughts: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" Romans 12:1-2.

When we become children of God we become vessels or temples where God dwells. His very presence produces fruit that will touch the lives of all those around us. It is like a spark of fire that ignites the wood which begins to burn and attracts attention. Others will also be touched and ignited by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

RELEVANCE:

The fruit should be the first evidence of a life that has been baptized and filled by the Holy Spirit. That is why Christ tells us that we will be known by our fruit (Matthew 7:16). The world is looking for real fruit, fruit that they can freely pick and enjoy. We must understand that more of the fruit of the Spirit must be flowing through our lives, growing and becoming the foundation to all that we do for Christ. We also must realize that everything that we do in Christ as well as that which we do in the world will produce some type of fruit. Remember, Paul tells us that whatever we plant, in due season we will reap (Galatians 6:7-10) and he further points out that we also have the blessing to plant, sow and reap a harvest from those lives around us. The fruit of the Spirit is the foundation stone to all servant / leadership ministry.

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REFLECTION:

Hearing and Seeing:

Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in what I say and do? Is He the lifeblood of my discipleship walk and reflecting who I am in Christ? What kind of fruit are people seeing hanging from my branches?

Doing and Living:

Do I each day pray, asking the Holy Spirit to fill me afresh so that, as I serve others, His fruit is available for them to pick? Have I set as a goal, not only to live the fruit of the Spirit out in my life, but am I pouring that which God has given to me, into the hearts of others? Is my servant leadership ministry producing fruit in others that will last? Do I have a concrete plan on how to help others whom I lead, to bear more fruit in the future?

RELATED SCRIPTURES FOR THE LESSON:

Gen 1:11-12 Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, *and* **fruit** trees on the earth bearing **fruit** after their kind with seed in them”; and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing **fruit** with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.

Gen 1:29 Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has **fruit** yielding seed; it shall be food for you;

Psalms 1:3 He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, which yields its **fruit** in its season.

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Isaiah 3:10 Say to the righteous that *it will go well with them*, For they will eat the **fruit** of their actions.

Isaiah 37:31 The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take **root** downward and bear **fruit** upward.

Matthew 3:8-10 Therefore bear **fruit** in keeping with repentance; ...The axe is already laid at the **root** of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good **fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Matthew 7:16 You will know them by their **fruits**. ...

Matthew 7:17-20 So every good tree bears good **fruit**, but the bad tree bears bad **fruit**. A good tree cannot produce bad **fruit**, nor can a bad tree produce good **fruit**. Every tree that does not bear good **fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their **fruits**.

Matthew 12:33 Either make the tree good and its **fruit** good, or make the tree bad and its **fruit** bad; for the tree is known by its **fruit**.

Matthew 7:20 So then, you will know them by their **fruits**.

Luke 3:8 Therefore bear **fruits** in keeping with repentance,

John 4:36 Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering **fruit** for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

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John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much **fruit**.

John 15:2, 4, 5, 8, 16 Every branch in Me that does not bear **fruit**, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears **fruit**, He prunes it so that it may bear more **fruit** ... Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear **fruit** of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much **fruit**, for apart from Me you can do nothing ... My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much **fruit**, and *so* prove to be My disciples. ... You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear **fruit**, and *that* your **fruit** would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

Romans 8:23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first **fruits** of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

I Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first **fruits**, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

Philippians 1:11 having been filled with the **fruit** of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:6 & 10 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing **fruit** and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth; ... so that you will walk in a manner

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worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing **fruit** in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

Roots: Isaiah 11:10, Romans 11:16, Colossians 2:6-7

Tree & its fruit: Matt. 7:15-23

Fruit of the world: Colossians 3:1-11

God's harvest field: Galatians 6:7-10, Matthew 9:37-38

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT DEFINED

1. LOVE

- Love is the steady direction of our will toward the lasting good of another. (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.147)
- No mark distinguishes the Christian more than love.
- God calls us to 'Christ-like love'.

2. JOY

- Joy is a deep sense of well-being that is not dependent upon favourable circumstances; rather, joy is rooted in a fundamental acceptance of, and confidence in, the will of God (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.151).

3. PEACE

- Peace is the absence of anxiety and the presence of a trusting assurance in the promises of God. (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.153)
- SHALOM: unity, completeness, rest, ease, security (The Holy Spirit, Graham pg.286).

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4. PATIENCE

- Patience is the ability to endure unpleasant people and circumstances for a higher cause (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.160).
- Long-suffering (KJV) “hanging in there”.
- To remain steadfast even when provoked.

5. KINDNESS

- Kindness is treating others well in word and deed (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.162).
- Gentleness - love-enduring - loving kindness – tenderness.

6. GOODNESS

- Goodness is doing that which is beneficial for others (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.165).
- Righteousness imputed and demonstrated.

7. FAITHFULNESS

- Is being reliable in doing what you should do (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.166).
- Trustworthy perseverance / dependability.

8. GENTLENESS

- Gentleness is treating others carefully, with respect and sensitivity (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.167).
- Meekness is not weakness or timidity, but love under control / tamed.

9. SELF-CONTROL

- Self-control is the ability to resist immediate gratification for the sake of a higher goal (The Holy Spirit, Anders, pg.169).
- Temperance (KJV)
- Strength in mastering of one’s thoughts/actions.

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- Temperance/self-control in every aspect of the Christian's life can offer the only true anchor in turbulent times.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF FRUIT

- Rotten or worldly fruit
- Artificial fruit
- Real fruit

THREE TYPES OF FRUIT

<u>The Weed</u>	<u>The Artificial Fruit</u>	<u>The Fruit of the Spirit</u>
hatred	limited love	love
sorrow	happiness, not real joy	joy
anxiety, strife	numbness, carelessness	peace
impatience	laziness, insensitivity	patience
pride	manipulation by kindness	kindness
evil	hypocrisy	goodness
infidelity	half-heartedness	faithfulness
self-seeking	false modesty	meekness
lack of control	choosing lesser gods	self-control

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VIII Gifts

A **servant leader** is **gifted** for the purpose of service and helping others mature in the body of Christ. A leader needs to understand what the **gifts** are and how they differ from their talents. When a leader works within the understanding of **giftedness** there is great fruit that comes from that ministry. Many people have a variety of abilities, but the **gifts** are led, nurtured and matured by the Holy Spirit. It is also important to clarify here that the **gifts** of the Spirit and the **fruit** of the Spirit are two sides of the same coin. Both are evidences of the Spirit's filling and anointing on the **servant leader's** life. The **fruit** must flow out through the **gifts** with which Christ anoints us.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Gifts: something that is voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation; the act, right, or power of giving or bestowing. *Synonyms:* bequest, bonus, bounty, contribution, donation, grant, gratuity, offering, present, ability, attribute, capability, power, talent, turn.

Talents: natural aptitude or skill. *Synonyms:* aptitude, facility, gift, knack, technique, expertise, capacity, faculty, endowment, strength, forte, skill, cleverness.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have **gifts** that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if*

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prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12:5-8

*As each one has received a special **gift**, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever **serves** is to do so as one who is **serving** by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.* 1 Peter 4:10-11

CONTEXT: Romans 12:5-8

- Paul teaches on the remnant of Israel.
- Paul teaches the Roman church about being grafted into the vine of Christ.
- Paul teaches how God still has a purpose and plan for Israel.
- Paul tells the believers that they are living sacrifices for Christ Jesus.
- Paul reminds the believers that they are all members of one Body and that Christ is the Head.

INSIGHTS

The subject of **gifts** has been very controversial over the years. This was also the problem that the Corinthian church faced

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and Paul had to give specific instructions for the local church. Many problems were caused by a lack of understanding. Others occur because of human nature and pride. Many want the best “on display”, the type of **gifts** for others to see. They would appear to have the biggest impact on the church and community; but **gifts** are entrusted to us in a stewardship form, given by God to be used in service. Because of that we should be very grateful for wherever God puts us in His body. All **gifts** are an act of God’s grace to God’s disciples. Our goal is to be faithful in using these **gifts** for His glory.

Gifts and Talents

In reality, we must understand that all things that we have are from God. Talents are something we are born with and **gifts** are what God gives to His disciple at a later point in time. As we understand the difference, we can begin to appreciate our strengths and weaknesses and those of others as well.

Gifted by Christ: Ephesians 4:7, 1 Timothy 1:14

When Christ calls us, He also **gifts** us for the area of service that He has revealed. We need to pray and seek the face of God to guide us. **Gifts** are given by God through grace and love to encourage us to serve. Everyone in the body is unique, necessary and important.

Gifts are for Service: 1 Peter 4:10-11

Gifts have been entrusted to us and we need to be good stewards of them. All the **gifts** are needed in order to serve the body. Servanthood is the best place for people to grow and mature. Service also shows our strengths and weaknesses. As leaders, we

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must understand that there is a place for every disciple to serve. We should be helping others to also find their place in serving Christ!

Gifts are in Rough Form: Romans 12:5-8, 2 Timothy 1:6

Gifts do not come in a ready-made form but are given to us by God in rough form. They are like seeds that have been planted. We, through the help of the Holy Spirit, must nurture and grow these seeds until they are mature enough to produce fruit. In the same way, we help others to mature their **gifts**. This growing process can be very challenging as it means stepping out in faith and becoming vulnerable. You will make mistakes. There are three things that the leader needs to understand about **gifts**.

