

STUDY GUIDE

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

AUTHENTIC

THE DISCIPLINE OF SERVICE

LUKE 17:7-10

06/19/2016

MAIN POINT

The way we serve reveals how well we've internalized what Christ has done for us.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

The previous session's application activity challenged you to think about and act on specific ways to deepen fellowship with others. Think back to those application questions and answer them again:

What do you hope to gain from this group in the area of fellowship?

What will you contribute to strengthen the fellowship of this group?

What specifically did you experience through fellowship with others this week?

What ideas or images come to mind when you hear the word "service"?

The next spiritual discipline we will tackle in our study is that of service. As James MacDonald will help us see, practicing the discipline of serving Christ has a direct, noticeable impact on the degree to which personal spiritual growth either plateaus or rises throughout a person's life. Service is a believer's natural response to Jesus' love and sacrifice. It's the day-to-day proving ground that reveals how well or how poorly we've internalized what Christ has done for us.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ LUKE 17:7-10.

What are some of the principles of service you can identify from these verses?

Think about someone you know who you think models the discipline of service. What specifically do you remember about their lifestyle?

Jesus' point in these verses is that the master will always be first and you, as the servant, will always be second. We must not

expect God to serve us before we've served Him. God is the Master, and we're servants in His kingdom. He's the priority, and we're always second. In his teaching, James MacDonald will continue to show us the key characteristics of the discipline of service.

WATCH THE TEACHING SEGMENT FOR SESSION 6 FEATURING JAMES MACDONALD.

What did you like best about James's teaching?

What does it mean to serve God in today's world? To serve others?

Why is it easy for us to place expectations on God, based on the ways we serve Him?

Maybe we're not blatant in our expectations, but it's easy for us to assume that God will serve us. But God isn't a coin-operated deity; He doesn't automatically or mechanically respond the way we want. The way we respond when something negative comes into our lives reveals a lot about our true expectations and beliefs.

How are you currently fulfilling your obligation to serve God?

What barriers often prevent us from faithfully serving God in our church and community?

What are the benefits of obeying God's command to serve?

When it comes to living as an authentic follower of Jesus, there's no substitute for the discipline of service. Service vividly demonstrates the love of Christ, providing rich opportunities to introduce people to Him. And in the end, when we serve faithfully, we will hear the glorious words, "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . Enter into the joy of your master" (Matt. 25:21).

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How can we work together as a group to practice the discipline of service?

Have a conversation this week with an individual who has faithfully served God in your community. Allow that person to tell his or her story. Then ask him or her the following questions:

What motivates you to continue serving God?

What benefits or blessings have you received from serving God?

What barriers have you been forced to overcome in order to continue serving God?

PRAY

As you close your group, thank God for the servant heart of Jesus who served us long before we were willing to serve Him. Thank Him for setting the ultimate example.

Visit LifeWay.com/JamesMacDonald to purchase the study guide for more in-depth personal and group study.

LUKE 17:7-10

17:7-9. Picture yourself as a landowner who employs slaves, Jesus told them. You send one of your slaves into the field to plow or into the hillside to tend the sheep. What would you do when the slave returned from doing his work for the day? Would you rush to him and invite him to sit down and eat a wonderful meal you had provided? Of course not! You would sit at the table and wait for the slave to go to the kitchen, prepare your meal, and bring your food. Only when this part of his daily work was done could the slave expect to eat something himself. Or would you rush out to the slave coming from the field and say, "Oh, thank you for working in the field today. That is so wonderful of you." You would never even think about acting in such a manner.

17:10. A slave who only did his job, or what was commanded, got no special commendation since all he had done was to fulfill his responsibilities. Similarly, a disciple of Christ (v. 1) should not expect special commendation for doing what is required. We serve the Lord because this is what it means to follow Him as disciples. It is our duty.