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Spiritual Disciplines: Serving

Teacher: Scott Waterman

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

* **Introduction**

**Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 ​**What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing of which it is said, “See, this is new”? It has been already in the ages before us.

**Hebrews 6:10** For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.

**Donald Whitney**: “Wanted: Gifted volunteers for difficult service in the local expression of the kingdom of God. Motivation to serve should be obedience to God, gratitude, gladness, forgiveness, humility, and love. Service will rarely be glorious. Temptation to quit place of service will sometimes be strong. Volunteers must be faithful in spite of long hours, little or no visible results, and possibly no recognition—except from God for all eternity.”

* **What Is the Spiritual Discipline of Service?**

Service is action, works, or ministry done for the benefit of others, to the glory of God. In order to qualify as *Christian service*, it must be done with right (gospel-centered) motivations and be in accordance with God’s commands/design.

**Deuteronomy 13:4** “You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him.”

**Deuteronomy 11:1** “You shall therefore love the Lord your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always.”

**Genesis 22:15-18** And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

**John 14:15** “If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

**Matthew 5:14-16 “**You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

**Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

* **Old Covenant/New Covenant Considerations**

**Matthew 22:36-40** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

* **How Then Should We Serve? Gospel-Empowered Service**

**Donald Whitney**: “Do you remember what it’s like not to know Christ, to be without God and without hope? Do you remember how it feels to be guilty before God and unforgiven? Do you remember the terror of knowing you have offended God and that His anger burns toward you? Do you remember the horror of knowing you’re only a heartbeat away from hell? Now do you remember the experience of seeing Jesus Christ with the eyes of faith, and of understanding for the first time who He really is and what He has done by His life, death and resurrection? Do you remember the joy of your first awareness of forgiveness and deliverance from judgment and hell? Do you remember the initial, incomparable realization of your assurance of heaven and eternal life?”

**Mark 10:45** “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

* **Hypocritical Service**

**Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

**John Gill**: “[we should use] all the powers and faculties of [our] souls, and members of [our] bodies [to] the service of God for his honour and glory.”

* **Healthy Worship=Healthy Service**

**Romans 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

* **Grace Motivates Us to Serve**

**Romans 12:3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

* **Serve the Church in Sync with the Body**

**Romans 12:4-5** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

**1 Corinthians 12:21-26** 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.

**Donald Whitney**: “I read of a missionary in Africa who was asked if he really liked what he was doing. His response was shocking. ‘Do I like this work?’ he said. ‘No. My wife and I do not like dirt. We have reasonably refined sensibilities. We do not like crawling into vile huts through goat refuse … But is a man to do nothing for Christ he does not like? God pity him, if not. Liking or disliking has nothing to do with it. We have orders to “Go,” and we go. Love constrains us.’”

* **Gracious Gifts from God for Service**

**Romans 12:6-8** Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

* **Final Application**

**1 Peter 4:9-10** Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. 1Pet 4:10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

**1 John 3:16** By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

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