1. Need to control their use
2. Need to exercise them
3. Need to use them according to God's will

Gifts are for equipping others: Ephesians 4:12, Romans 1:11

The key purpose to **gift** giving is to help equip others for service. Leadership is a step of faith, to reach out and do things beyond our ability and strength. This is why God gives **gifts** to us – to remind us that we need to be dependent upon Him for all that we do. We need to walk with Christ each day. Discipleship is a lifelong discipline of becoming equipped and of equipping others.

Gifts are of many forms and levels: 1 Corinthians 12:1-12

Gifts are given to us by someone else. Christ **gifted** us with the Holy Spirit, Whose purpose is to give **gifts** to the disciples. **Gifts** are given to bless, strengthen and help others. Nevertheless,

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gifts also need to be nurtured in order to reach their fullest potential. What follows is a list of what some of the gifts are.

Prophecy	Helps or Service	Teaching
Exhortation	Giving	
Administration/Ruling	Mercy	
Apostleship	Evangelism	
Pastor	Wisdom	Knowledge
Faith	Miracles	Healings
Discerning of Spirits	Tongues	Interpretation

RELEVANCE

These three words – "ministry", "equipping" and "gifts" – must work in harmony with each other, being seasoned by the fruit of the Spirit. Ministry is for the service of others, and if we are going to serve well, we must understand our God-given **gifts** and talents. They are given to us in order to help, encourage, strengthen and bless others. The **gifts** are not for our own convenience or encouragement, but for the strengthening of the church and for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ. We are all part of the same body, and as we work with each other as disciples, our foundation is the grace and love of Christ. We must purpose each day how we can take that which we have been given, and use it to equip and mature someone else for the kingdom of God.

Understanding our **gifts** (our "**gift mix**") will vary from those of other disciples) is of great importance for leaders; we need to focus on getting better equipped, as well as having unity and harmony.

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REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Take time to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the gifts that He has given to you. Take time to pray for an understanding of what the various gifts may be and how they function in the body of Christ. Listen to other people to whom you are close and list the **gifts** that they say you have; then compare and bring these two lists before the Lord.

Doing and Living:

Make a clear list of the **gifts** that you believe you have. Pray that you may see and understand the **gifting** of the individual people that you lead and how the different members can minister to others. Do you practice using your **gifts**? Learn all you can about them so you can become a better tool for Christ Jesus.

RELATED SCRIPTURES FOR GIFTS

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 Now there are varieties of **gifts**, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of **ministries**, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another **gifts** of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as **He wills.**

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Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's **gift**.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And **He gave** some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for **the equipping of the saints for the work of service**, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the spiritual **gift** within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the **gift** of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON

1. Research the various kinds of **gifts** and how they function in the body of Christ.
2. Study the **gifts** and talents of the people with whom you work.
3. Develop a plan on how you can practice the **gift** that God has given you.

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IX Example

A leader becomes an **example** in all that is said and done, as well as a picture to a lost world of who Christ is. We are to **exemplify** Christ in all ways. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, our lives reflect the fruit He produces. Paul told many people to follow him as he follows Christ (1 Cor 1:11). The actions in our lives should be leading people into the very presence of Christ Jesus.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Example: a person or thing regarded in terms of their fitness to be imitated or the likelihood of their being imitated. *Synonyms:* sample, illustration, precedent, lead, guide, model, pattern, blueprint, template, paradigm, ideal, standard, role model.

Follow: go or come after (a person or thing proceeding ahead); move or travel behind; come after in time or order. *Synonym:* come behind, come after, go behind, go after, walk behind, tread on the heels of, accompany, go along with, go around with, travel with, escort, attend, trail, abide by, adhere to, stick to, keep to, comply with, conform to, obey, observe, heed, pay attention to, note, have regard to, mind, bear in mind, take to heart, be guided by, accept, yield to, defer to, respect.

Mentor: an experienced and trusted adviser; an experienced person in a company, college, or school who trains and counsels new employees or students. *Synonym:* adviser, guide, confidant, counselor, consultant, spiritual leader, trainer, teacher, tutor, coach, instructor.

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KEY SCRIPTURE

*For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an **example** for you to follow in His steps.*

1 Peter 2:21

CONTEXT

- Peter teaches how we have a living hope in Christ.
- We are exhorted to live a holy life.
- We are living stones chosen by God.
- Peter teaches that in whatever situation we find ourselves, we are to submit to our rulers and masters.

INSIGHTS

Within leadership is the word "lead". We are to lead by **example**, modeling what Christ demonstrated to us. This will often run contrary to our nature but, with the power of the Holy Spirit, it is possible. We are to follow in the steps of Christ. A **servant leader** is a shepherd who leads the sheep into green pastures. He cares and ministers to the sheep in such a way that they will thrive and produce more sheep.

In this section, we will explore six different **examples** of leadership that we are encouraged to follow and be an **example** of to others.

1. Christ's example: John 13:15-17

Christ set before the disciples an **example** to follow. They

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were mentored by Him for over three years. There were many things that they did not understand, but He assured them that when He left the Father would send the Holy Spirit. He would give them wisdom and understanding in all things.

Christ's **example** was that of a servant. He came to serve, not to be served, and we should do likewise. He told His disciples that if they followed His **example** they would be blessed in all that they did. A servant heart does not expect a reward but serves out of a heart of love and grace.

2. Paul's example: 1 Corinthians 11:1, Philippians 3:17, 2 Thessalonians 3:7

Paul often made confident and bold requests that they were to follow him as he followed Christ. Just like Paul, we must be willing to mentor people. We need to walk with them over time so that they can grow and mature. Taking them to a seminar or giving them a book to read will help a little, but equipping comes when people walk with us. Let us read Paul's words, "*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ*" (1 Corinthians 10:32-11:1).

3. Timothy's example: 1 Timothy 4:12-13

Timothy was a young man, yet Paul saw his leadership abilities and knew the potential that lay in his heart. God can use the lives of children, youth and young adults to show others the way to Christ. We are exhorted to have a child-like faith. Paul told Timothy to be an **example** through his speech and life. He should

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do all things through love, faith and from a pure heart because others are watching. Timothy was also encouraged to read the Scriptures daily. Leaders must spend time in prayer and in the Word if we hope to overcome the things of this world. We are promised that if we walk in Christ's steps that we will be more than just conquerors. Timothy was exhorted to draw closer to Christ and he then would have the boldness and strength to lead others.

4. Church's example: 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8

As a body, the church is also to **imitate** Christ. Corporately, we are to let the fruit of the Spirit flow through us. To the world, the church reflects Whom we serve and what we believe. Too often we work as individuals, neglecting to move and live together as a body. We are to be an **example** in all areas, even in persecution and suffering. The Thessalonian church was a model to many others. That which was going on inside the church was "pouring out into the streets". People were both seeing and hearing testimonies of lives that had been changed. Actions and lifestyles, as individuals and as a group, were now completely different. Their faith in God was becoming known everywhere.

5. Disciples' example: Titus 2:7

Titus encouraged leaders to set an **example**, doing what was right and good. He also told them to do everything with integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech. This was so that those who would oppose them would have no ground to stand on, finding nothing bad to say.

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6. Leadership example: 1 Peter 2:21, 2 Thessalonians 3:7

Christian leaders are not born, but are trained by the church and by God. We need to be faithful in studying, and living out, the Word in our lives. We are not to be idle, wasting time, but are to be busy teaching and serving others. There are always people around us who desire to learn and grow.

We are called to walk in a disciplined manner. As leaders, we need to lead by **example**; others will not follow our example if our words do not line up with our actions. Yes, God will take us through times of stretching and pruning, but the purpose is always that we will produce fruit.

RELEVANCE

When Jesus called the first disciples, He said, “Come, follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.” **Servant leadership** is like casting the hook of a vision for service, and then watching as people come, follow, and then serve in a particular area. Our lifestyle should be such that it causes others to want to follow. They like what they see and desire to have the same thing happen in their lives. Leadership is mentoring by **example** – words are not enough. We need to lead others by living out what we believe. Jesus told the disciples that the harvest was ripe, and that people were like sheep without a shepherd. They needed someone to lead them so they would follow appropriately (Matt 9:36).

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

As I seek God, what does He show me concerning how my life reflects the life of Christ to others? What are the things that

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the Holy Spirit tells me concerning my example in the home, at work, and in the ministry?

Doing and Living:

As a leader, do I recognize that I am a modern-day shepherd of people? Have I taken time to see who is following in my steps? Have my actions today demonstrated that I am walking according to Christ's will and in His footsteps?

RELATED SCRIPTURES FOR THE LESSON

Matthew 4:19 And He said to them, "**Follow Me**, and I will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 4:18-22 Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, "**Follow Me**, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and **followed Him**.

John 13:15-17 For I gave you an **example** that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

John 21:19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to

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him, “**Follow Me!**”

1 Corinthians 11:1 Be **imitators** of me, just as I also am of Christ.

Philippians 3:17 Brethren, join in **following my example**, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8 You also became **imitators** of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an **example** to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.

2 Thessalonians 3:7 For you yourselves know how you ought to **follow our example**, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you,

2 Thessalonians 3:9 Not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would **follow our example**.

1 Timothy 4:12-14 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an **example** of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery.

Titus 2:6-8 Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all

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things show yourself to be an **example** of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

1 Peter 2:21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an **example** for you to follow in His steps.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

1. Research sheep and shepherd relationship.
2. List areas where the Bible teaches concerning leadership.
3. List some people of the Bible who were good **examples** to others around them and why.

