



Purpose – Lesson 3

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Purpose

Lesson 3: Purpose - Serving on Purpose

Bible: John 13:12-17

Description: Contrary to the popular message that you may hear from the world, as a follower of Christ it is your purpose to serve. You are meant to serve God, serve others, and serve God *by* serving others.

Supplies:

- 20 Legos
- 20 Oreos
- A bowl full of at least 30 square ice cubes
- Dirt (*before the service, have you or a youth leader roll their feet around in the dirt, making them extra filthy*)

Opening Game: Stack It Up

Split the group into two teams. Explain that they have to build a stack of one of each: 20 Legos, 20 Oreos, and 20 ice cubes. The point of the game is to go as fast as possible because you're going to time them.

Time the first team building their stacks. Then, let the second team try. Whichever team has the shortest time wins.

Teach

The last time we talked, we learned that our purpose was to become more and more like Jesus. Today, we're going to talk about one of Jesus' most defining qualities: He was a servant.

As a follower of Jesus, it is our purpose to follow after Him by being a servant.

“Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God; so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. 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. —John 13:3-5

Jesus knew His time on earth was coming to an end. He knew the terrible days that awaited Him with the cross. And yet, He chose to get up from this dinner with His friends, His disciples, and begin to wash their feet.

To really bring this into perspective, I need a volunteer.

Select a student to come up front.

Have the leader with the dirty feet come up—but leave their shoes on.

Okay! Lucky you, you're going to act this out for us. So I need you to wash ____'s feet. Sound good?

____, why don't you go ahead and take your shoes off so we can get your feet washed!

Have the leader take their shoes off. Allow students to react to how dirty their feet are.

Okay, okay. So you don't really have to wash their feet. I just wanted you guys to have a visual example of what Jesus did in this story.

You see, at that time, there weren't cars, and there weren't any showers. So the disciples' feet were *dirty*. Even dirtier than these feet! Yet, Jesus washed them anyway.

One of the last things Jesus did on this earth was a beautiful display of serving others. Why do you think that it was so important to Him to do that?

“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. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s

feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” –John 13:12-17

One of the final examples Jesus left for us was that of a servant. Then, He told His disciples that they should follow His example. As followers of Jesus, we should also be following that example.

As a follower of God, your life should be about serving Him.

So, how do you serve God?

First and foremost, you should be serving God with your life. By believing in Him and acting that out, you are serving Him. By following the Bible, you are serving Him. By living your life the way that He says you should live, you are serving Him with your life.

You can also serve God by serving others. And you can do that by using the gifts and talents that God gave you.

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” –Ephesians 2:10

What are your gifts? What kind of talents do you have? What are you passionate about?

Those things are not random. They are exactly the way that God made you!

This verse calls you *God’s handiwork*. Now, if He didn’t create you exactly the way He wanted you, do you think He would have called you His handiwork? Probably not.

If He had messed up on you, or if you hadn’t quite turned out the way He wanted you to, this verse would probably read a little bit different. It would say something like, “You are God’s project,” or “You are someone that God made in His spare time,” or something like that.

But that’s not what this verse calls you! It calls you His handiwork—that’s something to be proud of!

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” -1 Peter 4:10

What are you good at? What makes you happy? What kind of talents do you have?

You should be using those things to serve God and others.

For example, let's say you're really good at organizing things. At first glance, you may not think that being an organized person is something that can help you serve God. But it can!

You could offer to help your parents organize the garage. Maybe you have a lonely neighbor, and you could offer to spend the day helping her organize her kitchen since she doesn't have anyone around to help her. Or maybe you could spend a day at the church, volunteering to help organize the closets.

Maybe you're really good at baking cookies. You could bake cookies and give them to people you know are going through a hard time. If you're good at talking to others, you could use that talent to make visitors feel welcome. If you're good at making other people feel comfortable, you could use that to include people who you know don't have a lot of friends.

See? While at first, you may not think of something you're good at as a talent you can serve God with, I'm telling you that it is and you can!

Let's do an activity to get us started coming up with some ideas.

Choose several people from the audience and ask them to come up front.

Okay, so one at a time, you guys are going to tell me something you're good at, or something you know how to do. Then, we're going to put our heads together as a group and think of some ways you can use that talent to serve God and others.

Ask the students something they're good at, and then allow the group to chime in on how they think they could serve with that talent. If you have time, you can do this with your whole group. It can be very encouraging, especially to students who aren't sure if they have any talents to serve God with.

Be on the lookout for how you can use the things you are good at to bring God glory. Whether it's organizing closets or inviting people to hang out with you or baking cookies, you can use your gifts to serve God by serving others.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” -1 Corinthians 10:31

If you are living your life as a servant, which if you want to live out your purpose is what you should be doing, then you know that no matter what you do, you need to do it as if you were serving God because that brings glory to God.

In the game we played earlier, stacking some of the things were easier than stacking others. It was easier to build a stack of Legos than a stack of ice cubes, right? But knowing that didn't mean you slowed down or were lazy because you knew every

second counted when you were trying to win the game. You worked hard on all three things because you knew that you would have to work hard to win the game.

Whether it's a big project or a little something that no one else will ever know about, your attitude should be the same. You should work just as hard. Because you know your purpose in life is to serve, and you know that you can serve God in all things.

It doesn't matter *what* you do, it matters *how* you do it. It's your heart that matters.

Whether you're singing in front of thousands of people or cleaning up a stain on the carpet that no one will ever know about, your heart while you're serving should be the same. You should be happy to be doing what you're doing because you know you are serving God and fulfilling His purpose for you.

“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.” –Mark 10:43

What does the world say is great? Money? Fame? Power? Having a big house, or having a lot of friends?

What does God say is great? **Serving.**

That's a big difference, isn't it?

If you are living as a servant, then worldly recognition won't matter to you. It won't matter that the world may never recognize you as “great.” It will not matter that you may never be recognized by a lot of people for all of your hard work. What will matter is knowing that you're fulfilling your purpose by following after Jesus and being a servant.

Small Group Questions

1. Is serving something you spend a lot of time thinking about?
2. Do you feel like you are serving God as much as you should?
3. Do you think that there are things you could do to better serve others in your life right now?
4. Do you believe that as a follower of Jesus, it is your purpose to serve?
5. Is serving something that is hard for you to get excited about? Why or why not?
6. Do you think you do everything as if you were doing it to serve God, or do you only do your best on the bigger things?
7. Do you think that you bring glory to God by serving others?
8. What is one way you can serve God this week?
9. What is one way you can serve others this week?
10. What talents do you have that you can use to serve?

Teach - Closing

When Jesus washed those disciple's feet, He taught us a very important lesson, and He left us with very important instructions. In that moment, we get a glimpse into the heart of Jesus. And what do we see? A servant.

Maybe you were hoping for a more glamorous purpose for your life. Maybe you want your purpose to be something that brings you a lot of fame, or a lot of money. But I'm telling you guys, there is no greater purpose than becoming more like Jesus. And Jesus? He was a servant, through and through.

When you remember all that Jesus has done for you—that He loves you no matter what you do, and that He died so your sins could be forgiven—it's easy to want to give something back to Him. And by serving, you can do that.

Remember, when you serve, you're fulfilling you're purpose. Not only that, but you're also doing something that God calls great. Can you think of a purpose better than the one that God calls great? It's the best one there is!