Small Group Guide

Commission: Serving and Sharing
Growing as a Disciple (Part 4)
November 15, 2026

Overview

This week's sermon challenged us to examine the motivation behind our serving and sharing. Are we serving to pay back a debt, or are we serving as an overflow of genuine worship and gratitude to God? Use this guide to reflect personally and discuss openly with your group.

Key Takeaways

- Serving and sharing only have lasting power when they flow from a heart of worship, not from guilt or a desire to earn God's favor.
- Paul's words in 1 Timothy 1:15-16 remind us that every believer is both a passive display and an active example of God's patience and mercy to others.
- Spiritual gifts are given not for personal benefit but to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace, as described in 1 Peter 4:10.
- Financial generosity is a spiritual issue, not an obligation or a tax. It is one dimension of how we extend our worship to God.
- A growing disciple does not simply serve in comfortable, familiar ways but continues to take next steps, moving deeper in service and sharing over time.
- Jesus' words in Matthew 25 make clear that serving people in practical, tangible ways is inseparable from serving Christ himself.
- The ultimate purpose of a disciple's life is not career advancement, leisure, or accumulation, but contributing to the kingdom of God for the glory of God.

Discussion Questions

Opening

1. Think about a time when someone served you in a meaningful way. What did that experience reveal to you about the person who served you, or about God?

2. The sermon opened with a reflection on the beauty of creation and how God's creativity points to His character. Where have you recently noticed God's beauty in the world around you, and how did it affect your heart toward Him?

Going Deeper

3. The sermon posed this question directly: "Do you serve others to service your debt, or to extend your worship?" Be honest with your group. Which motivation tends to drive your serving, and how does that show up in your attitude or energy?

4. In 1 Timothy 1:15-16, Paul describes himself as both a passive display and an active example of God's mercy. In what ways might your own life story be serving as an example of God's patience to someone around you right now, even without you realizing it?

5. The sermon described a progression in discipleship: worship leads to prayer and meditation, which leads to losing and gaining, which then moves outward into serving and sharing. Where do you feel most alive in that progression? Where do you feel most stuck?

6. Matthew 25 describes the King welcoming those who fed the hungry, welcomed the stranger, clothed the needy, and visited the imprisoned. Which of those expressions of service feels most natural to you? Which feels most challenging, and why?

7. The sermon addressed financial generosity as a spiritual discipline. How has your understanding of giving changed over time? What has shaped that growth, or what has held it back?

8. The John Piper "seashells" illustration asked a pointed question about what we will have to show before God at the end of our lives. Without being hard on yourself, what does your current investment of time, energy, and resources say about what you are living for?

Personal Reflection

9. The sermon asked, "Who is your one more person?" Is there a specific person in your life right now whom God may be calling you to serve, share with, or invest in spiritually? What is one concrete step you could take toward that person this week?

10. Are you currently serving in a way that has become comfortable and routine? Is God prompting you toward a next step, whether that is a new area of service, a deeper commitment, or a first step you have never taken before?

Practical Applications

This Week

- Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal whether your serving is motivated by worship and gratitude or by guilt and obligation. Ask Him to realign your heart where needed.
- Identify one person in your life who could be your "one more person." Write their name down, pray for them daily this week, and ask God to show you how to serve or share with them.
- If you have never taken a step toward serving in your local church, visit the connection or volunteer area and explore one opportunity that aligns with your gifts.

For Ongoing Growth

- Reflect honestly on your financial giving. Using 2 Corinthians 9:7 and the principle of cheerful, decided-in-the-heart giving as a guide, ask God what a next step in generosity might look like for your current season of life.
- Consider whether there is an area of service where God is calling you to go deeper rather than staying in a comfortable rhythm. Bring that question before God in prayer and discuss it with a trusted friend or your small group.
- Begin preparing your heart for the upcoming series on making disciples. Ask yourself: what does it mean for me personally to be a witness, as Jesus described in Luke 24 and Acts 1:8?

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying as a group. You may use this prayer as a guide or pray in your own words:

Lord, thank you for the mercy and patience you have shown each of us. Forgive us for the times we have served out of guilt or obligation rather than out of genuine love and worship for you. Open our eyes to the people around us who need to experience your grace through us. Give us courage to take next steps in serving, sharing, and giving, not to earn your favor, but because you have already given us everything in Christ. May our lives contribute to your kingdom and bring glory to your name. Amen.