



Week 5 - Servant Leaders

WE TRAIN PEOPLE TO LOVE GOD & THEIR BODIES.

"Serving others prepares you to lead others." - Jim George

The next pillar of Revelation Wellness leadership is servanthood. Notice how each pillar builds upon the one before it—every foundation leading us here: leadership rooted in service. Jesus led by serving. Christlike leadership is established not on position, but on a posture of humility and love. When a leader lives God-first—secure as a son or daughter and committed to loving people well—leadership becomes fruitful, life-giving, and brings heaven to earth in the ordinary rhythms of daily life. God's design for leadership is to flood the natural life with the supernatural, on earth as it is in heaven. This happens as leaders serve with the heart of the Father and operate by the leading of the Spirit.

Jesus defined (or rather, redefined) leadership this way:

"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 13:14-17

The word *leader* is rarely used in Scripture to describe those in positions of influence. Instead, those God appoints to guide His people are most often called shepherds or servants. Kingdom leadership runs counter to the patterns of the world, and God's way of forming leaders looks nothing like worldly ambition. To those He calls, God says, "Become small if you would be great." He invites His leaders to take the lowest place and trust Him to exalt them in due time. His summons to leadership is, at its core, a summons to serve.

Biblical leadership requires brave, fierce hearts. The book of James tells us, "Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly," James 3:1. Leadership that reflects Jesus is not pursued for recognition or applause. God calls His leaders to humility, discipline, and sacrificial service. When Jesus invited others to follow Him, or people sought Him out to follow Him, He urged them to examine their hearts—to consider whether they were willing to carry through what they desired to begin. He calls us to the same honest evaluation, that we might follow Him into leadership marked by service.

"Leader" is found three times in the KJV, and the word "leaders" is found three times. Alternatively, SERVANT is referenced 885 times in the KJV and 731 in the NIV. Jesus said this about Himself –

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:28



In John 13 at the Last Supper, Jesus made it clear that He was giving His disciples an example by serving them. He, the creator of the Universe, the King of all kings, stripped down to the status of the lowliest servant and washed their feet. It is tragically easy to read over this verse without realizing the depth of what Jesus did and how He invites us to follow His example. Culturally, foot washing was considered the most menial task assigned to a servant. The dust, the mud, even animal refuse clung to the feet of those entering a home. The one who washed feet was regarded as the lowest of all servants. It was messy, unpleasant, and undignified work. Yet Jesus willingly took it upon Himself.

This is the **only time** Jesus specifically relates that He is setting an example for His followers. His entire life demonstrated godly living, dependence on and obedience to the Father, service, intimacy, and abiding. However, in regard to His own disciples, who would be the leaders of His church (both then AND now), He speaks specifically of His example of the charge to serve.

**"The heart of the leader is manifested through service to others."
-Artika Tyner**

The service Christ beckons leaders to embrace is not that of a slave performing duties for his or her master. *Christ-like leadership means serving from one's identity as a son or daughter of God.* This kind of

**"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself... Serve and thou shall be served."
Ralph Waldo Emerson**

serving brings freedom, granting a leader the freedom to serve without the need for applause or recognition, and as a response of a grateful heart. John 13 tells us that Jesus, knowing who He was and that the Father had given Him all things, got down on His knees and washed the disciples' feet. He had no insecurity and needed no

applause. Jesus served out of His identity. We, in turn, serve because He FIRST served us.

"You rule with the heart of a servant, you serve with the heart of a king. *You rule with the heart of a servant because you know that everything you have access to is for the benefit of others, and you serve with the heart of a king because you know that you have been placed in people's lives as royalty.*"¹ This is Christ-like service.

