
Ignite

“Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the joyful, abundant life that is ours through our Lord Jesus Christ. Guide us according to Your will, and help us become servants whose lives are a worthy example to others. Give us courage, Father, to claim the spiritual riches that You have promised, and show us Your plans for our lives, today and forever. In Jesus’ name. AMEN.”



SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

Impact Touchdown #1: Giving of Our Lives

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

Luke 17:7-10

“Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? Won’t he rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”

Introduction

This pandemic is like a ‘blip’ in the history of mankind. The IMPACT Touchdown series is a response to the unusual opportunities presented by this pandemic, where the ministries and cell groups of DUMC are reaching out to the communities out there. Let us keep going to continue to bless others in the midst of this pandemic.

As a spiritual family, let us do a ‘touchdown’. A ‘touchdown’ can be in the context of a plane touching down on the runway, or when a point is scored in the game of rugby. In this series, we would like to hear what God is telling us, where He wants us to go and to celebrate the good that He is doing.

If you love God, you would serve people, and through serving people, we are making people to be more like Christ.

This message may ‘bother’ us as it offends our 21st century mindset. We are driven largely by a ‘consumeristic’ mentality – we ask ourselves ‘what’s in it for me’, ‘what’s beneficial for me’, etc – this could be the idol of our lives. What Jesus spoke in this passage was addressed to His disciples, and not for the general crowd.

BIG IDEA: The job description of the follower of Christ.

The word 'servant' is 'doulos' in Greek; it is also often translated as 'slave'. A 'doulos' has no rights, he receives no wages, and he has no rights to appeal against whatever wrongs that are being done to him. Slaves were an acceptable, common and social norm when Jesus was on earth.

1. No extra help *Luke 17:7*

Notice in this verse that there is only one servant; meaning, there is no extra help. This servant does everything.

2. No time off *Luke 17:8*

There is also no time off for the servant.

3. No thank you *Luke 17:9, 10*

The master will not thank the servant. The slave is always a debtor of service to the master, and the master is never a debtor of rewards.

Jesus will not tell us to do something that He has not already done.

"Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." **Mark 10:43-45**

No extra help & no time off

For some of us, when we serve God, we tend to complain; sometimes we need to do more, and compare with the people around us. But this passage is not about what others are doing or not; it is about the individual as a servant and slave of Christ. It is about the individual's accountability to God. When one is serving God, he/she is serving an audience of One.

Do we do all these grudgingly and with complaints? Jesus paid a heavy price. God the Father sent His Son, Jesus, Who is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords to be the Servant of all.

Most of us who have received employment letters before would notice that they usually contain this clause within the job description: 'complete other duties at the discretion of the management', or 'other duties assigned from time to time'.

It is our responsibility to find out what God wants us to do, and to be faithful in. God does not owe us a 'thank you'. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves. It is not the case where we have worked so hard to save ourselves that God owes us something. It is purely God's grace. God does not owe us anything, but we owe God everything.

God does give us a hint that He remembers everything that we do on earth.

*God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. **Hebrews 6:10***

What a comfort that even though He does not owe us a 'thank you', God tells us that He remembers.

BIG IDEA: The job description of the follower of Christ. Everything Jesus tells you to do.

We ought to say 'we are only doing our duty, there is no need to thank me'. The Greek word for 'unworthy' is 'worthless', 'useless', 'good-for-nothing'. God does not need us. But we need Him. God will burst the 'balloon of pride' and the 'balloon of satisfaction'. As a servant of Christ, one does not get to decide. As long as He wants you to, you have to keep going. While God does not need us, He chooses to use us. It is a privilege to serve Him, and He makes us useful for the Kingdom of God.

While a sense of duty is important, it is not the highest motivation in serving God. The least we can do is to be dutiful. The highest motivation is the life of service of love.

*So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. **Genesis 29:20***

Jacob's motivation to work was not just for duty; it was also out of love for Rachel.

*"For Christ's love compels us ... " **2 Corinthians 5:14a***

After serving God dutifully, can we still say to Him, 'It is still worth it.'? This is the posture that God is helping us to work out.

