



21 Ways to Practice the Spiritual Discipline of Service

Week of April 24, 2021

Note to leaders - Last week there was a typo on the Scripture for question 3 bullet point 3. It should have been Philippians 2:3-5 not Philippians 3:2-5. Sorry about that! **There are 21 things so I know you will not have time to do all of these.** I would encourage you to look at the first one and then maybe have members of your group pick the ones they would like to discuss. I'll include ideas on each one, but you're free to choose! God bless you for leading!

Intro Discussion Question(s):

- *Intro Question - The word service may be one of the most diverse words in the English language. It has so many different uses, and when you consider the variations of the word, another layer of complication is added to this seemingly simple word. Ask the question: What are some of the different uses and variations of the word service you can think of? (example: getting the car serviced, the service industry, a server at a restaurant, servants etc.)*

Read Bible Study Summary:

This study examines the entire chapter of Romans 12 to discover at least 21 Christlike ways to practice the spiritual discipline of serving! We are confronted with this truth: because of God's mercy in Christ, we should become living sacrifices serving God in love with our God-given abilities so we can overcome evil with good! The detailed way in which Paul directs his readers to understand this concept uncovers proper motives behind the discipline of service along with proper actions of service. When practiced in our lives, the discipline of service has the potential to change you and the world around you!

Main Scripture

- **Romans 12**

There are 21 ways to practice the Spiritual Discipline of Service found in Romans 12!

1. **Practice serving with gratitude! Romans 12:1**

- Gratitude for God's mercy should be one of the greatest motives for everything a disciple of Christ does. In view of, because of, as a result of, considering, owing to, thanks to, due to, through and by the mercy of God we live!
 - **Ask Question** - *What is the difference between serving out of gratitude and serving out of obligation?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Ephesians 2:4-5*

2. Practice serving with your life! Romans 12:1

- This verse says offer your bodies as "living sacrifices." Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice in death in order that we might give sacrifices in life! He died for us so we could live for Him!
 - **Ask Question** - *In what ways do find it difficult to be a living sacrifice?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Luke 9:23-25*

3. Practice serving with your best! Romans 12:1

- Holy and pleasing to God. We should desire to give God our very best, nothing less! If we're honest, God many times gets our leftovers, our seconds, our scraps.
 - **Ask Question** - *What happens when we put God and the things of God first place?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Psalms 37:4-6*

4. Practice serving with worship! Romans 12:1

- So serving God with our life is our spiritual act of worship. We gather to worship together on Sundays and this we should do, but a true follower of Jesus wants to live a life of worship every day!
 - **Ask Question** - *What are some of the ways you worship with your life of service to God and others?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Psalms 19:14*

5. Practice serving with what you don't do! Romans 12:2

- A servant of God dances to the beat of a different drummer. We are motivated by a different standard, a different set of rules. We now know the truth about the ways of the world and its deception! We choose a different pattern. A pattern of life. (This goes hand in hand with #20 on the list)
 - **Ask Question** - *How is it serving God and others when we choose to not do certain things?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *1 Peter 4:1-4*

6. Practice serving with your mind! Romans 12:2

- We actually allow The Holy Spirit of God to begin redirecting our thoughts and minds. When you set your hearts and minds on the things of God you will begin to discover the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God!
 - **Ask Question(s)** - *What is the difference between serving out of gratitude and serving out of obligation?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Ephesians 2:4-5*

7. Practice serving with humility! Romans 12:3

- Unfortunately the church is not immune to the sin of pride! God doesn't want servants with false humility, but He sure doesn't need servants who have lost their view of God's mercy in their lives.
 - **Ask Question** - *How is it that God gives us amazing grace and mercy we don't deserve and yet we can begin acting as if we are better than others?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *James 3:13-17*

8. Practice serving with faith! Romans 12:3b

- You must realize that your ability to serve and even have faith is a gift of God! It's up to you to exercise your faith to trust Jesus as your Savior and then in service to God, but God put the capacity to know God in your heart in the first place!
 - **Ask Question** - *What does this statement mean to you? A servant's standing with God and assurance in God are not based on how much faith they have but who they place their faith in!*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Galatians 2:20*

9. Practice serving with others! Romans 12:4-5

- God believes in teams. The Holy Trinity of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus built a team of twelve. God has included us on His team in order to reconcile the world to Himself. Without teamwork, the church ceases to be the church and simply becomes an organization.
 - **Ask Question** - *What are some of the benefits of serving with others as a team?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Hebrews 10:24*