Second-Mile Service

Chick-fil-a teaches what they call "second-mile service." This service goes beyond the required actions to go "the extra mile." In Matthew 5:41, Jesus urges His disciples to

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jqp4SaybAY> Bill Johnson, Senior Pastor, Bethel Church



go beyond the law's requirement of carrying a Roman soldier's bag for 1 mile. During this time of Roman rule, a soldier could conscript a Jewish citizen to carry his pack for a maximum of one mile. Jesus sets a new standard – go the second mile. Do the unexpected. Let your lives brim over with service from delight unto the Father. The key to this principle is the heart – not begrudgingly carrying the burden for a second mile, but delighting in serving from the heart.²

Great delight comes from serving when a person does not have to prove themselves. All service becomes an offering to the One who served you first. Service becomes a GET TO instead of a HAVE TO when our hearts are securely grounded in our God-given identities. Christ-like service is not motivated by the approval or disapproval of others but is a response of obedience and love to the Father.

Servant-hearted Leadership

How does this work itself out in leadership? How does serving and going the second mile actually happen in leadership?

Servant leaders humbly carry the Father's heart into every circumstance. When our hearts are set to serve the King through every action, we lead like Jesus. Serving as unto the Lord and not pleasing people frees us from the responses, or lack thereof, of the people being led. Colossians 3:23 states: "*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as if working for the Lord, not for human masters.*" We serve others as if we are serving Jesus Himself.

Leadership is often uncelebrated and deeply challenging. The limelight fades, and one's heart must have a firm foundation in the WHY of service – our personal vision, mission, and core values. Why do I serve? Who am I serving? Am I serving for my own glory and recognition or out of response to the King's service? "*We love because He first loved us,*" 1 John 4:19. The same is true of serving well – we serve because He first served us.

Foundations in Serving

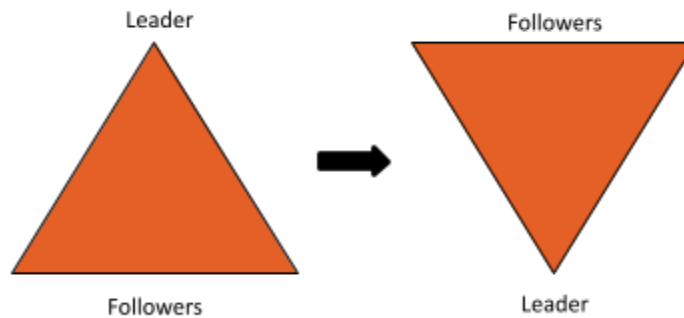
These things provide the groundwork for this foundation: As leaders, we first and foremost are to serve the Lord, and THEN to serve those God has entrusted to our care. This heart of service and effective leadership begins in our homes and then grows into the communities God has placed us in. God-first leadership flourishes as we lead from a heart that delights in service.

While this seems obvious, many homes and ministries do not function like this. Leaders can be selfish and demanding because of their position. *Not so with Kingdom leadership.* Christ-like leaders lead from the bottom, taking the last place in line and putting others before self. In the world system, leadership looks like this: Leader at the top, employees/followers at the bottom. Kingdom leadership, however, flips the standard. Matthew 20:25-28 Jesus called them together and said, "*You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. **Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.***" (emphasis added).

² Turner, DeeAnn "It's My Pleasure-The Impact of Extraordinary Talent & a Compelling Culture"; 2015 Elevate Publishing



Christ-like leadership reverses the expectation of leaders being at the top and sets a new standard. Jesus served first. He laid down His life first. He calls those following Him to go first to serve, love, and follow.



God-first servanthood comes from a heart submitted and madly in love with Christ Himself and flows into every area of our lives. Our homes and closest relationships will be radically affected if we begin to live out the service to which Christ calls us.

Have you received His service?

At Home

All these ideas of servanthood and leadership become hollow if they are not first lived out in our homes and everyday lives. The first recipients of a leader's service should be those closest to us. In marriage, parenting, friendship, shared living, and every sphere of relational influence, Christlike leadership calls us to serve not out of duty, but from delight—responding to His great love and example of service. We have returned full circle to the first pillar – God-first. Are you receiving His love for you daily? Your personal leadership will remain stunted and shallow if your heart is not first captivated by His great love. He came to serve YOU. As you receive His love and service, the right response is a freely given love for and service to others, regardless of their worthiness.

