

newark united pentecostal church

Lesson Title: ALL Making Disciples of ALL through Serve



Key Concept: Our local church has a unique calling within the worldwide body of Christ. We are striving to fulfill our mandate of *ALL making disciples of ALL*. This is **what we** do. In our local assembly we make and are made disciples through four primary actions: we worship, we learn, we serve, and we play. This lesson examines serve and how it contributes to our discipleship. Through serve we love God by caring for our neighbor.



Scriptures:

²⁶But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ²⁷and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. ²⁸For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.

(Matthew 20:26–28 *New Living Translation*)

He sat down, called the twelve disciples over to him, and said, “Whoever wants to be first must take last place and be the servant of everyone else.”

(Mark 9:35 *New Living Translation*)

Context Scriptures: Matthew 20:25–28; Mark 9:33–35; Luke 10:25–37;
Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; 1 Corinthians 12:28–31; Matthew 25:31–46;
Mark 10:45



Lesson Thoughts:

One day an expert in religious law asked Jesus a question that is very important to humanity: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?” The expert answered love your God (Deuteronomy 6:5) and love your neighbor (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus confirmed the man’s answer, “Do this and you will live!” But the man is uncomfortable with this answer and attempted to justify himself with a question: “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus’ response was the story of the Good Samaritan

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and the command to go and act like the Samaritan by showing your neighbor mercy (Luke 10:25–37).

Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, became a human to serve. His submission to death on the cross continues to this day to be an act of mercy for his neighbor—us. Discipleship is about following Jesus' example, and it begins with denial of self. Nowhere does this happen more acutely than when we serve. We all desire to succeed and be great. But the path of greatness as a disciple of Jesus is the path of service. Leader is servant, even slave. First is last. The disciple of Jesus is the servant of everyone else.

To serve others is to honor God. Sometimes serving is honored, while many times it is not noticed at all. But serving is always observed by God. Jesus makes this plain when he describes the final judgment. He describes sheep and goats being separated, with the sheep being blessed and the goats being cursed. Neither the sheep nor the goats understand the cause of their blessing or cursing. But Jesus states that feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, inviting the stranger into your home, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, and visiting those in prison is what distinguishes the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31–46). "When you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!" In other words, we love God by caring for our neighbor.

The disciple of Jesus does not serve others for others; rather, they serve others for God. In one of Paul's lists about how God has structured the church, along with apostles, prophets, teachers, leaders, and workers of miracles and healing are listed those who help others. In this passage (introducing the love chapter of 1 Corinthians 13) Paul calls the Corinthian disciples to desire the most helpful gift—loving others (1 Corinthians 12:28–31). Love your God by loving your neighbor. In Paul's writings is heard the voice of Jesus, "Do this and you will live!"

Every act of worship creates an atmosphere and example by which other disciples are also called into their own worship of the one true God. An atmosphere of learning is essential so that all disciples are both making and being made disciples through learning. Likewise, we are made disciples by acts of service. To serve is by its very definition about others and not about self. Jesus makes very clear that being his disciple is about self-denial and serving others. Whether in the church or in the community, we are made disciples by our acts of service in which we love God by caring for our neighbor. We worship! We learn! We serve!

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) If you have served before, why did you do it?
- 2) What are some wrong motivations for serving? What are some right motivations for serving? Does motivation (or intent) matter?
- 3) Who are some groups of people that you struggle to serve?
- 4) When you serve, how does it contribute to your self-denial?
- 5) How has serving contributed to your growth?

Next Lesson: ALL Making Disciples of ALL through Play

Notes and Reflections

- 1) Read Philippians 2:5–11 *slowly* and reflect on the example of Jesus, the ultimate servant.
- 2) Read Matthew 20:20–28 *slowly* and consider where you resemble James and John and the rulers of the world. What habits, motivations, and attitudes need to change?
- 3) Paul encourages the Corinthian church to desire the most helpful gift—loving others. What are some ways that you can express this love by helping others? Make a list.
- 4) Go to the Serving the Church card on the church website and choose some areas that you are willing to serve.

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Notes and Reflections, cont.