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X Message

The Bible tells us that we have freely received, and that now we should freely **give** (Matthew 10:8). What, then, are we to give? We are to proclaim the “**Good News of Jesus Christ**”. The “**Good News**”, when spoken and shared, is like light beamed from a mountaintop (Matthew 5:16). It can be seen for miles. Also, it lights our pathway (Ps 119:105). It brings hope, love, grace and peace to the one who sees as well as to the one who hears.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS:

Message: a verbal, written or recorded communication sent to another person, a communication, news, memorandum, letter, report, communique, announcement.

Messenger: Envoy, herald, go-between, runner, courier, deliverer, ambassador, one who delivers a letter or some verbal information to another.

Gospel: Good news of Jesus Christ; also, a title given to the first four books of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Christ's coming to earth is made up of nine powerful realities: Living Word, His virgin birth, His earthly life, His death, resurrection, ascension, the sending of His Holy Spirit, birth of the church, His second coming and the kingdom of heaven.

KEY SCRIPTURE:

*“This is the **message** which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no*

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darkness.”

1 John 1:5

*And He said to them, “Go into all the world and **preach the gospel** to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name, they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”*

Mark 16:15-18

CONTEXT:

- This was proclaimed by Jesus Christ, to the disciple right after His death, burial and resurrection.

INSIGHTS:

*Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you **good tidings** of great joy which will be to all people.”*

Luke 2:10

One may ask, what is this thing called the “**good news**”? To put it another way, what is this thing called the **Gospel**, and why are these words used interchangeably? Why do people sometimes say, “Well, that’s the gospel truth?” It seems that these words have at least a 2000-year-old history behind them, because they came into being around the time of Christ. They became part

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of Greek thinking and language, all throughout the world governed by Rome.

The words “**good news**” can be defined as, “**glad tidings**”. In old English it was spelled “godspel” from “god” meaning “good” and “spel” meaning “news” or a “story.” Thus, the word “gospel” means to announce or declare good news. Theologically, it is “the teaching or revelation of Christ”. Of course, “gospel” also refers to the first four books of the New Testament. The widespread expression “gospel truth” implies something that is absolutely true”.

The first time this word appears is in Matthew 4:23 ... *“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the **gospel** of the kingdom and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.”* Matthew records for us what kind of things Christ was doing. He was travelling and, wherever He went, He shared the good news about the Kingdom of heaven. Not only that, he also demonstrated the power of this good news by healing the multitudes. Historically we see it being used in Mark 1:1-2, *“The beginning of the **Gospel** of Jesus Christ, the son of God; as it is written in the prophets, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee.”* It is thought that the Gospel of Mark is the oldest of the four Gospel books.

The challenging questions that we face are: 1) is there really a living God Who created all things, including mankind? 2) Where has He been all these years? 3) Why does he still care about us? 4) Why did God want to reach out to man anyway?

Well, one reason may be because He created us and we are His children. Another reason is that He loves His creation and

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deeply loves His family – He desires to be our Father. But, throughout history, there have been problems which have constantly built a wall between God and mankind. The root problem started in the Garden of Eden when the man and the woman exercised their free will, deciding to deliberately disobey God. Then, throughout time, the human race has continued to spiral downward in sinfulness, leading to damnation.

To gain a better understanding we need to go further back in history. We need to realize that, from the beginning, God had a plan to bring us back into a deep and personal relationship with Him. Disobedience is sin and, because of Adam and Eve's sin, everyone who came after them was infected with the DNA of a sin nature. The sin nature was already in our blood, mind, and spirit – we didn't have to do anything – it was just there. But, because of God's great love, mercy, and grace, He had, from the beginning of time, conceived a plan of redemption. That step-by-step plan, once it all came together in the fullness of time, would again make it possible for man to enter into a personal relationship with God.

God's plan was to send His Son. His life, death, and resurrection would again make it possible for mankind, through faith, to freely choose eternal life or continue down the pathway of death and destruction (John 3:16 & 14:6).

The Bible is a record and testimony of what God has done for mankind and what He will yet do for and through us in the future. The Bible is full of prophecies foretelling what God has in mind and how things will change for us if we only have faith in Him.

There is, I believe, at least one key Scripture verse summing up the whole Gospel plan that God had in mind from the

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beginning until He comes again to set up a new heaven and earth. It is found in **Matthew 24:14** “*And this **gospel** of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come.*” Jesus Christ Himself spoke these words.

I believe these five words, “**The Gospel of the Kingdom,**” sum up for us the big picture that all mankind needs to know. We are told to preach and to be a witness of the **Gospel** of the kingdom to all the nations. This is the message that has been proclaimed from the beginning of time, and we are now entering the phase in which the last few pieces of the puzzle are about to be put together.

The plan of God came to us through the life of Jesus Christ which has been recorded for us in the Gospels of the Bible. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John give testimony of this unique Gift Who was sent to us, the One Who would restore humanity back to a personal relationship with God. These four books of the New Testament, also known as the “**Good News**” paint for us a unique picture of who Jesus Christ is, what His nature and character are, and what He gives us through His life.

God’s plan was to replace humanity’s self-righteousness with His righteousness, extending His amazing grace to one and all. He provided the Way, the Truth, and the Life – full and unique, with purpose and value. Jesus Christ is the Truth. We are called to test the spirits as did the Berean church, searching the Scriptures to ensure that what we are being taught is, indeed, truthful (Acts 17:10-11).

When I read the Gospel accounts of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) I see ten key things that can bring “Good News” to one’s heart, things that will change the direction of all mankind. Jesus came and gave Himself for us so that we would see the true

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light of Who God is and how we need Him to be in our hearts, giving us the ability to walk this journey here on earth for His glory (John 1:4-5). Now, let's begin our journey through the true-life story of Jesus Christ Who the Heavenly Father sent to us so that we could have eternal life, and to help us understand what the Kingdom of Heaven is all about.

Living Word:

From the very beginning, it was the Living Word Who spoke everything into being – everything that was created was created by God Almighty (John 1:1-3). When God spoke, dramatic things took place. Right from the beginning of time God, as the Living Word, walked with man. He spoke words to nations but also personalized His words to His individual children. It is important for all disciples to understand that the Gospel of the Good News goes right back to the creation of the world, the crowning and exciting event of which was His speaking into being a man and a woman, made in His image. Our God is the One Who speaks life-giving words to those whom He has created.

Birth:

It begins with God sending His son, conceived by a virgin through the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1-25). Amazingly, the birth of Christ was heralded to shepherds by a host of angels. The wise men heard of Jesus' birth and they presented gifts to the babe. Also, the enemy became aware of His birth and tried to have Him destroyed (John 4).

Life:

Jesus lived His first 30 years as a carpenter's son in Galilee. In the fullness of time He left home and was baptized by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17). His earthly ministry of proclaiming the Kingdom of God began at this point – showing us how, as a sinful

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people, we could once again come into a very personal relationship with God. He challenged the religious ways of His day and demonstrated that He was the Light of the world. He clarified that the Father had a plan of redemption and, with ultimate grace, poured out His life as a “drink offering” so that man could clearly see the love and mercy of the Father in heaven.

There were some people who wanted to make Him king because of all the miracles He performed, but Christ demonstrated the heart of a servant, showing how we could come into a deep relationship with God. This servant relationship would demonstrate our commitment to Him as Lord and Savior.

Death:

The enemy constantly sought to destroy Him. It seemed that Satan had won as, in the fullness of time, Christ was taken away, beaten, and hung on a cruel cross, just like a criminal. At the moment when Jesus breathed his last breath, having shed his blood, He gave all into the Hands of the Father in heaven (Matthew 27:33-37). For three days, He remained in the bowels of the earth where the keys of life and death (stolen in the Garden of Eden) were taken back from Satan.

Resurrection:

If the death of Christ ended the story, He would have been no different than any other man. But, on the third day, the tomb and grave could not hold Him (Matthew 28:1-10). God’s resurrection power filled His body, raising Him up from the dead and breaking, once for all, the chains of sin and death. The bridge between God and mankind was restored. No longer did the relationship have to be external, but now would be internal. Christ then appeared to the disciples and many others, bearing testimony that things had now changed.

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Ascension:

Finally, not only was Christ resurrected, but He then ascended on high (Acts 1:9-11) to prepare a place for us (John 14:3) and to intercede with the Father on our behalf. He also told His disciples ... “That as you have seen me go, I will once again come back to receive you unto myself”.

Holy Spirit:

After Christ ascended, another promise was fulfilled, possibly the most unique of them all. On the day of Pentecost, God sent His Holy Spirit. God’s very presence now came into the heart of every believer (Acts 2:14). The Holy Spirit gives us the power to overcome the grip and strongholds of this sinful world. He has become our Teacher and Comforter and will never leave us or forsake us.

Church:

On the day of Pentecost, Christ sent the Holy Spirit in His power – at that moment the church was born (Acts 2:38-41). Christ not only wanted us to have a personal relationship with Him, but also desired that we would build relationships with other believers. The church was to be His Body, the organism of which He would be Head, flowing through the church as a witness to the lost world (Eph 1: 22-23). The church was to be a light to all who would desire to give their lives to Christ; it was to be a place of refuge and safety of the pilgrim traveling through this world.

Jesus would empower His Body with unity and harmony, equipping them for various types of ministry and service. The life blood of the body would be the Holy Spirit, as evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit displayed through the church as a corporate body and through individual people.

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The church was to be a place of rest and peace, a place in which to be restored, built up, trained, and equipped for service. We do not have to feel alone or abandoned, as we are now part of a worldwide family. We have been adopted into the family of God, having brothers and sisters who can help and care for us as we walk with Christ.

