

**Stewardship Emphasis:**

**Faithful Stewards**

**of God’s Grace**

**Week Two: “Serve One Another”**

**Week One: “We are Ambassadors for Christ”**



Our three-week stewardship emphasis, **Faithful Stewards of God’s Grace**, focuses primarily on one Bible verse. *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace”* (1 Peter 4:10). What a wonderful privilege and honor that the Creator of the universe has bestowed upon us as He has made us stewards of His creation! All that we are and have been given are by the grace of God. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we are equipped and motivated to be **Faithful Stewards of God’s Grace.** We pray that this stewardship emphasis will help you grow as a steward and deepen the relationship that you have with our heavenly Father. May we all hear the words, *“Well done, good and faithful servant”* (Matthew 25:23).

**“Serve One Another”**

As God’s people, we are urged to *“fix our eyes on Jesus”* (Hebrews 12:2 NIV). When we *“fix our eyes on Jesus,”* what will we see?

We see the Suffering Servant about Whom Isaiah wrote. The One Who has *“borne our griefs and carried our sorrows”;* the One Who was *“pierced for our transgressions...crushed for our iniquities…”* and byhis *“wounds we are healed”* (Isaiah 53:4, 5).

We see the Son of Man Who *“came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many”* (Matthew 20:28). This is the Son of Man Who preached and taught, Who healed the sick, confronted the wicked, and comforted the despairing. This is the Son of Man Who calls us to *“deny [ourselves] and take up [our crosses] and follow [Him]”* (Matthew 16:24).

We follow Him in paths of service. Just as Jesus did, we serve when it might be inconvenient or when the person needing our service is unlovable. Just as Jesus did, we put others first. Just as Jesus endured the cross *“for the joy that was set before Him”* (Hebrews 12:2), we, too, will find joy and fulfillment in serving in Jesus’ name.

As God’s people, we are called to love God with all of our hearts, souls, and minds and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39). The key to our service is to live with an attitude that is God-centered. With God as our focus, we will want to love and serve Him and others. Unfortunately, because we are by nature self-centered, our interest is in serving ourselves instead of serving others. When we succumb to the temptation of putting ourselves first, we place ourselves in the center of life, and we become less interested and ultimately unaware of the needs of others. God’s grace turns us around. In Christ, He has put us first, so now we are freed to put others first.

**Being a Servant**

When our hearts are filled with God’s love, we find joy in serving. 1 John 4:19 tells us, *“We love because He first loved us.”* Because God loved us so much that He would give His son for us so we, too, can love. Just as Christ’s love for us led Him to labor for us throughout His passion, His death, and His victorious resurrection, so we, too, are prompted by our love for Him and others to be about serving. God’s love within us overflows to those around us. True service without love is impossible. Apart from God, we cannot truly love.

God expects that the love He lavishes on us will naturally flow out of us into others. Real love is expressed through action, first in labors of love to fellow believers and then to our neighbors. The Apostle Paul wrote, *“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith”* (Galatians 6:10),

We need to examine ourselves to see whether or not we really are God’s servants. A servant is someone who submits his will to another, does not seek his own interests, but lives for his master. The concept of serving rather than being served is not a natural one. We have an inborn desire to be served ourselves and to have our own needs met rather than to see to the needs of others. It is our nature to want to be “number one.” God’s love transforms our mindset from wanting to please ourselves to a desire to serve others. Seeing others as our brothers and sisters in Christ helps us follow God’s command to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31).

Besides our selfish natures that put ourselves first, the world urges us to do the same. We are told that we should aspire to fame, power, and wealth, but rarely is there glory, spotlight, or fame for the servant. Worldly praise has no lasting value, but that is not what God’s servants aspire to, anyway. In living a life of service, we give of ourselves without striving for financial rewards or glory. Along with the Apostle Paul, we are not trying *“to please man, but to please God Who tests our hearts”* (1 Thessalonians 2:4). Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we are freed from selfish interests and freed for Christian service.

We are urged to be imitators of Christ (Ephesians 5:1) Who lived a life of compassion for others. Being like Jesus, we will serve the hungry, handicapped, and helpless. We serve out of love for Christ and His people and, desiring to be worthy of His calling (Colossians 1:10), thoughts of self-exaltation or praise from men are absent.

Let us, by God’s grace, live the rest of our remaining lives as God’s servants.

**Blessings on your Stewardship Journey!**