

Beyond Sunday: Experiencing God's Design for the Church

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Week 2: The Church is Intentional

Introduction: One of the plainest expressions of love in Scripture is fellowship—sharing with others. One of the most valuable things we can share is ourselves: our time, our talents, our energies in serving others in the Body of Christ.

The greatest example and teacher of servanthood was of course the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said of Him that He took "the very nature of a servant" (Phil. 2:7), and Jesus said of Himself that "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28).

Serving is always intentional. True service never happens inadvertently. The servant is always tuned in to the needs of the one being served. When Jesus came, lived, died and lived again—he did so in full awareness of the Father's desire and human need. Jesus lived with distinct intentionality.

If we are to live out our Gospel identity as serving-followers, we must master this: true greatness in the Kingdom of heaven consists in serving one another. Jesus said, "... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (Mt. 20:26).

The Big Picture: The church witnesses to and fellowships with each other through serving. This serving-follower identity comes from God's own Trinitarian position of the Son who came to be a servant to all by giving His life as sacrifice for sin. Jesus as the founder of the church is the one who designed the church to tell the truth to an unbelieving world. When the church engages together as serving-followers, we witness to each other and to those who do not believe the goodness of God.

Discussion:

Share:

- Share a memory of a time when someone served you. How did that make you feel?
- What image most comes to mind when you think about a servant? Is this a healthy image or not? Why do you think this?

Discuss:

Sermon Review:

- Review the sermon together using the website or the app. Write down any questions or thoughts that stand out to you as you review the sermon together. Discuss them as a group.
- "Church is a people; not a place or an event." Why do you think this statement is important to understand?
- Respond to Pastor Jeremy's statement: "Because Jesus is the servant-king, my identity is serving-follower."

- Why do you think “being a servant is counter-cultural and revolutionary”?
- Pastor Jeremy said that a “servant seeks the highest joy of those being served.” Do you think this is true of you when you have helped others?
- Respond to this statement: “Following Jesus always means leaving something.”
- Do you believe God has prepared work for you to complete? How do we discover that work?
- 1st Peter tells Jesus’s followers to use their gifts for the benefit of each other. Are you fully engaged with using your gifts to build up the family of faith or do you hold something back? Why do you think this?

Unsettled or Uncertain:

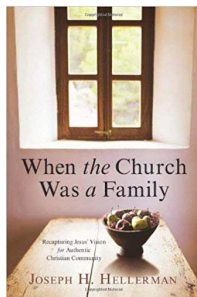
- What questions, concerns or doubts do you still have as this discussion wraps up?

Now That You Know:

Jesus organizes the church around a deep intentionality of honoring God by serving each other.

How will you live more into Jesus’ expectation to be a serving-follower with other Christians? Write out one sentence that describes your intended attitude or action in response to God’s truth.

Further Exploration on this Topic:



Volunteering: A Guide to Serving the Body of Christ by Leith Anderson

From the Publisher: Volunteering can be a rewarding and exciting experience—but to effectively serve you need to understand the why, how, and what of serving others. Based on the principles and training they have utilized at Wooddale Church, pastor Leith Anderson and Jill Fox will help you better understand:

The importance of prayer in ministry

Avoiding burnout and serving for the long-term

Recruiting others to serve in ways that are natural and easy

Enjoying the ‘pay’ that is more valuable than money

Finding your fit and serving out of your strengths

This short and accessible book will help you to find the resources you need to be inspired and trained to serve in the most vital workforce in the world today—the church of Jesus Christ. Jesus’ original vision for authentic Christian community will deeply satisfy the relational longings of both audiences.

Link: <https://www.amazon.com/When-Church-Was-Family-Recapturing/dp/0805447792>