Second coming:

Jesus explained to the disciples on the day of His ascension that, just as they saw Him go, so He would personally return to receive his own (Revelation 19:11-19). The book of Revelation goes into great detail about the battle that will occur between good and evil.

Heaven:

Our final point (although not often discussed) is heaven. Heaven is a place where believers will spend all eternity – a place where there will be no more pain or suffering, a place where all the strongholds of sin have been destroyed, and where we will once again be in direct fellowship with God. We will see Him face to face, worshiping Him for all that He has done (Revelation 21 and 22).

What Christ did for us was truly “Good News” for all mankind; it reveals God’s desire for a heart relationship of love and grace, with no strings attached, to all who would just receive it as a gift. Romans 10:9-10 makes it clear how we can receive this Good News into our hearts: *“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your hearts that God raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved**; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness; and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”*

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RELEVANCE:

The **Gospel** has the complete truth on how we can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When accepted, it makes us joint heirs with Christ for all eternity (Rom 8:17). We are also commanded by Christ to preach the **Gospel** to the lost people and nations of the world; the Word of God is to be taught to the disciples of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20).

The **Gospel** of Mark gives to us a wonderful overview concerning the Good News of Jesus Christ. Let's take a moment to reflect on what Mark shares concerning this **Gospel**: *"The beginning of the **Gospel** of Jesus Christ, the son of God. (Mark 1:1) "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the **Gospel**." Mark 1:15 "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brother or sister or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for my sake and the **Gospel's**, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time – houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life." Mark 10:29 "And the **Gospel** must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speaks, but the Holy Spirit." Mark 13:10-11 "Go into all the world and preach the **Gospel** to every creature." Mark 16:15*

REFLECTION:

Hearing and Seeing:

What is the Gospel message I am sharing with others, and what are they hearing? What is the Gospel message that people see in my daily life as I live amongst them?

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Doing and Living:

As a servant leader, am I using my life to show others the wonderful truth of the Gospel of Christ? As I minister and work with people, do I have a plan by which I will be able to personally show how this Gospel of Jesus Christ can set people free from bondage and death?

SCRIPTURE RELATED TO THE LESSON:

Message

Hag 1:13 Haggai, the LORD'S messenger; spoke the LORD'S **message** to the people, saying, "I am with you, says the LORD".

I John 3:11 For this is the **message** that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

Matt 4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the **Gospel** of the kingdom and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Matt 11:5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the **Gospel** preached to them.

Acts 8:25 So when they testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the **Gospel** in many villages of the Samaritans.

Rom 1:15-16 So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the **Gospel** to you who are in Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the **Gospel** of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also the Greek.

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Rom 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the **Gospel** of peace, who bring **glad tidings** of good things.”

1 Cor 9:14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the **Gospel** should live from the **gospel**.

Gal 1:6-9 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different **Gospel**, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the **Gospel** of Christ, but even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach another **Gospel** to you than that what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other **Gospel** to you that what you have received, let him be accursed.

Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the preparation of the **Gospel** of peace;

Phil 1:17 But the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the **Gospel**.

Col 1:23 If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the **Gospel** which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

1 Thes 1:5 For our **Gospel** did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

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Proclaim / Proclaimed

1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you **proclaim** the Lord's death till He comes.

Ps 40:9-10 I have **proclaimed** the good news of righteousness in the great assembly; indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have **declared** Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and your truth from the great assembly.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THIS LESSON:

Preaching: See how this word was used when the disciple went out into the communities to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Teaching: See how this word was used by Jesus in the Gospel and by the disciples in the book of Acts.

Proclaim: Look at how Jesus Christ and the disciples went forth to so many different places to speak to anyone who would hear their glad tidings of the Good News.

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XI Stewardship

“**Stewardship**” is not a commonly used word. The meaning of the word is that we have been entrusted with something that is not ours. We can use it and take care of it until the owners come back and ask for it. We must treat it as if it is ours, and we also need to remember that we will be held accountable for the condition in which we return it. **Servant leaders** must keep in mind that they will be held accountable for that which they had been entrusted with by Christ.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Stewardship: supervise arrangements or keep order, manage or look after (another’s property). *Synonyms:* management of, care of, take care of.

Accountability: (of a person, organization, or institution) required or expected to justify actions or decisions; responsible. *Synonyms:* responsibility, liability, answerability, responsibility, reporting, obedience.

Entrusted: to look after, to maintain in good order, to be responsible for, delegated to. *Synonyms:* given, received, responsibility, commitment.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*As each one has received a special gift, employ it in **serv**ing one another as **good stewards** of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever **serve**s, let him do so as by strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus*

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*Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever.
Amen.* **1 Peter 4:10-11**

CONTEXT

- Teaching on wife and husband relationships.
- The challenge of suffering for doing good.
- Keeping our hearts and mind focused on what Christ has done for us.
- The importance of living our lives for God.
- Sharing that the end times are near.

INSIGHTS

With **servant leadership** comes responsibility. As leaders, we are entrusted with many things for which we will be held accountable. We need to understand that the gifts God gives are for a purpose – to invest them in the lives of others. In this section, we will look at seven areas which define what it means to be a “**stewardship leader**”.

1. Stewards of our talents: Matthew 25:14-20

The parable of the talents is a story teaching people about the concept of **accountability**. It concerns three people whom the master knew. Intending to leave and, not knowing when he would return, he gave each of the three responsibilities. He entrusted each one with a certain amount of money based on their ability. In due time, he returned and asked the workers to give an **account** of what they had done with the money entrusted to them. Two of the people had doubled what they had been given. But, out of fear of

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his master, the third hid his money and did nothing with it. Not only did he renege on increasing that which he had been given, but he lost what he had. Because of his inaction, all that he had was taken away and he was cast out into outer darkness.

This parable reminds us of all that God has given and **entrusted** to us. It also reminds us that, while our Master is away, we need to be about the ministry of being wise stewards because – when we least expect it, the Lord will return. At that time, He will ask us to give an **account** of the things with which He has entrusted us. The ministry of leadership has, at its base, **accountability** and **responsibility** for what we have been given.

2. Stewards of our time: Luke 12:35-48

Time is also a gift from God; we do not know the hour that we will be called home to our King. In some ways, time has become an enemy. We are told that God gives enough time to accomplish those things that are His will. Much time is wasted throughout the day, doing things that have no value. We spend time buying, and then worry about all things we have purchased. We are told to be ready in season and out of season. We need to evaluate and determine which things are the most important. Jesus told a parable about 10 virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish. The foolish virgins missed out on being with the Lord. The biggest thing our enemy comes to steal is time.

We are asked in this passage of Scripture to answer Christ's question about who was the wise steward. The Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible **steward**, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?" (Luke 12:42). A **servant leader** must use his time wisely; when he doesn't, it's like water running from a cup that has a hole

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in it. We must value both our time and other people's time. We have been **entrusted** with much and need to use time wisely.

3. Stewards of the Gospel: Luke 16:10-12

The Gospel is the foundation for all we do. We have been **entrusted** to proclaim this Good News throughout the world. But the Gospel should also be the salt that flavors everything that we, as leaders, do. Paul calls the Gospel a mystery to some, but to those who believe, it is life. The Gospel should be the foundation of our daily thinking. Our hearts should be full of the Gospel when, as disciples, we are placed in positions of leadership. This message has been **entrusted** to us; its truth is life changing and freeing. The principles of the Bible are foundational to all leaders who disciple others.

4. Stewards of our walk: Ephesians 5:15-17

A leader is a person who puts plans into action. We need to ask God for wisdom as we serve others. Paul told the Ephesian church that they needed to be filled daily by the Holy Spirit – He teaches us how to live our lives for the glory of God (Eph 5:18). We need to go to the fountain of God and daily drink from His living waters. We are asked to walk in His ability and strength, not ours. This passage challenges us to be careful how we live our lives. The **servant leader** must walk life's journey with God personally. Only then will he be **entrusted** with the responsibility of walking alongside others.

5. Stewards of our giving: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Stewardship consists, not just giving our finances, but using our time and abilities to help people. Giving is like the

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planting of precious seed that will bring on a harvest. Again, it is important that we are open to the moving of the Holy Spirit. It is not the size of the gift that counts, but being faithful in doing something. We are so often worried about what others may think. Many people are not faithful in little things, and therefore cannot be **trusted** with greater things.

Stewardship is a step by step process – learning, listening, and doing. God wants us to reap a harvest, but first we must deal wisely with what He has already given to us. The key is to be obedient to God in all areas of life. After all, everything we have is His. We are told that we have received freely, and now we should freely give (Matt 10:8). Often the greatest gift we can give is the gift of time – it’s just one aspect of managing our resources.

6. Stewards of God’s grace: Ephesians 3:2

God’s grace is the greatest gift with which we have been **entrusted**. Because of grace, we have been set free from the life of sin and death. As leaders, we need to be people who share God’s grace freely with those around us (James 4:6). Paul told the church that this grace was a mystery. It came through Jesus Christ, God’s only Son. Grace is unmerited favor; we need to extend this amazing grace to those around us. In a sense, Grace is double sided – it is to be freely given, but there is an accountability factor regarding how we use it.

7. Stewards of our ministry: 1 Peter 4:10

Peter tells his readers that they have been given gifts for service, but they have to be good **stewards** in the use of these gifts. The gifts of the Spirit can be a great blessing or can be very destructive. The gifts must flow from the fruit of the Spirit. This

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fruit is the foundation upon which the gifts are to be built. Both gifts and fruit have one main purpose – to serve one another. We serve as servant leaders – as though we were Christ Himself. We are His hands and feet. We need to be good **stewards** of the ministry with which we have been **entrusted**.

