



CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Living With Purpose

October 15, 2022

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Philippians 2:5-11 (NIV) • “Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Leviticus 25:35 (NIV) • “If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and are unable to support themselves among you, help them as you would a foreigner and stranger, so they can continue to live among you.”

2 Timothy 1:16-18 (NIV) • “May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus.”

Hebrews 13:1-3 (NIV) • “Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.”

James 2:15-17 (NIV) • “Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

Revelation 14:13 (NIV) • “Then I heard a voice from heaven say, ‘Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.’”

1 John 3:16-18 (NIV) • “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

Galatians 6:2 (NIV) • “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

1 Peter 5:5-7 (NIV) • “In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “CHRISTIAN SERVICE”

Service is good. Who is going to argue with that statement? Very few. Even those who don’t believe in God believe that helping others is a positive virtue. So, what makes Christians’ service any different from non-Christians cleaning up the forest or tutoring children in math? It begins with the “Why?” of service. The reason we serve grows out of our belief about the nature and value of people. Our service to others extends as a resounding praise for the service God has shown to us. God selflessly responded to our need for a Savior and provided one. (One of the ways we experience God’s love for us is to follow His example and share it with to others.) Another reason we serve is because service is a trademark of God’s kingdom. Helping others is just the natural course to take around God’s household. This lesson will seek to show the underpinnings of service to others as well as start the students thinking of creative ways to respond to the needs of others. Of all the disciplines and exercises, service strikes a chord in teens because they immediately experience the joy of selflessness and the fruit of kindness.

C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “CHRISTIAN SERVICE”

As a result of this lesson students should be able to:

1. Discover a sound rationale for serving others.
2. Evaluate and develop the notion of meaningful service.
3. Make the connection between being in the kingdom and being a servant to others.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) straight stick(s); (Activity B) pens or pencils, paper, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, paper, pens or pencils.

Applying • Paper, pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE’VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word. At some point you should distribute or call their attention to their student lesson for this week.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • This exercise or demonstration serves the purpose of showing that your focus determines your outcome.

Get set • Get a straight stick about five feet long. If possible, have several so several students can try the experiment at once. Tell the students they are to balance the stick upright on the tips of their fingers in one hand. The object is to balance the stick in the air as long as they can.

Go • Ask for a volunteer to try the exercise. First, ask them to look at the very top of the stick as they attempt to balance it. (Typically, the only way this will work is if one keeps one's eyes on the end of the stick that is not in hand but up in the air.) Then have them try again, keeping their focus on the part of the stick that rests on their fingers. (Typically, this way you lose your sense of perspective and balance falters.)

Debriefing • Ask: What spiritual lessons can you glean from this exercise? How does looking at the opposite end give you better balance? In what sense do you think service to others helps us grow closer to Christ?

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Write the following list on a white/chalkboard.

- ___ They don't have the time (No time)
- ___ They don't have the money/resources to be of real help (No money)
- ___ They are embarrassed to participate in service because others might scoff at them (Embarrassed)
- ___ They just don't know of the opportunities available to them (Clueless)
- ___ They don't see how it would have any long term benefits (No difference)

Get set • Distribute paper and pencils or pens. Have the students write the phrases in parentheses on their papers, and then rank them in their order of importance as roadblocks to people involving

themselves in service to others. They should mark a 1 beside the most common roadblock, 2 beside the next most common, all the way to 5 by the one that is the least likely to be a factor or roadblock.

Go • Discuss their individual responses and create a consensus ranking to put on your list on the board or flipchart. Ask students to think about what kinds of Christian service they have had opportunity to do, and what some of their own "roadblocks" have been.