Jesus' disciples were actually offended, as His demands were high.

*From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. **John 6:66***

Where God has called you, that is the safest place.

All of us are slaves to something or other.

*But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. **Romans 6:17,18***

*"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" **Matthew 25:40***

Let us adopt the posture of a servant as we serve the community. IMPACTNow is an amazing initiative to serve God with all of our hearts.



SERMON REFLECTION

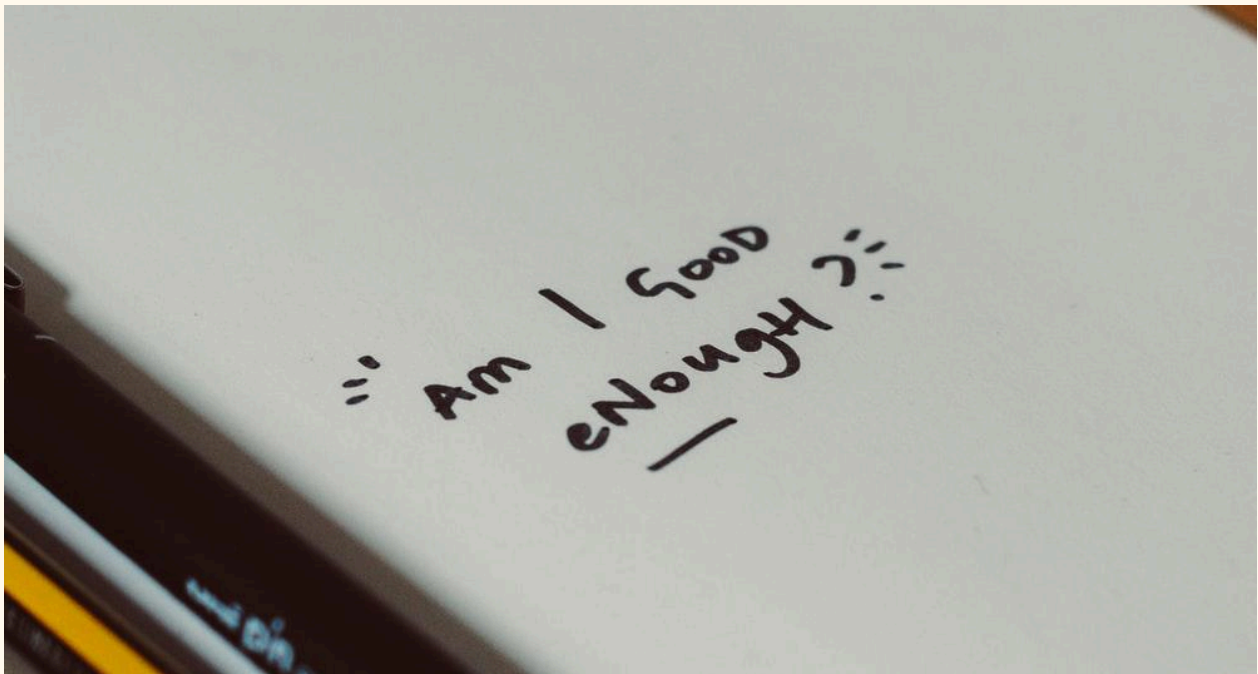


Photo by Hello, I'm Nik on Unsplash

I had some repentance to do when I listened to this sermon. I have to confess that there are moments when the mere thought of serving puts me in a state of panic,

and there are also times when serving propels me to a 'spiritual high' - panic, because of the constant fear of not doing well; the latter usually comes about after completing a task.

But this wasn't the case when I first accepted the Lord. Back then, I would serve in several ministries concurrently, so much so that friends would comment, 'you are serving all over church!'. Well, not all over church literally, but yes – I would even volunteer at the church office whenever the opportunity arises. I was consistently joyful, enthusiastic, never tired and looking forward to serving each time I am on duty. To top it all off, I was also holding a demanding job in the investment banking industry at that time. I felt so close to the Lord each time I was serving.