RELEVANCE

God is a God of giving, **entrusting** many things to us, including people's lives. People are a special treasure of God – each one is unique and full of potential. We must open our hearts to serve people to the best of our ability, not doing things for selfish gain, but from a heart of true love. We hope to see these people grow and mature in Christ. Leaders will be held accountable for that with which they have been entrusted (James 3:1). We cannot hide from our gifts or pretend that we don't know what our gifts are. We must walk in the truth and the light of God's Word; it will light our path.

Stewardship indicates that we have been given something to look after and we must do our best to fulfill the trust that God has given us.

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Ask the Holy Spirit to prompt your memory as you make a list of things that God has given to you and which, to this point, you have done nothing. Take time to reflect on those areas in which you have not been faithful in fulfilling his call concerning **stewardship**.

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Doing and Living:

God's makes you responsible for people – remember what you have done with them and also remember what you have not done with them. You are accountable for both. Take some time to record on paper what accountability means as it affects your life and the lives of those around you. One needs to develop a plan of accountability in one's ministry whereby the whole team of servants are good stewards for Jesus Christ.

RELATED SCRIPTURES FOR STEWARDSHIP

Luke 16:10-12 He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will **entrust** the true riches to you? And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a **cheerful giver**.

Ephesians 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the **stewardship** of God's grace which was given to me for you.

Ephesians 5:15-17 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

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Colossians 1:19-29 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh, I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church, I was made a minister according to the **stewardship** from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose, also I labour, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON

1. Research the old English concept of stewards and stewardship.
2. Reflect on what it means to be accountable as a believer and as a leader.

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3. Write out a list of things that you can see that God has entrusted you with.

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XII Seed

The purpose of planting **seed** is to reap a crop. As we sow **seed** in people's hearts, it will bear a crop. **Servant Leaders** need to catch the vision that what we do today affects history. Lives will be touched and changed. For example, Abraham did not, at first, trust God for a son. Although he believed God's promises, he did not think God was big enough for his circumstances. He and Sara decided that he should have a child with Hagar, Sara's servant. We are seeing the results of that decision even today. Everything we do in the present plants **seed** that will produce a crop in the future. **Seeds** can bring forth a harvest, not only in our generation, but can influence many in generations to come.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Seed: a flowering plant's unit of reproduction, capable of developing into another such plant. *Synonyms:* kernel, germ, genesis, source, origin, root, starting point, beginnings, potential, cause, reason, motivation, motive, base, basis, foundation, fundamental; core, nucleus, heart, essence.

Treasure: a quantity of precious metals, gems, or other valuable objects. *Synonyms:* cherish, hold dear, place great value on, prize, set great store by, value greatly, esteem.

History: the study of past events, particularly in human affairs: a continuous, typically a chronological record of important or public events or of a particular trend or institution. *Synonyms:* chronology, story, account, study, saga, narrative, tale, chronicle, archive, record, report, narrative; memoir, biography, autobiography, public records, annals.

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Galatians 6:7-10

CONTEXT

- Paul teaches the Galatian church about Hagar and Sara.
- Paul proclaims what kind of freedom we have in Christ Jesus.
- We are exhorted to walk in the Spirit.
- We are exhorted to be careful not to be deceived by false teachers and religions.
- Paul tells of the importance in having the fruit of the Spirit flowing through our lives.
- We need to be careful that we evaluate ourselves concerning the things that we do.
- We need to be people who share with one another.

INSIGHTS

The **servant leader** needs to understand how to plant **seeds** wisely. There are many kinds of **seed** in the world. The leader needs to inspect what kind of **seed** is planted in people's lives, as long-term effects will occur (Matt 23:18-20). We can, through

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God's strength, change the course of history. It is not good enough to sit back and say that it is not our problem. TV, radio, books, music, and video games – all these can produce a destructive and unwanted type of harvest. We must inspect the **seed** and ask God for discernment about what that seed might produce.

Once we understand the types of seed available and what we are to do with them, we then need to start sowing good seed wherever we can. We need to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and direct us to the soil that He has prepared.

Our responsibility does not end once the **seed** is planted. We must nurture, feed, and water the plant through prayer and the Word of God. A baby is not born and then left to fend on its own; parents have many years of responsibility in leading that child to maturity. Part of nurturing is weeding and pruning. We discipline in love because we know what will happen if we do not do so. In the same way, leaders are called to nurture people. Leaders may be called on at times to administer painful, but beneficial, discipline.

The leader invests the **seed**, with the goal of turning the **seed** into a crop that will keep producing. We plant so that we can get a return on what has been planted. Further, we do not just reap on earth, but we also store up treasure in heaven (Matt 6:19-20). Harvesting can occur at different times of the year or in different seasons, depending on the type of **seed** that was sown.

One other point of note is that the servant leader himself is seed. We are not only to plant seeds in others but we ourselves must be planted in order to multiply and bear fruit. Jesus states, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”* (John 12:24)

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Every leader must go through a process of dying – dying to self and becoming a new creation. In this process, the leader is “breaking open” so that the seed inside can sprout, giving rise to a new plant that will bear much fruit. It is like metamorphosis. A worm, through God’s miracle of metamorphosis, becomes a butterfly. We, as **servant leaders**, need to train and equip others so that they, too, can understand the importance of this process in their daily lives. Paul said, “I die daily” (1 Corinthians 15:31). Again, what we do as leaders is not for the purpose of the rewards or blessings we receive here on earth, but for the love and joy of serving our King, Jesus Christ.

RELEVANCE

As leaders, we have the joy of planting good things into other people’s lives. Our everyday actions will produce a crop of some type; what we do will affect the course of history. We are given precious **seeds** to sow and, each day, we need to do so wisely. We know that God has provided a great storehouse of **seed** which will never run out, but if we hope to see a harvest, we must broadcast that **seed** into people’s lives. So much **seed** is lost when people wait for others to do the work. We must realize that every one of us is very important in the ministry of **seed** distribution. Every **seed** you sow can yield thirty, sixty, or a hundred-fold (Matt 13:23). The potential is huge but the labourers are few. Therefore, we are exhorted to keep praying to the Lord to send out labourers (Matt 9:30-31). Different people do different kinds of work, but it is God Who gives the increase. As leaders, we need to have faith, knowing that what we sow will produce a crop in due season; we are not to grow weary in labouring for Christ (Gal 6:8-9). As long as there is time, we as **servant leaders** must keep sowing, nurturing, and harvesting all we can.

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REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Have I lost heart or am I full of fear about stepping out and being a **seed** planter? Do I think I have nothing to give? If so, confess these things to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what He has already given you, and how you should use it for His glory.

Doing and Living:

What have I been doing with the **seed** which God has entrusted to me? Into whose lives have I been sowing this **seed**? What is the **seed** God has given me to plant, and where does he want me to sow it?

SCRIPTURES RELATED TO SEED AND TREASURE

Isaiah 33:6 And He will be the stability of your times, a wealth of salvation, wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is his **treasure**.

Matthew 6:19-21 Do not store up for yourselves **treasures** on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves **treasures** in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your **treasure** is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 13:31-32 He presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard **seed**, which a man took and sowed in his field; and this is smaller than all other **seeds**, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.”

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Matthew 17:20-21 And He said to them, “Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard **seed**, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move: and nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting.”

Matthew 23:18- 22 Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom **seed** was sown beside the road. The one on whom **seed** was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom **seed** was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom **seed** was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.

John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a **grain of wheat** falls into the earth and **dies**, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, he must **follow Me**; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honour him.

1 Corinthians 15:36-38 You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; and that which you sow, you do

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not sow the body which is to be, but a bare **grain**, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the **seeds** a body of its own.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this **treasure** in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

2 Corinthians 9:10 Now He who supplies **seed** to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your **seed** for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness

1 Peter 1:22-23 since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of **seed** which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON:

1. Study the whole process of planting and growing.
2. What is spiritual seed?
3. Study some people's lives and see how history was changed because of what they planted.

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XIII Harvest

As a farmer who plants a field has faith that there will be a harvest, servant leaders need to set their focus on what lies ahead in the future. On this subject, Jesus interchangeably uses two words – “harvest” and “fruit”. God expects results from our labours and so should we. Jesus explained that the harvest was ready but that there was a lack of workers (Matt 9:37-38). There is a great need for disciples to go out and reap what God has prepared for us to harvest. The servant leader must be praying for a bountiful harvest of fruit.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS

Focus: the center of interest or activity; the state or quality of having or producing clear visual definition. *Synonyms:* center, focal point, central point, center of attention, hub, pivot, nucleus, heart, cornerstone, linchpin, kingpin, bedrock, basis, anchor, backbone.

Fruit: the sweet and fleshy product of a tree or other plant that contains seed and can be eaten as food: the result or reward of work or activity. *Synonyms:* reward, benefit, advantages, product, produce, profit, return, yield, legacy, issue, deserts, outcome, upshot, result, results, consequences, effect, effects.

Reap: cut or gather (a crop or harvest); receive (a reward or benefit) as a consequence of one’s own or other people’s actions. *Synonyms:* harvest, garner, gather in, bring in, take in, cut, crop, receive, obtain, get, acquire, secure, realize, derive, procure.