10. Practice serving with your gifts! Romans 12:6-8

- Serve with the gifts you've been given. Way too many people spend their time wishing they had somebody else's gifts. Don't waste your life wishing you were somebody or something else other than who God created you to be.
 - **Ask Question** - *What gifts do you bring to the table as a member of Christ's body?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *1 Corinthians 12:14-18*

11. Practice serving with love! Romans 12:9

- A servant of God must have a love that is sincere. The only thing he or she should hate is evil! A servant of God is to never hate anyone, not even their enemy. Our love helps us become like God in the way we serve God.
 - **Ask Question** - *What difference does it make whether or not you serve with love?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *1 Corinthians 13:1, 4-7*

12. Practice serving with devotion! Romans 12:10

- A servant of God is devoted to God, and one of the greatest ways we show our devotion to God is by our devotion to serve our brothers and sisters in the family of God!
 - **Ask Question(s)** - *What is your definition of devotion?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *1 Thessalonians 2:8*

13. Practice serving with zeal and spiritual fervor! Romans 12:11

- Why combine these two like Paul did? Because zeal, eagerness, and passion, without spiritual direction can be dangerous! Our zeal must remain connected to our spiritual fervor.
 - **Ask Question** - *Why should spiritual fervor be driven by an intense and passionate desire for God's direction in every single aspect of our lives?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Psalms 73:24-26*

14. Practice serving with joy, patience, and faithfulness! Romans 12:12

- These three directives go together! They work together! A servant of God is joyful because of the hope God has placed in their life! We have patience because we trust God is going to work even in our afflictions! And we remain faithful in prayer through it all!
 - **Ask Question** - *How have these three things been a part of your life of service to God?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Romans 5:1-5*

15. Practice serving with generosity! Romans 12:13

- Sometimes generosity has nothing to do with money, but everything to do with being generous with our time, our talents, and our willingness to just be there for someone who's hurting!
 - **Ask Question** - *Can you tell us of a time when you experienced the truth Jesus taught: It is more blessed to give than to receive?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Matthew 25:37-40*

16. Practice serving with no discrimination! Romans 12:14

- Yes, we are even to serve our enemies. What more powerful testimony of God's love than to serve in love someone who doesn't love you!
 - **Ask Question** - *Why are we to be non-discriminating in our service to others?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Luke 6:35-36/Romans 12:16*

17. Practice serving with empathy! Romans 12:15

- A servant of God is going to be motivated by the things of God, rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn! Sometimes you won't have the words to say, there are no words for some things. But the fact you showed up, counts!
 - **Ask Question** - *Has there ever been a time in your life when you experienced the beauty of being served by someone who was empathetic with what you were going through? You don't have to give details, but can you tell us the difference that made in your life?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Galatians 6:2*

18. Practice serving with harmony! Romans 12:16

- We don't have to agree with one another on everything, but we are commanded to love one another and to do things in harmony with one another.
 - **Ask Question** - *What is the defining characteristic of a follower of Christ?*
 - **Read Scriptures**- *John 13:35/Ephesians 4:1-3*

19. Practice serving with forgiveness! Romans 12:17-20

- Some dictionaries actually have a hard time with the concept of forgiveness. They will say things like..."The act of forgiving, To pardon." "Psychologists generally define forgiveness as a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness."
 - **Ask Question(s)** - *Why is it so hard to forgive others and why is it so important?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Colossians 3:13*

20. Practice serving with discernment! Romans 12:17

- As a servant of God, and as a child of God, I have rights. I have freedoms. I have privileges. But as a servant of God I must exercise discernment!
 - **Ask Question(s)** - *Do you think about the impact on others before you say something or do something?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *1 Corinthians 10:23-24*

21. Practice serving with vision! Romans 12:21

- Our vision should be one of victory over evil and to win the victory in a good, Godly way. Your vision should be a victorious one, because as you serve God you begin winning the battles against temptations, bad habits, bitterness, and any number of destructive behaviors! Your vision should also be a vision of the good you will begin to do, not because you have to in order to be saved, but because you have been saved and now have the privilege and honor of becoming a living sacrifice. Serving God in this way will cause you to overcome evil with good!
 - **Ask Question** - *What are some ways you could start being a living sacrifice through the spiritual discipline of service?*
 - **Read Scripture** - *Romans 12:21*

Closing

- Don't forget the opportunity to play golf and support missions at our Golf tournament on May 15th, an opportunity to be baptized on Sunday May 2nd, an opportunity to for Baby Dedication Sunday May 9th, and an opportunity to become a covenant member at our Northshore Orientation classes May 16th-June 13th.
 - **Ask Question** - *What is the greatest challenge you are facing? Is there some way our group can help?*
- Pray together over those requests.