

VOLUNTEERISM

DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS*

How can we know what our part is in the body of Christ?

"The Holy Spirit graciously gives ministry abilities, 'spiritual gifts,' so that every Christian can make a valued contribution to the health of the whole body. The church actually operates as the body of Christ when each person seeks to know and function in accord with their role assigned by God."

* The preceding question and answer comes from Chapter 21, entitled "Ministry Gifts" in Greg Ogden's Discipleship Essentials workbook.

SERVICE A Practice That Transform Us

"Many Americans spend their lives working themselves into a place where they can be served more than serve. As the saying goes: "It's good to be queen (or king)!" Our culture sees the blessed ones as those who get waited on and served. And few among us aspire to be the maid with the job of serving and blessing others.

In Genesis 18:18 the Lord says, "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation and all nations on earth will be blessed through him." God's trajectory is to bless the earth through his people. And to show them exactly what he has in mind, he comes to earth as one who serves (Luke 22:27). Jesus is God with us. And he calls us to serve (Matthew 22:37-39). This is not religious rhetoric that we simply endorse as a good rule of thumb. The Christian discipline of service is the way the world discovers the love of God. We are the way God blesses the earth."

* These paragraphs come from Adele Ahlberg Calhoun's book *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*



- When you hear the word "volunteer" what comes to your mind?
- What has been a memorable time of volunteerism for you? What made it so memorable?
- Describe a time when volunteering turned out to be more rewarding/exciting/joyful than expected? Why do you think that is?
- How do you volunteer your time and energy at Legacy? Why did you pick serving in that area?



1 PETER 4:1-11 ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

3 For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

4 With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;

5 but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

6 For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

11 whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

PETER'S WISE COUNSEL IN THE END TIMES

- According to Wayne Grudem, in his commentary on 1 Peter, the first six verses of this chapter declare that the maturing Christian must decide to suffer for the sake of righteousness. In what ways have you suffered for righteousness sake? If you don't believe you have suffered, why is that? What have you learned about the faith and God when you have observed others that have suffered?
- Is there anything else in the first six verses that stood out to you that you would like to discuss?
- In verses 7 through 11, Peter highlights why love and service for others is so important in the time before Jesus returns. Why is it important for you and me to be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of our prayers? How does that practically look in our day-to-day life?
- Dr. Thomas Constable states "*God has given every Christian at least one "gift" (ability) that he or she can and should share with other believers ("employ [use] it"), and in so doing serve them... God bestows His grace on different people in different ways. The gifts are aspects of God's grace. No Christian can claim that he or she has nothing to offer the church.*" Do you agree or disagree with Dr. Constable's assessment? Why or why not?
- Furthermore, what is the gift(s) and/or abilities that God has given you? How do you use that gift on a regular basis? Are you helping other people discover their gift(s)? If so, how are you helping them?
- When you serve, how do you keep love and hospitality at the center of your service? What happens if you don't keep love central to what you are doing? Why is that detrimental to not only you, but the people around you?
- What else stands out in verses 7 through 11 that you would like to discuss, especially in light of Pastor Patrick's sermon?

CLOSING

Nika Spaulding, Theologian in Residence at St. Jude Oak Cliff, states that all people, especially Christians should know and engage theology. The problem is not knowing the impact that theology has on our lives. Because of this, she ends her classes by asking "So what?" So what difference does this topic have on my life? And that is the question I leave us to answer today. So what difference does volunteerism make on my day-to-day life? Discuss before closing in prayer.