Harvest: the process or period of gathering in crops. *Synonyms:*

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reaping, picking, collecting, ingathering, gleaning, return, result, fruits, product, effect, consequence, output.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the **harvest**’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for **harvest**. Already he who **reaps** is receiving wages and is gathering **fruit** for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who **reaps** may rejoice **together**. For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows and another **reaps**.’ I sent you to **reap** that for which you have not laboured; others have laboured and you have entered into their labour.”*

John 4:34-38

CONTEXT

- Jesus calls the first disciples to come and follow Him.
- Jesus performs the miracle of changing water into wine.
- Jesus goes to the temple and clears it of all the money changers and sellers.
- A Pharisee named Nicodemus questions Jesus on how to be born again.
- John the Baptist gives testimony about Jesus.
- Jesus talks to the Samaritan woman.
- Jesus tells the disciples about the harvest.

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INSIGHTS

God wants all disciples to experience times of **harvest**. He is so interested in us that he wants us to receive the blessing of **harvest** for the things that we have stepped out and done in His Name. Let us now look to God's Word to see what "harvesting" is.

1. Call: Romans 8:28, 29-38

God calls us in two distinct ways. One is to follow Christ as Lord and Savior and the second is to do something for the Kingdom of God with our lives. We will see a **harvest** in due season, but we must remain faithful to the call. In our hearts, we need to be convinced of the call God has laid upon us. Then we will be able to overcome the trials and tribulations that will inevitably come upon us. The enemy does not want us to succeed in bringing in a **harvest**. Paul tells the Roman disciples "In all things we are more than conquerors" – we are to press on through life's difficulties.

2. Will: Philippians 2:13 and John 4:34

As leaders, we must understand God's will if we want to see a **harvest** in the future. The Lord's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane focuses not on "our will" but on "His will". God works through leadership that is in line with His purposes. Paul tells the Philippians, "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose". Each day we battle with our own desires and plans. But, as we pray and walk in His will, we will see fruit from our labours.

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3. Plan: Ephesians 1:11, 13-14 and Proverbs 19:21

Do we really believe that God does have a plan for our lives? Does he really care about the things that I, as a leader, say and do each day? The answer is YES. Jesus said that a wise builder works according to a plan. He counts the cost, evaluates the project, makes a decision to build and, as he keeps focused, he will see the **fruit** of his labour. Ephesians tells us, "... predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything ...". There are individual plans as well as community plans. These plans draw us together for the purpose of fulfilling the great **commission/harvest**.

4. Purpose: 2 Corinthians 5:5 and Romans 8:28

Romans 8:28 tells us, "*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His **purpose**.*" God wants leaders to work in harmony with others to fulfill God's purpose. Again, we are called to do so. As we listen to the Word, we see a bigger picture. Paul tells the Corinthian church that God has created us for a purpose, and is interested in the details of our lives. He never leaves us or forsakes us, but is there to guide and equip us for the tasks that we will face each day. That is why Isaiah tells us, "*Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary*" (Isaiah 40:31). God's purpose for you is that there be times of harvesting in your life.

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5. Goal: Philippians 3:14

We are to aim for the call that God has put before us. That goal (or goals) will stretch our faith and ability. Reaching toward this goal is a daily process. Each day we take steps to keep focused on the bigger task down the road. It is like climbing a mountain – at first it seems like a huge undertaking, but each day we take steps and, over a period of time, we stand on top. This is very exciting! After all the planning and work, we have met our goal and we reap the **harvest**. Paul tells us to press on, forgetting that which lies behind living forward to the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.

6. Word: Isaiah 53:11

The Word of God is the foundation for all that we say or do. We must study the Word if we hope to reap a **harvest**. The Bible is full of principles for leadership and harvest. We need to tap into this great resource of wisdom. Hear the words of Isaiah 53:8-11.

*For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways
And My thoughts than your thoughts.
For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
And do not return there without watering the earth
And making it bear and sprout,
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the
eater;
So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;*

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*It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent
it.*

The **servant leader** needs to meditate on these words because they provide much wisdom about what lies ahead for themselves and those they lead. We need to focus on God's Word and put it into practice in our lives, having faith that He will bring to pass a great **harvest**. The **servant leader** can see a great **harvest** as a result of the seed of God's Word.

7. Vision: John 4:35

What does the Lord see? As leaders, we need to ask God to open our spiritual eyes to see what He sees. In John 4:35 Jesus said, *“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the **harvest**’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for **harvest**.”* We need to see things from a heavenly perspective – not a worldly one. We must realize that we are not in a battle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.

The Bible tells us that one day when Elisha was in his house, his servant came running in to tell him that the enemy armies had surrounded them. Elisha told his servant not to worry because the armies of God were even greater. Elisha prayed that the Lord would open the servant's eyes that he would see. The Lord opened the eyes of the young man; he went back out and saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha's home (2

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Kings 6:15-18).

8. Lasting: John 15:16

The servant leader must keep his focus on fruit that will last. We need to be producing a harvest that will go on long after we have finished our part. The heavenly Father is looking for fruit from our lives and will reward us accordingly. Revelation 22:12 says, *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My **reward** is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."* There will be a time of accounting for what we have done. Afterwards, Christ himself will pour out His blessings. We are to be planters and harvesters for Christ, remaining focused and committed to this task.

9. Holy Spirit Galatians 6:8-9

Everything we do must always be done according to the will and under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. Paul warns the Galatian church about sowing in the flesh because the harvest of that is only fleshly, temporal, and will reap corruption. What we need to be doing as **servant leaders** is to be sowing God's precious seed in the Spirit. What we sow here will cause us to have an eternal harvest in the future. But the challenge we face, is not to grow weary as **servant leaders** but to continue our commitment to Christ Jesus, knowing that one day we will receive a **harvest** from Him as a result of that which was done according to His will.

RELEVANCE

We are building, not just for ourselves, but for those who are yet to come. We plant and sow in order that the **harvest**

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will be reaped. Many seasons may pass by before we see any fruit, yet we should not grow weary because in due time we will see a **harvest** (2 Thes 3:13). Leaders may often wonder if anything is going to come from their efforts; they may ask the question, “Is what we are doing going to make a difference?” As Paul told the Galatians, we must remember, “Whatever you sow you will reap ... so do not grow weary in well doing (Gal 6:9).”

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Do I see that there is a **harvest** that is just waiting to be reaped? As **servant leaders**, each day we must pray that God will open up our spiritual ears and eyes to see what is truly happening around us during our walk with Him here on earth.

Doing and Living:

What have I been planting? What kind of a **harvest** has been coming from it? What have I been focusing on in these last days? What **harvest** field is God pointing out to me and to the people whom I am leading and with whom I am serving?

RELATED SCRIPTURES RELATED TO HARVEST

Proverbs 19:21 Many **plans** are in a man’s heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand.

Matthew 7:16-20 You will know them by their **fruits**. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good **fruit**, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad **fruit**, nor can a bad tree produce good **fruit**. Every tree that does not bear good **fruit** is cut down

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and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their **fruits**.

Matthew 9:37-38 Then He said to His disciples, “The **harvest** is plentiful, but the workers are few. “Therefore, beseech the Lord of the **harvest** to send out workers into His **harvest**.”

Matthew 12:33 Either make the tree good and its **fruit** good, or make the tree bad and its **fruit** bad; for the tree is known by its **fruit**.

John 15:8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much **fruit**, and so prove to be My disciples.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear **fruit**, and that your **fruit** would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His **purpose**.

2 Corinthians 5:5 Now He who prepared us for this very **purpose** is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

Galatians 6:8-9 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time **we will reap** if we do not grow weary.

Philippians 2:13 For it is **God who is at work in you**, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

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Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the **goal** for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON

1. Research what it means to **harvest**.
2. Read some biographies and see what people **harvested** in their lifetimes or after they were gone.
3. Write a list of things that you have **harvested** because of the seeds that you planted in the past.

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XIV Commission and Charge

The **Great Commission** charges us to do a specific ministry. We can say that the **Great Commission** is a blanket statement that creates a foundation for everything else we do. We are called to live a moment-by-moment lifestyle that will model and reflect Jesus Christ to a lost world. We mirror Christ to others in the world and when they look at us they should see Christ in us. We have become part of a body of believers that lives under a new banner, different from the kingdoms of this world, and reflects our heavenly citizenship (Phil 3:20). As **servant leaders**, we need to be aware that we are the first in line to be disciplined by Christ – there is accountability for everything we do (James 3:1). Leadership is often **commissioned** by God through the church. The goal of the **Great Commission** is to make more disciples.

DEFINITION AND SYNONYMS:

Commission: an instruction, command, or role given to a person or to a specially constituted group. *Synonym:* task, employment, job, work, piece of work, project, mission, assignment, undertaking, exercise, enterprise, endeavour, duty, charge, responsibility, burden.

Charge: to impose a particular duty or task on; to entrust with responsibility, care, custody or management of something or someone; to command or exhort with authority. *Synonyms:* burden, encumber, duty or task, directive, order, command, dictate, exhort.

Witnesses: have knowledge of (an event or change) from personal observation or experience; give or serve as evidence of; testify to; one who gives testimony to what one has seen or

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heard. *Synonyms:* evidence, indication, proof, testimony, evidence/proof of, attest, testify, confirm, evidence, prove, corroborate, verify, substantiate, bear out, show, demonstrate, establish, be a monument to, indicate, reveal.

Disciple: the one who has been taught and trained by a master; a learner or student; one who is mentored by another who has also been mentored himself. *Synonyms:* follower, pupil.

KEY SCRIPTURE

*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go** therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **teaching** them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* Matthew 28:18-20

CONTEXT

- The death and burial of Christ.
- The resurrection of Christ.
- Christ meets with His disciples.
- The false report of those who guarded the tomb.

