

KEY PASSAGES: *Philippians 2:5-11; John 13:1-4*

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- Read key passage (Phil 2:5-11) and then answer the following three questions: Jesus did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped. Eve was tempted with the lie that she could be equal to God. Many have fallen because of this lie. How do you recognize when you are tempted to try to be like God (fixing others, judging others, exalting yourself over others)?
- What is a bond-servant? What does it represent in this context? What does it mean for you?
- Jesus humbled himself and became obedient (to the Father) to the point where he was highly exalted by God. How has God exalted you when you have chosen to submit to him and obey him?
- Read key passage (John 13:1-4) and answer the following two questions. If Jesus was God and he served his disciples by washing feet, and you are clearly NOT God, what is preventing you from serving others?
- Jesus came not to be served but to serve. How does his example, again Jesus being God, inspire you to become a servant of others?

THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS:

Spiritual Infant – The language/behaviors of a spiritual infant are characterized by lack of understanding. Infants may have a rudimentary understanding of the purpose of serving. More likely, they will see it as a task. They may also view serving as unreachable. They may perceive worship leading be out of reach, not realizing that there are steps to growth in ministry and serving. Infants need to be introduced to serving at the lowest rung on the ladder to give them confidence. Their faithfulness in small things gives them ability to move up. Learning to put others first will help them develop their faith.

Spiritual Child - The language/behaviors of a spiritual child is characterized by self-centeredness. Children live in a world of instant gratification. They love to serve because it's fun! They see immediate benefits to serving (spreading bark has an immediate return on investment in beautifying the property where it is placed). For children to grow to the next level, they need to learn to see the Kingdom benefits. In doing so, they delay gratification. Serving an unbeliever may not have immediate Kingdom benefits. Diligently humbling oneself to serve another will have two benefits: they will develop patience and discover the eternal benefits while reinforcing the discipline of humility.

Spiritual Adolescent - The language of a spiritual adolescent is characterized by a search for identity. Adolescents are learning to expand their love for others and this can easily manifest in over-serving and over-committing. Servant-hood understanding shares somewhat with those of children – that it has immediate benefits. Adolescents will, however, understand the immediate Kingdom benefit ("I serve as a tangible witness to Christ") but may expect an immediate result ("if I serve my hardest, this person may come to church"). Adolescents need freedom to explore their areas of giftedness, and then be shaped to discover their true calling. They also need to learn to be patient in their expectation of the return on their investment in serving.

Spiritual Parent - The language of a spiritual parent is characterized by intentionality and strategy. Parents see serving as more than a task, but as an expression of their faith in Jesus (Jesus came to serve, not to be served) and that it's not about them, but about others. Parents take others on the journey, creating opportunities for discipleship through serving others. Parents model humility and sacrifice which is a far better teacher for infants/children than just telling them what the Bible says.

ADULT STUDY / HOMEWORK: (For your personal daily study time)

Day 1

- Read Isaiah 42:1-4, 52:13-53:12
- How did the Father refer to Jesus in this prophecy? How did He describe Jesus' appearance?
- List the things Jesus endured and His responses to those actions by others.
- What reasons are given as to why He willingly endured so much in His life and death?

Day 2

- Galatians 4:6-7 says we are no longer slaves, but sons and daughters.
- Read Philippians 2:3-8, John 5:19,30 - Though Jesus is God the Son, how do these passages describe His attitude for living?
- Read Hebrews 2:16-18, 4:15, 5:8 Jesus chose to live for 33 years before He died for our sins. These verses testify to how he understands our struggle with dying to self. How can His example help you when you have hard choices to make?

Day 3

- Servant= earns wages and has rights
- Bond-servant = does not earn wages and has no rights, no appeals, is the absolute property of the Master
- Bond servant by choice = one who chooses to place themselves into slavery under a Master; knowingly accepting the consequences of being owned by another
- Read John 10:11-18. Which type of servant did Jesus choose to model and how? Take time to thank Him.

Day 4

- Read Romans 12:1-3, Luke 4:8, 16:13, John 13:34-35. What kind of commitment does God expect from His children? How do we attain it?
- Read Matthew 16:27, 25:23, 34-40. What rewards for those who obey are mentioned in these verses?

Day 5

- Read Luke 17:7-10 - Five points of a bond-servant:
 - 1) Does what he is asked, for as long as it takes without consideration from the master. He has no rights.
 - 2) Does not expect to be thanked for serving. There is no room for self-pity or bitterness.
 - 3) Does not view others as selfish as he performs his job. He exists to serve the interests of his master.
 - 4) Has no grounds for pride or self-congratulation. (In our flesh "dwells no good thing," the good we do is because of Jesus living in us and making us willing. Romans 7:18, 1 Corinthians 15:10)
 - 5) Serves with humility and meekness, doing only what is his duty. (God created us and redeemed us to follow the example of Christ and to do the good things He pre-destined for us to do. Romans 8:29, Ephesians 2:10)
- **Meditate** on these points. Do these points describe you as a servant of Jesus Christ?

FAMILY STUDIES / HOMEWORK (For 1st Grade and up):