

IGNITE INSTITUTE | HOW TO GROW

CLASS 8: SERVING

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 9:14

MOTIVATION FOR SERVING

1. The Indicatives

→ Indicatives are what God has done *for us*.

- i.e. Through Christ's sacrifice, God "**cleanse[s] our consciences from acts that lead to death**, so that we may serve the living God!" (Hebrews 9:14)

→ Imperatives are *our response to* (or *commands that flow from*) the indicatives.

- i.e. Through Christ's sacrifice, God "**cleanse[s] our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!**" (Hebrews 9:14)

→ Our service is an overflow of God's work in our hearts.

2. The Glory of God

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of His calling and that by His power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12)

→ In all forms of service, our goal is to glorify God.

3. The Commands of God

Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul. (Joshua 22:5)

→ Because of our love for the Lord, we obey his commandments.

WHO WE ARE SERVING

1. God

So then, obey the commands that I have given you today; love the LORD your God and serve him with all your heart. (Deuteronomy 10:13)

→ Serving the Lord is an amazing calling.

- We can rest in knowing he doesn't need us, but we experience joy by accompanying him in his work.

2. The Church

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. (1 Corinthians 12:14-26)

→ Church members

- Who are you serving regularly?

→ Within the church walls

- Where are you serving regularly?

3. Non-Believers

... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12)

4. The Vulnerable

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1:27)

→ Protecting the vulnerable is one of the primary responsibilities of the church.

- How can college-aged students practically serve vulnerable people?

THE POSTURE OF OUR SERVICE

1. Serve with Humility and Pure Motives

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:3-8)

→ Humility and pure motives are a common thread in Jesus' commands.

2. Serve Motivated by Love³⁵ (Donald Whitney)

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

→ Love for the Father spurs us on to love for others.

3. Serve with Gladness³⁶ (Donald Whitney)

Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! (Psalm 100:2)

→ Because we are living into the purposes God made us for, we are glad to serve.

USING OUR GIFTS FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. (Ephesians 4:11-14)

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

1. Every Christian gets at least one spiritual gift.³⁷ (Donald Whitney)

→ Disciplining ourselves to serve helps us understand how God has made us.

2. Every Christian has a gift for the purpose of serving his name and his church.³⁸ (Donald Whitney)

→ Using your gift in acts of service is embracing God's design for your life.

WHAT IS YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT?

Exercise: Take IGNITE's Spiritual Gifts Evaluation. You can find the link on the IGNITE App.

³⁵ Whitney, Donald S. (2014). *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress), 150.

³⁶ Whitney, Donald S. (2014). *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress), 146.

³⁷ Ibid., 151.

³⁸ Ibid.