Debriefing • Ask: What kinds of Christian service have you had opportunity to do? What were some of the roadblocks to your serving others? What are the typical roadblocks experienced by most teens? Why do you think teens respond this way? What other reasons can you think of that aren't on this list?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

Faye leaned on a nearby bench as she stood in line at the phone booth. She was obviously very sick and in tremendous pain while she waited for a phone to become free so she could call someone for help. The people in line chatted mindlessly with no idea that Faye patiently waited in agony. Students ordered pizzas on the phone, talked with friends, called for a ride home, but no one noticed this lady in trouble. Finally one passerby stopped and asked her if she was okay, and she replied weakly, "I just need to call for a ride to the hospital." The gentleman yelled out, "Hey! This woman is sick and needs to use the phone." Shocked by his interruption, the callers stared for a moment and then began to hang up the phones and make way for her to call. The crowd in front of the phones parted like the Red Sea at Moses' command, and Faye was able to call an ambulance to take her to the hospital. Most people are willing to help because it is the most basic human response to those in need. Most people just need to be shaken out of their routine and daily pursuit to be reminded of others' needs.

Debriefing • Ask: When have you been interrupted with a “hey!” that announced that someone had a need? What happened and what was the need and response?

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

As we discover from week to week what it means to be in God’s kingdom, a certain theme keeps popping up: God’s children are recognized as such by the way they relate to others around them. The marks of a citizen are not hidden or secret, they are blatant acts of goodness that help restore dignity and health to others. God’s people are to be recognized by the way they love one another. “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35, NIV).

The exercise of service to others strengthens the “muscle” in our minds and hearts that allows others to come first in the kingdom. The kingdom of the world is a “me first” movement. People are recognized and rewarded for pushing themselves to the forefront and “making something of themselves.” For children of God, there is another way. Read the following verses (or have a student read them).

Matthew 7:9-12 (NIV) • “Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

John 13:35 (NIV) • “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

1 Peter 4:7-10 (NIV) • “The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson.

Say: Jesus promises His people that there will be moments when some will misunderstand and even hate them. But more often than not, the most impressive feature of His followers is the way people are helped and changed by their service to others. The story of David Livingstone depicts a man who spends himself for others and is rewarded by both joy of his work and eventually by the honor and recognition of others.

Ask: Whom do you know who practices the discipline of service? What kinds of things do they do? What is their attitude? What do others think of this person?

In your opinion, what character from the Bible epitomizes service to others? If you had to choose one person who served others, who would it be, and why?

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

Kenny made a good point the other day when he said, “I can’t feed the world. I don’t have any money to give to the poor. I want to help but I don’t feel like there is much that I can do. I don’t even know where to start.” Sound familiar? “Most of the time I’m so busy that I don’t even see who I should be serving, much less know how I should help,” Kenny continues. And with our world as busy as it is today, if opportunities are not convenient and relatively “do-able,” these gifts of grace to others are rarely given away.

Ask: How would you say the believer can develop the muscle of service to others in their spiritual life?

Have students discuss in small groups the principles they can see at work in each act of service described in the following verses: **Mark 2:1-5; Luke 7:11-17; Luke 13:10-13; Acts 3:1-10.** Have them make note of what they find and be ready to discuss it with the rest of the class.

Have students share what they learned from the stories.

Debriefing • Ask: Who might these people in need look like if you were to see them today? (Single mother. Lonely person. Someone who is discouraged because of health problems. Someone who is always there but often overlooked. A friend. Someone who has made serious mistakes in life and needs forgiveness and acceptance.) **What was their need?** (Forgiveness. Acceptance. A shoulder to cry on. Words of encouragement. Healing. A job.) **How did the person come to discover it?** (Jesus saw her. He was there on their way to the temple—just like every other day. She was in church every Sabbath. Four friends decided to take serious action. The two groups of people ran into each other, one on the way to a funeral, the other on the way into a city.) **What other stories of service in the Bible would help us understand how we can better serve others?**

Help the students synthesize what you have been discussing.

Ask: From what we've been observing and discussing, can we come up with a three to five step process that will help us exercise our "service" muscles? (Be prepared to help everyday. Open your eyes/ears to know who is in need. Team up with one or more others to bring help. Be thorough and abundant in your service—go the extra mile. Thank and praise God for the gift of serving others.)