God opened doors and led me to several mission trips over the years. As anyone who had gone on a mission trip would testify, preparing for such a trip required detailed planning and execution, especially if it involved flying to a foreign country whose native language one did not speak. The initial excitement of serving the Lord in the mission field very quickly waned. I remember being very frazzled and stressed, having to organise my role for the mission trip and handling work issues simultaneously. I had sleepless nights and cried out to God, 'I am serving You both at the marketplace and in the mission field at the same time, only You can see me through this.' I do not want to be the deadweight to either the mission trip team or in the workplace, where we are trying to pitch our services to a new client for a major transaction then. I seriously contemplated quitting the mission trip team.

Perhaps it was a case of bad time management on my part, but God restores. He was and is faithful and caused the mission trip to be a fruitful one, and we also won the deal at work at the same time. (I had to attend to several work calls during the trip – God truly blessed me with multi-tasking abilities!)

Thank God for wonderful mission trip teammates and understanding workmates. I learnt that if God calls me to it, He will also equip me for it.

But serving the Lord isn't limited to just duties within the confines of the church domain.

Colossians 3:17 reminds us that "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

'...whatever I do...'

After leaving the marketplace in pursuit of other life priorities, I began to question what purpose does God have for me. I doubt my parents aspired to have me cook and clean daily as my sole vocation, after having spent their hard-earned savings on my education. Nothing wrong with doing household chores, but I began to resent such 'hard work', when I cannot even perform them well to begin with. But I am reminded that God has put me in such a position in this season of my life; surely, this

is an avenue to serve Him even in the most menial of tasks. I choose to worship the Lord even while doing laundry and cleaning food scraps off dishes. A job worth doing, is indeed a job worth doing well.

It is not so much as serving for serving's sake; it is more of a revelation of Who I am serving. God has allowed me to be part of His story! I am, after all, an imperfect human being used by a perfect God for His glory. 1 Peter 4:10 is a reminder that God made and blessed me with unique gifts, passions and experiences to serve Him as only I can. The least I can do is to serve Him with it. My Heavenly Father is a generous God – He multiplies the time back to you, each time you expend time serving Him! He will not short-change those who serve Him.

I have learnt to serve God by His spirit and not in my own strength – serving in my own strength will entail incessant complaining and murmuring, and God will not be pleased. It is my prayer that my serving will serve (no pun intended) as an encouragement to others and as a channel to spread God's love. God first loved me by sending Jesus to the cross on my behalf – He loves me so much that He did not withhold Jesus. God loves me so much and has given me everything I need to lead a godly life – this forms the core of my motivation to serve Him, in light of eternity.

'... giving thanks to God the Father...'

Before I was born, God already knew me. God set me apart and called me by His marvellous grace. As God's chosen, I ought to be eternally thankful to Him! And I am! There is no greater privilege and honour than to be called by God to serve Him in everything I do! It is never about me – it is all about Him. This revelation is my reminder to always maintain a good attitude, to serve Him with a heart of gratitude and be thankful to Him in whatever and all I do. THANK YOU, LORD JESUS.

Contributed by May Ng, PJN6



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will

guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Activity/Questions

1. Name some of the unsung heroes in your life. How has this person contributed to your life?
2. When given a task, do you usually stick to the 'job description', or do you go beyond? What is your motivation in doing so?



Photo by David Iskander on Unsplash

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

1. Did you find this sermon difficult to accept and digest? Which part did you find most difficult?
2. What does the word 'slave' mean to you? Would using a different term, e.g. 'helper', denote a different meaning?

3. What do you think God's purpose is when He needs something done?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

1. What new things did you learn from Luke 17:7-10? Is there something you did not know before? How has it impacted you? Name one change that you will intentionally make in applying this sermon's message.
2. Why is this expectation of Jesus so difficult for many of us? Which part of 'dying to self' in our lives do we need to experience to help us be like a "doulos", as Jesus was? Discuss this in light of Mark 10:43-45. Share how this can be practically applied in your life.
3. While the motivation of duty is important, why is love the highest motivation? Discuss this in light of 2 Corinthians 5:14. What is your primary motivation in serving God?

