

Small Group Guide: UNDER THE HOOD - Serving

Opening Question

If you could instantly become highly skilled at one behind-the-scenes job - sound tech, cooking, organizing, fixing things, decorating, childcare, or event planning - what would you choose and why?

Opening Prayer

Jesus, thank You for bringing us together. Help us see serving the way You see it - not as pressure or guilt, but as a response to Your love and grace. Open our hearts to Your Word, help us encourage one another, and show each of us our next faithful step. In Jesus' name, amen.

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

Christian service begins with Jesus. We do not serve to earn Jesus' love or pay Him back. We serve because He first served us and gave His life for us.

Jesus sees people with compassion. In Matthew 9, Jesus saw the crowds as harassed and helpless, and He was deeply moved toward them.

The harvest is plentiful, but workers are few. Jesus calls His followers to pray for workers - and to be willing to say, 'Lord, start with me.'

The church is one body with many parts. Every believer has a meaningful role in the body of Christ. No one should discount themselves, and no one should discount the contribution of others.

Visibility is not the same as significance. Some service is public, and some is hidden, but all faithful service matters in the mission of Jesus.

Every believer is a minister. Ministry happens when we use our gifts, talents, experiences, and abilities to serve God by serving people.

We are called to serve in love. Christian freedom is not freedom to live for ourselves, but freedom to love God and serve others.

Serving is part of the mission Jesus gave the church. We serve so that disciples are made, people are welcomed, burdens are carried, and God is glorified.

Discussion Questions

1. **Read Mark 10:45.** Jesus says He came 'not to be served, but to serve.' How does this change the way we think about serving in the church or community?
2. **Read Matthew 9:35-38.** What stands out to you about the way Jesus saw the crowds? What does His compassion teach us about ministry?
3. Serving begins when we learn to see people through the eyes of Jesus. What are some groups of people in our church, community, or world that are easy to overlook?
4. **Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.** Paul compares the church to a body with many parts. Why do you think comparison can keep people from serving?
5. **Read 1 Corinthians 12:21-27.** What are some behind-the-scenes roles in the church that may not be highly visible but are still very important?
6. The sermon said, 'Visibility is not the same as significance.' How can remembering that encourage people who serve quietly or in less noticeable ways?
7. **Read Galatians 5:13-14.** Paul says we are called to freedom, but should use that freedom to serve one another in love. What is the difference between serving out of obligation and serving out of love?
8. **Read Matthew 28:18-20.** Jesus commissioned His followers to make disciples. How can ordinary acts of service help people take steps toward following Jesus?

Practical Applications (Choose one or two.)

1. **Pray, 'Lord, start with me.'** This week, ask God to show you where His compassion may be moving you toward people.
2. **Notice someone.** Look for one person at church, work, school, or in your neighborhood who may need encouragement, welcome, or help.
3. **Identify your part in the body.** Reflect on your gifts, experiences, personality, and passions. Ask how God might use these to serve others.
4. **Take one next step to serve.** Consider filling out a serve card, talking with a ministry leader, or asking about opportunities in the church, community, or missions.
5. **Encourage someone who serves.** Thank someone who serves faithfully, especially someone whose work is often behind the scenes.

Memory Verse for This Week

Mark 10:45 - 'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'

Closing Prayer

Jesus, thank You for serving us first and giving Your life for us. Help us see people with Your compassion and help each of us find our place in Your mission. Give us humility, courage, and love as we serve others in Your name. May our lives point people to You. In Jesus' name, amen.