INSIGHTS

Your call is to become a disciple. The fruit of that is to go forth and make other **disciples**. **Discipleship lifestyle** is a daily commitment to the truth and teachings of Christ. It is a daily walk of following after Christ and His call for us. Our talk and actions are to be a witnessing tool that Christ will use to draw others to

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Himself.

We are to become disciplined into a new way of living, walking in Christ's footsteps. Our lives should reflect Christ in everything we say and do. We have become part of a new kingdom and culture, and need to talk and walk as citizens of Christ's Kingdom. Specific distinctives should mark the **disciple**, so that when others look at us, they can tell what "country" we are from. Remember, we have been called to be Christ's ambassadors, representatives of His Kingdom (2 Cor 5:20) to go forth in His Name and as His servants, doing the ministry of reconciliation to a lost world.

Citizenship in the Kingdom of God requires a **discipleship lifestyle** (Phil 3:20). We have full rights as citizens of the Kingdom and we have the protection of our King. The enemy cannot enslave us – even if he tries to do so, we can call upon our "government" – He will come and fight for us. Paul knew the power of citizenship – he was born a Roman citizen and used that citizenship when he needed to do so. We, through Christ, are born into the Kingdom of God. We have the full power and authority which Christ has given to us (Matt 10:1).

Discipleship can be compared to a student going to university. Students pursue an area which disciplines them to become equipped in their chosen field. The key to a **discipleship lifestyle** is **discipline** – becoming equipped for a life of service. Just as Paul told Timothy, we should study to show ourselves approved, good workmen for the Kingdom of Christ (2 Tim 2:15).

The Christian leader must build his life around the **Great Commission** command. We are charged with, and commissioned to the mission of Christ Jesus here on earth. From the **Great**

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Commission found in the Gospels and in the Book of Acts, we can glean eight directives. Each is a command, and all are important for **servant leaders** to follow.

1. Go with a Testimony and Witness

In Bible times people did not have a lot of books, nor did they have anything like the teaching tools we have today. What they did have was their **testimony**. They had a story to share with others about Jesus Christ Who had dramatically impacted them and changed their lives from the inside out. For example, the woman at the well (John 4) was touched deeply by the words of Christ. Initially, the change occurred in her heart, but not yet in her actions. But she was so deeply affected that she went into her village and **testified** to others, proclaiming the One Who had come, the Messiah (John 4:25, 39). Her **testimony** became the bridge that God used to touch the entire Samaritan village for Christ. We see that her **testimony** became the tool that helped others see Christ as “the Christ”, the Savior of the world (John 4:42).

Jesus told the disciples that there was a great need for labourers in the ripened fields (Matt 9:37-38). That particular day, the Samaritan village was the “field”, and it was ready for reaping. But Christ still had to go out to the people. He had to **witness** to the woman, and the woman had to **witness** to the village. The key to the **great commission** command is to realize that the Holy Spirit has been sent to empower the **servant/leader**, so that he can be a **witness** (Acts 2:22) to others as he goes out each day into the surrounding world (Acts 1:8). Look at what Peter did on the day of Pentecost – he shared a **testimony** by the power of the Spirit and thousands came to Christ Jesus (Acts 2:41).

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2. Go make disciples

This first point is a broad statement but it does have a very specific truth relevant to **servant leadership**. There are three important words – “going”, “making”, and “disciples”. First, we must be **“going”**, taking responsibility and action for others in our world. Although we may not go overseas, we have our streets, neighborhoods, and cities. Many disciples of Christ do not even know who their neighbors are. **“Going”** means getting up and moving outside of our comfort zones.

The second word we want to look at is **“make”**. In order to have anything, someone has to take the time to **make** it. If it is a cake, someone has to gather the ingredients and bake it. If it is a car, hundreds of people gather on assembly lines to put it together. **Disciples** are not just born, but they are **“made”**. Salvation (the new birth) begins the process of growth and maturity in our faith. At times, a believer needs to be “disassembled” before he can be made into a new creation for Christ. A **disciple** is like a baby – it takes time and nurturing to make a true **disciple** of Christ. **Discipleship** is a process of training and equipping on both parts – the teacher’s and the student’s. The disciple then needs to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Then comes the word **“disciple”**. A **disciple** is one who chooses to follow after the teaching and disciplines of another. When we become Christians, we become **Christ’s disciples**. Becoming a **disciple** is more than having prayer and Bible reading for 15 minutes each day. **Discipleship** is a **lifestyle**, affecting all we say and do. As **servant leaders**, we are to help in bringing Christ to all nations. We are to give them the tools to grow and mature.

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3. Go Baptize new disciples

Baptism is important because it proclaims that a new believer is willing to die to self. **Baptism** displays commitment to Christ and to the church. It is a first step to growth. We need to be faithful in little things first to have Christ trust us with greater responsibilities.

Baptism is a command of Christ. Before it takes place, we should train people in its meaning as well as the importance of this step of faith. **Baptism** is a picture of death to self and resurrection to the power of Jesus Christ. We die so that we can show others that we now live for a new Kingdom and King.

A **servant leader** should be baptized to bear testimony that they now serve a new Master. The actions of leaders often speak louder than their words. When they humble themselves in the waters of baptism, Christ uses that step of faith and testimony to lift them up to higher ministry in Him (James 4:10).

4. Go and teach the disciples

It is important to understand that we are all **teacher/learners** and **learners/teachers**. Through our actions we show others what we have learned – this can happen every day. Every child, every youth, and every adult is, in some form, a **teacher**. We are **teaching** disciples to know the truth of God and obey it.

The **servant leader** needs to clearly present the Gospel of Christ to others. The Gospel, as the way and the truth, should be lived out each day. Unfortunately, there are some leaders in the church who do not reflect the Good News but demonstrate selfish and worldly ways. Their speech and actions do not align

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themselves with the teachings of Christ Jesus.

We are both **commissioned** and **charged** to **teach** and disciple people for Christ. If you are a leader in the church, are you demonstrating that you have been commissioned and charged to disciple people? Are you being a **servant leader** who obeys the Word of God?

Another truth, when you go out and **teach** others, is that you begin to **learn**, not only more about Christ, but also more about who you are. We need to clearly see that all leaders are both **teachers** and **servants**. We **teach** that which we have studied and experienced, and then pass it on to others, both directly and indirectly.

5. Go and do it, in and with Christ

As disciples, we must remember that it is Christ Jesus Who has **commissioned** and **charged** us. We have committed ourselves to serve Him and to be led by Him. He came as “Emmanuel” (“God with us” – Matt 1:23). Not only is He “with us”, but following the day of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit, he is “in us” (Acts 1:4). He re-creates us from the inside out. Our hearts, our thinking, and our outward actions change. We see things with a new set of God-given eyes.

When we go out as **servant leaders** to minister to a lost world, we do so in the Name of Jesus Christ. We do nothing in our own power or strength, but through His power and strength alone. We are told “*that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow ... and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*” (Phil. 2:10). We are involved in a spiritual battle for lost souls. We are Christ’s hands and feet, sent with His authority and power. All that

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we do is done under the banner of His Name. The key is to **go** out and **“do”**. We are to work in service and ministry together with other disciples of Christ. We are part of a worldwide body of believers.

Finally, we are told to “keep on keeping on” until the end of time. As long as we have breath, we need to proclaim Christ Jesus and His Kingdom (Matt 28:20). Remember, all this is done in the Name of Jesus. We serve as He served and, one day, we will reign together with Him, in a face-to-face relationship.

6. Go in the power of the Holy Spirit

Pentecost was a day that changed the disciples’ lives. The Holy Spirit’s coming **empowered** the disciples for service and ministry. Boldness came to the fore. Fear was exchanged for faith. Christ had commanded them to wait in the upper room for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament had prophesied about this event and now, because of Christ, the Holy Spirit came and fulfilled all Scripture (Acts 2:17-21). The disciples were now **empowered** from on high.

Jesus knew that if the disciples were to fulfill the **commission** and **charge**, He had given them, they would need God’s **authority** and **power** to accomplish His directive (Acts 1:8). Too often we do not take the time to pray and study the Word. Anointing comes through prayer and the Word. We need to take in so that we can give out, as Paul told the Ephesians (Eph 5:18). King David knew the importance of meditating on God and the Word (Psalm 1:1). Isaiah told us how we need to wait on God; when we do, we will have the strength to walk, run, and even soar like eagles for God (Isaiah 40:3).

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7. Go focused, committed and determined

Paul made clear to the Corinthian church that they were in a race (1 Cor 9:24) and that, if they hoped to win the prize, they must keep focused, committed, and determined to go forward, whatever the cost. **Servant leaders** need to keep focused on the race set before them because the enemy constantly wants to sidetrack and ensnare them (Heb 12:1).

Jesus has **commissioned** us to be ambassadors of His way and His truth. As we do so, we'll live out His kind of life (John 14:6). We have a **commitment** and **charge** to bring reconciliation to a lost people who have no hope (2 Cor 5:20). Without Christ in their hearts, people will spend all eternity in hell. Disciples need to share the truth, for it is truth that sets the captives free (John 8:32).

The Bible tells us that God has a plan for our lives, a plan full of blessing if we will trust Him in all things (Psalms 37:1-11). We have to listen in order to hear His voice so that our plans line up with His. He knew us even before we were born and He continues to watch over us every moment of the day.