**"The simplest way to explain it would be to say that servant leaders focus on identifying and meeting the needs of others rather than trying to acquire power, wealth, and fame for themselves."
Kent Keith, CEO Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership**

In community

There are no lone rangers in the Kingdom of God. You have been strategically placed where you are by the Holy Spirit to influence and care for those around you. What community are you a part of? What does Christ-like service and leadership look like for you in that place?



Servant-hearted leadership cannot draw its joy or motivation from the response of those being served. Its source is the Father Himself. The heart of true servanthood flows from Him. Every measure of influence we are given is a sacred trust—an invitation to carry the Father's heart and advance His kingdom on the earth, wherever He has placed us.

"The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers," Ralph Nader. As a leader serves, he or she calls out the greatness and leadership in others, empowering them to become more than they knew possible. True leadership serves, and this service empowers those who are served. Our service enables others to go beyond us! Our leadership and service ceiling becomes the next generation's floor.

An important clarification when discussing servant leadership: serving does not diminish authority. True servant leadership does not surrender responsibility or weaken leadership—it strengthens it. It empowers those being served and equips them to lead as well.

Authority and responsibility remain intact. What distinguishes servant leadership is not the loss of authority, but the heart from which it is exercised.

We are no longer slaves seeking the approval of God for every action, ruled by insecurity and an orphan spirit. No longer driven by a personal agenda, a leader is available to follow the Holy Spirit in new ways. Freedom is gained to follow and obey as He leads. Christ-like leadership lives with eyes and ears open to the voice of the Father: *What are you saying in this situation? How can I minister first to You right now? Who would you have me talk to, love, lead, and share with?* Servant leaders become partners with God Himself.

"Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it." Mark 16:20

"For we are God's fellow workers." 1 Cor. 3:9a

Let's dive into the deep things of the Spirit – serving and loving with the heart of Jesus.



Training Exercise—Day #1 Jesus' Leadership Style - Service & Humility

Your assignment today is to read the following articles

[Got Questions - Servant Leadership](#)

[Servant Leadership of Jesus](#)

As you read, make a note of what sticks out. What is the Holy Spirit showing you?

What are some practical ways you can live this out?

Examine your heart and ask the Holy Spirit to show you— does your service come from the heart of a slave or child of God?

Remember, this is where leadership begins.

*"So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love,
any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,
complete my joy by being of the same mind,
having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit
but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.
Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
Phil. 2:1-4*

Check in with your swim buddy.

**"Life is an exciting business
and most exciting when
lived for others."
-Helen Keller**



Training Exercise—Day #2 Practical Servanthood

"Jesus got them together to settle things down. He said, 'You've observed how godless rulers throw their weight around, how quickly a little power goes to their heads. It's not going to be that way with you. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That is what the Son of Man has done: He came to serve, not be served—and then to give away his life in exchange for the many who are held hostage.'"

Matthew 20:25-28 The Message

Read Matthew 20:25-28 in a few different versions. Make notes of Jesus' commands and teaching on servanthood.

*"So no matter what your task is, work hard.
Always do your best as the Lord's servant, not as man's."*
Col. 3:23 Voice

Pray through Col. 3:23.

Please read the articles below.

<http://www.skipprichard.com/9-qualities-of-the-servant-leader/>

<http://www.inc.com/guides/2010/08/how-to-become-a-servant-leader.html>

Which principles and ideas about servant leadership MOST challenge you?

How do they apply to YOUR LEADERSHIP?

If you approach your relationships with a heart and a focus of service, how will that change you and those around you?

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.



Training Exercise—Day #3 Serving from Intimacy

Watch this podcast on serving - Mary BEFORE Martha - Corey Russell

<https://youtu.be/ajRQqz9E2Qs>

Which principles and ideas about sitting as Mary did BEFORE serving challenge you?

Where do you still feel you must DO so that you might BE?

How are you at SITTING and hearing His word?

What is your “I WILL” moving forward in servant leadership?

“And he said to me, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” Is. 49: 3

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.