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

As a class or in small groups brainstorm a list of things you could do for others that:

- Meets their needs
- Is caring and loving
- Gives them hope
- Makes them feel valuable/dignified and honored

Give the students the following ideas in your own words:

Make sure you choose projects that are do-able. Creativity is great, but practical, meaningful, and do-able is the goal. It is more important to have a few projects to choose from that are realistic than many that might be hard to accomplish. Either way it will take time, so be sure you can be committed to follow all the way through to get the job done. While the work of service is exciting, it takes time, energy, and discipline. So before anyone leaps, let's think about how we would finish!

Here are a few ideas that teens are doing to jump-start your thinking:

- Hosting a pancake breakfast for local firefighters and police officers to honor their service to the community.
- Providing a single parent with a night out by babysitting.
- Writing notes of encouragement to someone who has lost a loved one.
- Sending a care package to a soldier or student missionary.
- Visiting an elderly person and cleaning their home.
- Making a video of church members sharing words of encouragement and bringing it to someone who is struggling or sick.
- Helping in lower divisions Sabbath School classes by assisting with various group activities related to the lesson.

Work with class members to choose a few items from the brainstorming list and discuss how you could implement them. Make concrete plans to carry out one or more of these projects as a group.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. When has someone brought to you a gift of service and what difference did it make in your day, or your life?
2. What has been your greatest moment in service? Describe how the experience shaped your life.
3. What kinds of service activities do you feel are most helpful in sharing the gospel?
4. For you, when is service a discipline? When is it something you don't really have to think much about? Describe both scenarios.
5. Can you think of others who naturally serve and those who choose to integrate service as a way of life?
6. Consider what some have said about the exercise of service. Which quotation or phrase speaks profoundly to you? Why? (Refer to student lesson for some quotations.)
7. What are some experiences devoted to service you want to have in the coming week? What kinds of gifts do you want to give to people in the way of service?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

Talk is good, but cheap. It is easy to make plans but hard to see them through. We develop the muscle of service by planning and following through. Most of the opportunities for service are not big events you do but the little opportunities that show up each day right in front of you. We simply have to practice getting our eyes off ourselves and seeing others in need. Just like any other exercise, we work out consistently and regularly to grow our ability to meet the needs of others. Imagine the Savior's face every time you follow through with gifts of service. According to Jesus, every time you serve someone else you are serving Him. Do you want to grow closer to God? Get closer to others by putting them first before yourself and following through with service to them, and you will discover a joy like no other. Of course, you will never know until you try.



STUDENT LESSON

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Living With Purpose

October 15, 2022

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries:** “God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 82, 83

LIVING WITH PURPOSE

David Livingstone loved the people of Africa. After 16 difficult years as a missionary he returned to his native Scotland to speak to the students at Glasgow University. His body was emaciated by the ravages of some 27 fevers that had coursed through his veins during the years of his service. One arm hung useless at his side, the result of being mangled by a lion. He certainly had Africa engraved in his very flesh. Nobody could doubt his love for that land, because it was expressed in more than words.

He went back to Africa, and when he died, natives removed his heart and embalmed the rest of his corpse. They carried the body to Bagamoyo and shipped it to England, where it was interred in Westminster Abbey. But his heart remained in Africa—literally. His devoted followers buried it within the roots of an old African tree, and on the bark of the tree a native carved neatly, “Dr. Livingstone, May 4, 1873.”

—Adapted from Henry Feyerabend, “David Livingstone’s Heart,” *Slices of Life* (Oshawa, Ont.: It Is Written, 1995), pp. 141, 142.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 13.
- » Mandy rededicated her life to Jesus last weekend and asked God to help her see the needs of others so she could help. The first person she thought of was Tanya, who had been on the receiving end of some unkind words from Mandy. There was obviously a wedge between the two, and they tried to avoid each other. This is a problem now that Mandy has a new commitment to God.
- » What do you think Mandy should do or say? Should she confront Tanya and make things right with her, or wait and do something else, giving herself time to get ready for an appointment with Tanya later? What do you think Jesus would say to her?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

- » Read Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 27-31, 1 Peter 4:10, 11.
- » God calls individuals who are willing to prepare others for service, to build up the church, and to spread the knowledge of God to all humanity. To each of us He has given “talents,” or “spiritual gifts.” These gifts help us to fulfill our calling. When we faithfully use the gifts God has given us, we become more like Him, and we will share His gifts with others so that the

church will grow in faith and love.

