

2022 ... A Year of Discipleship

Service

One of the most common of the gifts which God gives to His people is the gift of service. According to C. Peter Wagner (*You Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, © 1979, 1994, 2005, 2012; Baker) close to 95% of all believers receive the gift of service. Why is this so? In many ways, because through service the work of the Church is accomplished. We may want our lives as disciples to focus solely on prayer, worship, and Bible reading. It can be very fulfilling to be surrounded by God's people, learning and studying. The problem with this is that our faith and life as disciples can become isolated and self-centered; making our faith something for our own benefit and not for the benefit of others.

1. Read Micah 6:6-8. What does the Lord require of His people?

The life of the disciple involves service. Justice and love, which are the basis for service, are not options for those who follow Jesus. Because of this, service is a key mark of discipleship. Whenever a disciple of Jesus engages the world for the sake of the Gospel, service is rendered.

2. Read Matthew 10:41-42. What does Jesus say here about service to one's neighbor?
3. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. Why does the disciple live a life of service?

There is no way to earn God's favor and love. Instead, celebrating that our salvation is a gift from God because of what Jesus has done for us, we do good works ... acts of service ... so that we may point people to Jesus.

4. Does a life of service have to be hard? Why or why not?

Acts of service can be very simple such as consistently practicing common courtesy to others to directing investing oneself in the lives of others.

5. What are some simple ways to practice a life of service? What are some ways to directly involve oneself in the lives of others?

6. Former LCMS pastor Mike Ernst once said, “Jesus didn’t come to condemn. Jesus didn’t come to condone. Jesus came to care.” Read Matthew 20:28. How would you interpret Ernst’s statement? How does Ernst’s statement and Jesus’ words apply to the lives of believers?

7. Read Matthew 26:11a. There will always be needs which will present themselves, even beg, for the disciple’s attention. What is the importance of boundaries in the disciple’s life of service? Is it ever appropriate to decline to serve one’s neighbor? Why or why not?

8. Does Christian service only happen on the church grounds or can it exist in other places? Justify your answer.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “When Christ calls a man, He bids him to come and die.” In a life of service, we are called to give up ourselves. This is part of our dying to sin so that we may live for Christ. Service always involves some “dying.” Service is about giving up so that others may have.

Three things can be said about a life of service.

- a. A church that has created a lively atmosphere where service is expected, acknowledged, valued, and celebrated is likely to attract more people into service, thus spreading the work around and providing opportunities for everyone.
- b. A church that is intentional about providing training opportunities that give people skills and confidence in various kinds of service is also likely to attract more people into service.
- c. A church that continually reminds disciples that service begins at home and in the workplace, as we strive to build healthy relationships, seek reconciliation, resolve conflicts, and simply care for the people closest to us is more likely to attract more people into structured programs of service.

A culture of service to others doesn’t assume that staff and/or the “few who do everything” will be the only ones to serve. Instead, it recognizes Jesus and His service to others for *“the Son of Man can not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* (Matthew 20:28)

Look at the list of ministries within Redeemer. Which excite you? These are ministries you can participate in:

- **Altar Guild**
- **A/V Livestream**
- **Shepherding**
- **Prayer**
- **Homebound**
- **Health & Wellness**
- **Fellowship**
- **New Member**
- **Funeral Coordination**
- **Funeral Lunches**
- **Human Care**
- **Greeters (all worship services)**
- **Readers (all worship services)**
- **Ushers (all worship services)**
- **Vacation Bible School**
- **Outreach**
- **Properties and Garden Club**
- **Kitchen**