We also need to remain focused on the importance of the church and how God **commissions and charges servant leaders** to serve under the umbrella of the local church. Connection to the church trains, nurtures, and disciplines us in order that we can serve effectively.

8. Go and bring in the harvest

Jesus told the disciples that problems lay ahead. It wasn't that there wasn't going to be a harvest, but there would not be enough labourers to go out and bring it in (Matt 9:37-38). Christ calls people to go, but too often we are more concerned about the

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things of this world then we are about the treasures of heaven. Jesus **commissioned**, **commanded**, and **charged** disciples to go out and do something for Him – whether at home, in their communities, or in other countries. It is time to get involved! Yes, there are challenges – for we fight not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers in the spirit realm (Eph 6:12).

There are two commands that constitute the foundation stone to all we say and do: Christ tells us to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbor as ourselves” (Matt 22:36-40). God has **commissioned** and **charged** us, and now we need to go out in faith and serve Him.

RELEVANCE

The call to a **discipleship lifestyle** will make a difference in yourself as well as in those living around you. When you become trained and equipped in Christ, it is for the purpose of service. Christ knew this would be a challenge and He therefore sent the Holy Spirit to teach us (1 Cor 2:13). We have been given a Tutor Who indwells us and is able to bring us through all challenges and difficulties. He prepares us to live a new life, one that will reflect to others who we are in Christ, one in which the fruit of the Spirit can be seen (Gal 5:22-23). The discipleship lifestyle is a commitment to a whole new way of living. Inevitably, it means we will see and treat people differently. We no longer use the world’s methods, but we use God’s methods of **servant leadership**.

REFLECTION

Hearing and Seeing:

Ask God to show you what kind of leadership/discipleship lifestyle flows through your life and ministry. Also, ask the Holy

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Spirit to show you what disciplines need to be added to your personal walk with Him each day, and then make a covenant between yourself and Jesus Christ to follow through. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you demonstrate a life that will be an example to those you lead.

Doing and Living:

How am I helping, and what am I doing to ensure that others become better disciples/leaders? What disciplines am I exercising in my life to make me a stronger leader for Christ? Do I only verbalize the Great Commission, or do I live it out in my daily life? Do my words and actions bear testimony to the living Christ Who dwells in me?

SCRIPTURES RELATED TO COMMISSION AND CHARGE

Mark 16:15-18 And He said to them, “**Go** into all the world and preach the **gospel** to **all** creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name, they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Luke 14:27 “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My **disciple**.”

Luke 24:45-49 Then He opened their minds to **understand** the Scriptures, and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be **proclaimed** in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are

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witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

John 13:35 By this all men will know that you are **My disciples**, if you have love for one another.

John 15:8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be **My disciples**.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be **My witnesses** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Luke 10:2-3 And He was saying to them, the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest. **Go**; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

RELATED RESEARCH FOR THE LESSON

1. Reflect on the words “disciple” and “discipline”.
2. Reflect on the words “commission” and “charge”.
3. Reflect on the words witness and testimony.

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CONCLUSION

Paul exhorts Timothy on how to be a **servant leader/teacher** of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He states, in 2 Timothy 2:1-6, *You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, **entrust** these to faithful men who will be able to **teach** others also. Suffer hardship with me, as a **good soldier** of Christ Jesus. No **soldier** in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a **soldier**. Also if anyone competes as an **athlete**, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. The hard-working **farmer** ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops. Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.*

Paul gives to Timothy three examples that will conclude this booklet on **servant leadership**.

A servant / leader disciple is a:

Soldier who:

- knows Who enlisted him.
- knows that he is in active service.
- knows his job.
- knows the enemy.
- knows the hardship of war.

Athlete who:

- knows the rules.
- knows not to get himself entangled.

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- knows the importance of training.
- knows that he needs to keep focused on the goal and prize.

Farmer who:

- knows the cost of hard work.
- knows that he must motivate himself to press on and endure hardship.
- knows that he must prepare the ground and plant seeds.
- knows that he must nurture and care for the plants.
- knows that there will be a harvest in due time.

We do not need to be afraid of **servant leadership**, but we do need to deliberately put our lives in the hands of the **Great Servant Leader, Jesus Christ**. We can see that Paul wanted Timothy to know the bigger picture about how to prepare and work with others for the ministry. The principles are the same wherever we serve.

Remember again Paul's words to Timothy,

Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

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MEMORIZATION

Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. II Corinthians 3:5-6

PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus,

I come to You today, full of struggles, because I desire to serve You with all my heart, but my busy life keeps me from serving You as I should. I know that sometime that I have not been faithful to the little things that You call me to do in my home or with my neighbours or at the job where I work. I ask that You forgive me and help me to become stronger in You. I pray that You would help me to overcome my fears. Lord, sometimes I am not sure if it is Your voice leading me in some of the things that I feel I should do. Lord, I need Your help to understand how and where You desire me to serve. Lord, I commit my heart afresh to being your servant leader. Jesus, I want to help others, but I want to make sure that I am doing it in Your strength and power. Thank You again for all Your love and help.

Your servant leader,

AMEN (Let it be so Lord.)

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Project L.A.M.B.S. International

Making disciples is the call and mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus urged the disciples to follow Him. He laid down before us the teaching and the walk that we need to follow with Jesus as our supreme example. It is imperative for every believer and the church to know that disciples are not born, but rather, they are made. For the church to be strong in the last days, we must be about the business of equipping the saints (disciples) for the work of service.

Dr. James Paul Humphries has been ministering for over 45 years, and has experience in a variety of ministries including church planting, children's ministry, street ministry, youth ministry, camp ministry, pastoral work and directing and teaching in schools all over the world. In addition, he has taken part in traveling and ministering in the USA, Mexico, Ukraine, Myanmar, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Thailand, India, Viet Nam and across most of Canada. He completed his B.R.E. and his M.A. at Briercrest, and his Doctorate of Ministry at Providence Theological Seminary in the spring of 1999.

In January 1996, Dr. Humphries resigned as pastor of a local church. His vision was to reach further abroad with the Word of God and to use it to train labourers for Christ (Matthew 9:36-38). He shared this vision with Dr. David Smith and Dr. Chuck Nichols of Providence Theological Seminary; they strongly encouraged Dr. Humphries and his wife Irene to develop what God was laying on their hearts.

In March 1997, they traveled to Jamaica where they met several pastors who were very concerned about the need for training and disciplining their young people as leaders in their

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churches. James and Irene did not know that this would be the starting point for a worldwide ministry of discipleship training known as “Project L.A.M.B.S. International”.

To date, Project L.A.M.B.S. has ministered in Canada, Myanmar, Ukraine, Africa, Jamaica, Mexico, Israel, Thailand, Japan, Dominican Republic, Naga Land, Viet Nam, India and China. We offer over 30 different courses. Our graduates number over 1000, and are serving worldwide. Out of this group of graduates, we have equipped and trained directors, teachers and pastors who in turn are carrying out II Timothy 2:1-2 to an even larger group of people.

In 2002, it was discovered that Irene had cancer again. God gave Irene another three years and, because of that, she was still able to travel and teach in many different countries. Shortly after what was to be her last trip, Irene was hospitalized in February 2005. A few weeks later, on March 9, she went home to be with her Lord and Saviour.

My second wife, Hkaw Win, was raised and trained primarily in the land of Myanmar. She earned her B.Th. University Degree and a Master of Divinity degree in Myanmar. In April 2007, she finished a second Master’s Degree in Christian Education at Providence Theological Seminary. After July 1, 2007, she headed back to Myanmar to head up the Christian Education Department for the Myitkyina Kachin Baptist Association and oversaw various ministries to 62 churches. After her four-year term was completed, she traveled and worked as an interpreter, doing translations of various kinds of discipleship books and materials.

Over the last twelve years James and Hkaw Win have lived in the countries of Myanmar and Thailand, preparing a variety of

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resources in the Burmese (Myanmar) and Kachin Languages. To date, over 20 different kinds of books have been published. Our goal is to equip and establish people as Disciples of Christ. Please pray for God's leading and wisdom. Our walk with Christ has taken us down many challenging pathways but we have seen the faithfulness of our Lord and Savior in every area. His grace has been sufficient.

Founder and Director,

Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

Meditation and Reflection:

Foundation stone for **servant leadership**, Proverbs 3:5-6:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,

(Make Him LORD of your life.)

And lean not on your understanding;

(Think outside of your own box.)

In all your ways acknowledge Him,

(Bear testimony of Him daily.)

And He shall direct your paths.

(Fill up - Rise up and walk in Christ Jesus.)

Please! Take time to see, hear and reflect on this lifestyle word of wisdom and knowledge from the leadership of Solomon!

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Discipleship / Leadership Booklets

- 1. My Call with Christ**
- 2. Called to His Purpose**
- 3. Abiding in the Vine**
- 4. Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding**
- 5. Scripture: The Disciples' Anchor**
- 6. Baptism: The Disciples' Testimony**
- 7. The Disciples' Church**
- 8. Servant Leadership**
- 9. Teacher / Learner, Learner / Teacher**
- 10. Being Wise Builders**
- 11. Shepherds of God's Sheep**
- 12. End Times**
- 13. Relationship Pilgrimage**
- 14. Christ's Disciple**
- 15. Disciple's Prayer Life**
- 16. Communion**
- 17. Ambassadors for Christ**
- 18. Full Armour of God**
- 19. Good News for Challenging and Changing Times**
- 20. Christ our Mediator**
- 21. Jesus our Deliverer**
- 22. Mission and Missionaries**
- 23. Full Gospel Discipleship**

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