

Winsome:

SERVE

GETTING STARTED

In our sermon series “Winsome” we will be leaning into what it would look like to partner with the Holy Spirit to be Jesus’ heart and hands in our lives. How we can be present to God, ourselves and others...where we live, where we work, where we play...in any area of our lives.

This week we will look at how Jesus encourages us to serve the world.

OPENING PRAYER

God, please show me how to love You and Your people. Align my heart with Your will, and help me to make decisions that bring You glory and honor. Help me and show me how I can love others fully. Help me to show justice and mercy to those who need it, because those are actions that delight You and show that I am Your child. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

STARTER QUESTIONS

1. Micah 6:8 tells us to “act justly and to love mercy.” How do you feel this applies to how we serve others? What does it look like for you to live these out in your life?

2. Envision a space you occupy a lot (home, work, school, small group, your neighborhood, etc.). Now imagine how different those spaces might look if you intentionally showed up with a heart posture to serve...out of love, justice and mercy. How do you see it being different?

READ ALOUD

Consider reading the passages twice in different translations.

Luke 10:25-37

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' 36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

John 13: 1-17

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. 6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." 8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." 9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" 10 Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Luke 10, Jesus tells us who our neighbor is, and shows us how we are to serve them. Do you find it challenging to actually serve your neighbor who looks, thinks, and believes differently than you do, with the same sacrifice as the Good Samaritan did?

2. Luke 10: 33-35 details the way the Samaritan took care of the wounded man. He took pity on the man, but didn't stop there, he took action. He tended to his wounds, sacrificed his own oil and wine, gave up the comfort of riding on his animal-so the man could be carried, spent his own money to make sure shelter was provided, and then made plans to follow up and see if any other financial help was needed. How do these details help you evaluate how you define serving others?

3. Jesus doesn't just teach, but gives the example of humility. He washes the disciples feet in John 13:1-17, a great example of 'actions speak louder than words!' What do you feel Jesus was conveying in this action? How could the world benefit from acts of humility and not just words?

4. "If I do not wash you, you have no part of me." Jesus says this to Peter about the importance of Him washing Peter's feet. How grateful should we be that Jesus didn't say if you are not the personification of holiness, or if you are not a Bible expert, or if you are wounded...you have no part of me? Being able to have a part of Jesus begins simply with receiving what He has to offer us. Why do you feel Peter pushed back against it at first, what was he not understanding? How does seeing Jesus' humility and grace towards you, encourage you to extend that humility and grace towards others?

5. Question for thought. What makes sacrificially serving others so difficult? If it's something you struggle with, pray to God to give you His servant heart.

PRAYER MINISTRY TIME

Encourage people to settle into a comfortable position and pray, "Come, Holy Spirit." Wait. Breathe. Ask God to show you any areas where your heart may be hardened towards someone or group whom you struggle to understand their point of view, their struggle, or their beliefs. Repent of ways you might have shown up or thought negatively towards them. Ask God to help align your heart to His when they come to mind. Ask God to give you His heart, humility, love and joy for serving others...and He does with us.

FURTHER REFLECTION & ACTION

Most of us would describe ourselves as helpers. We don't mind putting money in the poor box, lending our truck to a co-worker who is moving, watching our friend's kids for a few hours or taking a few minutes to pray for someone...and these are all great things to do! However, when how about serving...the way Jesus describe in the story of the Good Samaritan and in the account where He washed the disciples feet? That might be a bit more uncomfortable for us. So, let's invite the Holy Spirit into that discomfort.

This week, be encouraged to commit to at least one of these things, and share which one you choose with your group. Lift your commitments up in prayer and ask Jesus to give you His heart, eyes, words, compassion and strength as you prepare, and while you serve.

- Ask God to highlight a neighbor (not limited to your actual street neighbor) whom you could serve this week, and make a plan to do so, not just think about it. Ask God to guide you to help that person in the way that will help them see the love of Jesus.
- Volunteer at our Vineyard Community Center, in the many ways there are to serve those in our community. Call Nikki at 614-259-238.
- Sign up for Compassion week as a group, and make it a priority to follow through in June. www.vineyardcolumbus.org/compassion-week.

Follow up in your group after you have done this and share how you have seen God move in you and through you as you serve. Encourage each other to grow in serving others. 1 Thessalonians 4:10, encourages us to strive in our serving and giving to others.