- » “The little attentions, the small acts of love and self-sacrifice, that flow out from the life as quietly as the fragrance from a flower—these constitute no small share of the blessings and happiness of life” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 82).



See activity at the end of this lesson.

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read James 2:15-17.
- » The exercise of service is nonnegotiable for those who take the name of Christ. Jesus called us to follow His example of self-sacrificial service (Luke 9:23; John 12:26). The Bible mentions this frequently. Whether we do good deeds or ignore the needs of others, our actions will speak louder than anything we might say.
- » What does it mean to love others and serve them self-forgetfully? How is serving others significant to our Christian life?

- » Following Jesus means having different priorities than those of the world. Instead of pursuing our personal interests, we are allowing Jesus to work in us and enable us to serve others. How are you allowing Jesus’ love to flow through your actions as you employ the gifts that He has given you to serve others?

Wednesday BIBLE INSIGHTS



See activity at the end of this lesson.

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Review the memory text.
- » “Those who have sought for the development and perfection of Christian character by exercising their faculties in good works will, in the world to come, reap that which they have sown. The work begun upon earth will reach its consummation in that higher and holier life to endure throughout eternity” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 83).
- » Your call to serve others is a gift from God to you. A gift? Every time we put others first and spend ourselves to help or serve someone else, it reminds us of the way God reaches out to us. The work of service is one of God’s great activities for shrinking our sinful nature and growing our kingdom qualities.
- » Learning to think of others is a journey. It is born from your love for God and your desire to help others. Little by little, as you practice service, it changes you.
- » What makes service an act of love? How does Jesus’ self-sacrificial life of love for our world help us to have the right motives when we serve others?

Friday APPLYING

- » Think about some practical ways you can help and serve others around you. Use the questions below to guide you in writing a journal entry about your plan for service.
- » 1. What needs can you meet?

- » 2. How can you use the gifts and talents God has given you to help encourage and serve someone?

» 3. List practical things you can do to help someone.

» 4. What did you decide to do, and how will you put your plan into practice?

Monday activity

Spiritual Gifts

Use the words in the list below and fill in the blank spaces in the Bible passages.

All the Bible texts are from the New King James Version of the Bible.

activities
 another
 apostles
 cheerfulness
 differing
 diligence
 excellent
 gifts
 good
 grace
 healings
 liberality
 miracles
 prophets
 speak
 Spirit
 stewards
 teachers
 use
 works

1. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts _____ according to the grace that is given to us, let us _____ them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with _____; he who leads, with _____; he who shows mercy, with _____" (Romans 12:5-8).
2. "There are diversities of _____, but the same _____. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of _____, but it is the same God who _____ all in all" (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
3. "Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first _____, second _____, third _____, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of _____? Do all have gifts of _____? Do all _____ with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more _____ way" (1 Corinthians 12:27-31).
4. "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one _____, as _____ of the manifold _____ of God" (1 Peter 4:10, 11).

Wednesday activity

Match the text with the phrase. You will probably need to read the entire text to find the answer. Most phrases are not taken from the beginning of the text. All of the texts are from the New International Version of the Bible. Go to BibleGateway.com.

- _____ Matthew 7:9-12
- _____ Matthew 23:11, 12
- _____ Matthew 20:25-28
- _____ 1 Peter 4:7-11
- _____ Proverbs 11:25
- _____ Matthew 25:31-36

1. "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."
2. "A generous person will prosper . . ."
3. "For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."
4. "I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."
5. "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave."
6. "If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."