

TOTAL REVOLUTION of IDENTITY

Session #5 – The Life of a Servant

Session Objective: The point of ‘doing’ is serving. Although not all of us may have the spiritual gift of leadership, all of us are called to be leading as servants wherever we go and whatever we do. This session will:

- Put the ‘servant’ back into leadership
- Experience Jesus’ servant leadership in foot washing
- Challenge your group to acts of servanthood

Extended Prep:

- One movie clip could be from “**Pay It Forward**”. In this movie a young boy is given a project: Come up with an idea that will improve the world. His little idea (of paying good deeds forward) sweeps across the country and creates a media stir. Watch the whole movie and select a possible clip or show the whole thing. The application is clear: Just like the small seed that becomes the great tree, so God can take our small offerings and multiply and grow them into **TOTAL REVOLUTION!**
- Through spiritual gifts, God provides special areas for us to serve others. Lead your group through a spiritual gift inventory and help them understand how God may have uniquely gifted them to serve.
- Develop a list of random acts of kindness and take some time to live them out. (A random act of kindness is an action that serves another in love – ideas could include: delivering flowers/candy/pop to group, church members, or strangers, cleaning snow off parked cars, paying for the person behind you at a drive thru, encouragement notes, etc.). Share your experiences. (For more ideas see **Conspiracy of Kindness** by Steve Sjogren).
- Recognize some of the servant leaders in your midst – volunteers on your leadership team, unsung heroes at your church, ask group members to provide names of people who they’ve seen serving behind the scenes, etc.
- Interview a Christian Horizons worker or personal care worker. What is it like to care for someone’s most personal needs? (i.e. going to the bathroom).

Leader Note: This session gives your group the opportunity to live out and experience the biblical act of foot washing. In our day, this can seem like a strange, uncomfortable and humbling act. However, this experience can be very significant and memorable for your group. You need to determine whether your group is ready for this type of experience or how to ‘tweak it’ – i.e. would same sex foot washing be best? If so, you need to set the tone accordingly for the night by explaining what you are doing (see notes that follow), setting the atmosphere (maybe dimmer lights, candles, music, etc.) and leading by example. Needed for foot washing – basin, washcloth, and towel. Multiple sets if your group is larger.

Session Outline

Small Group Questions:

1. Think of a leader you respect. What are some of the key qualities that make him/her a good leader?

Our list probably could be endless – and that’s without adding answers from all the books and resources on leadership. Without a doubt, leadership is important and it’s a biblical gift and office. But, it’s interesting that the word leader is only found in the Bible a few times. Instead, the concept of leadership is often referred to as ‘servant’.

2. What do you think of or feel when you hear the word ‘servant’?

In John 13, Jesus demonstrated servanthood by doing something that sounds crazy in our day and age. Read or act out – socks on or off – John 13:1-17 (For reading: Characters needed: narrator, Jesus, disciples, Peter).

3. What did it feel like to have your feet ‘washed’? What did it feel like to be the foot ‘washer’? (Options: humbling, demeaning, awkward...)

Background on footwashing: On the dusty and dirty roads of ancient Palestine, without the protection of Doc Martin’s or Nike, footwashing was required for comfort and cleanliness. While each house offered guests water for washing their own feet, assistance for this lowly task was not even required by Hebrew slaves. The act of washing another’s feet demonstrated great humility, exceptional love and selfless service (see John the Baptist – Mark 1:7; Luke 7:37-50.¹

¹ “Foot washing” by Chris Church, p. 506-507, Butler, Trent C., General Editor, Holman Bible Dictionary, (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991).

4. Why did Jesus choose this act to demonstrate his love (v. 1) and example (v. 15)?

- *This act was a forerunner of Jesus' ultimate demonstration of love at the cross.*
- *This act requires the one being washed to humbly submit and accept the work of the washer. Followers of Christ are also required to submit to and accept the work of Christ (see John 15:8-9).*
- *If Christ demonstrates love with great humility and abundance – washing the very feet of those who's sins required his crucifixion, then we are called to follow with radical service and love (see John 15:14-15)*

5. How do we/can we practically serve one another in our group? Church? Family? What is one action you could take this week?

See Action Points.

Prayer Options: Thank God for how He has served us, for His example, etc. Pray for eyes to see opportunities to serve. Pray for specific ministry needs or church needs in the area of service.

Action Points

- Ask your parents, family members, etc. what is one thing they really hate having to do around the house. Do it for them for a week.
- Through spiritual gifts, God provides special areas for us to serve others. Lead your group through a spiritual gift inventory and help them understand how God may have uniquely gifted them to serve.
- Develop a list of random acts of kindness and take some time to live them out. (A random act of kindness is an action that serves another in love – ideas could include: delivering flowers/candy/pop to group, church members, or strangers, cleaning snow off parked cars, paying for the person behind you at a drive thru, encouragement notes, etc.). Share your experiences.

Comments and Feedback

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

Please see the following handout. You have permission to reproduce these handouts for your group.