Question Bank *(Extra questions you can use to bring your discussion further as you see fit):*

1. How do you feel to serve without extra help, with no break, and with no 'thank you'? Do you ever feel being taken advantage of when you serve? This could be in the area of parenting, in ministry, etc. How would you apply Hebrews 6:10 in such instances?
2. Do you think serving is an obligation, a chore/burden or a privilege? Do you jump at the opportunity to serve God, or do you need lengthy persuasion by someone and agree grudgingly? How should your perspective on serving change when Jesus Himself came not to be served, but to serve?
3. How does an attitude of humility help make serving a priority in your life? What are some things you can do to show that you are a disciple of Jesus? How can you cultivate more of these traits in your life?
4. Romans 12:11 says we should never lack zeal, but keep our spiritual fervour in serving God. What should this look like in the lives of Christians today? As the body of Christ, how can we stay true to this?
5. Have you served in order to meet the needs of others because you wanted that person to experience the love of Jesus? What is it about serving others that you find hard to do? Would you regret your deeds if the person did not express any gratitude

to you? Why, or why not?

6. Share an instance when someone thought of you and served you instead of themselves. How did it affect you? How was God glorified?

7. Do you try to get the biggest “bang for your buck” when you serve? Are there any self-interests which motivates you to serve, e.g. showing off of talents, wanting to be seen serving, getting into the good books of leaders, etc? How do you feel after each time you serve – drained, energised, satisfied? How does viewing Jesus as the perfect Servant help shape your views to serve?

8. Do you view yourself as a slave, or a child of God? Romans 8:17 says that we are children and heirs of God. How would you reconcile Romans 8:17 with Luke 17:10 when Jesus called us ‘unworthy servants’? How would this influence your posture in serving?



PRAYER



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Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

Indonesia

The pandemic has caused as many as 5 million Indonesians to drop below the poverty line by September 2020, further worsening cases of malnutrition, childhood illness and deaths.

Pray for:

- The LORD to guide the Churches to be His hands and feet, pursuing justice for the poor and upholding the cause of the needy.
- The LORD to revive the land and its people.
- The LORD to send labourers into His harvest field.

Christie - Missionary in Indonesia

Pray for:

- Good health, good friends and prayer partners in Indonesia coming alongside Christie to finish the good race (2 Tim. 4:7).
- The Lord to strengthen Christie with the power of the Holy Spirit through infilling with God's love (Eph. 3:14-21).
- God to open doors of evangelism, and opportunities to share the good news with whoever Christie meets (Col. 4:2-4).



OTHER RESOURCES

*Below are some links to resources for you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!*

FEATURED

In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!



Helping without Hurting in Short-Term Missi...

8 sessions (20-30 minutes average)

rightnowmedia.org

This stand-alone resource applies the principles of "helpin...

Brian Fikkert

Mission Social Concerns

Video Series



Discipleship Bands

1 hour a week for the duration of the discipleship group

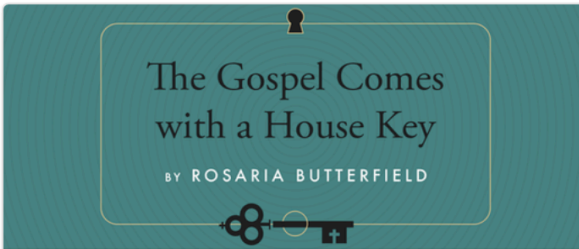
discipleshipbands.com

A framework for discipleship groups for 3-5 people based...

J.D. Walt

Fellowship Prayer & Spirituality

Tool App



Gospel Comes with a House Key, The

13 videos (3 minute clips on average)

rightnowmedia.org

Rosaria Butterfield invites us into her home to show us ho...

Rosaria Butterfield

Fellowship Friendship Hospitality

Video Series Book Study



Knowing God (Video Series)

3 videos (8 minutes average)

youtube.com

The leader must know God and walk with God in a daily, ...

Malcolm Webber

Leadership Prayer & Spirituality

Video Series



DUMC STORIES

Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!

