

session 10 study guide

becoming others-centered

starter

WHO DUNNIT? Use the “Who Dunnit?” worksheet (see the end of this file) and a pen or pencil to get one signature of an actual participant for each activity listed on the sheet. After 5 to 10 minutes, the person who collected the most signatures will be declared the winner. Once the game is concluded, find one person whose signature you obtained on the sheet. Briefly interview that person and record their answers to the following questions:

1. Why did you participate in this activity?

2. What response did you receive from the person who you were serving?

3. How did you feel when you were doing this for the other person?

4. What were the easiest and most difficult parts about serving in this way?

message

Often, we think of the pastor in our church as the minister and the congregation as non-ministers. That is just not true. All of us who call ourselves Christians are ministers. In fact, it is the role and lifestyle of every Christian to be a servant—to be others-centered.

a good neighbor

In Luke 10:30-37, Jesus told His disciples a parable that demonstrated this idea. As you read this story, consider the actions of the priest and the Levite—both of whom were leaders in Jewish worship at the time—and the actions of the Samaritan.

A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him,” he said, “and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.”

Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?

1. Why did the priest and the Levite pass by the man on the other side of the road?

2. What was the Samaritan’s response? How did his service go above and beyond what one would think is typically required in helping others?

3. What is especially noteworthy about the Samaritan's response to the injured Jewish man is that the two groups did not get along with each other. Both Jewish and Samaritan religious leaders taught that it was wrong to have any contact with the opposite group, and neither was to enter each other's territories or even to speak to one another. Given this, what do you think Jesus was saying by having the Samaritan be the one who performed the act of mercy?

4. What was the difference between the priest's, the Levite's and the Samaritan's attitude in helping someone in need?

5. How would you answer Jesus' question about who was a neighbor to the injured man? What does it mean to be someone's "neighbor"?

attitude and actions

Jesus is our example in both attitude and actions. In Philippians 2:3-8, Paul tells us that we should strive to be like Christ in everything we do:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

1. What rights did Jesus give up when He became a man?

2. Whose interests should we be concerned about?

3. According to these verses, what character qualities can be seen in a person who serves others?

dig

Jesus cared about more than just the physical and emotional needs of people. His ultimate purpose was *eternal*. Service to others allowed Him to meet the real, eternal needs of people and to offer us a model to follow so we can continue His mission with humble hearts. In Mark 10:42-45, Jesus gives us a glimpse into this eternal perspective on serving others:

Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as 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 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."

1. What did Jesus mean when He said He would "give his life as a ransom for many"?

2. According to Jesus, what does it mean to be “great”?

3. How does serving others in Jesus’ name affect the servant?

4. How can being served in Jesus’ name affect the person being served? What needs are being met?

After Jesus returned to heaven, Peter and John continued to follow Jesus’ example of serving others. In Acts 3:1-8, they met a man at the Temple in Jerusalem who was asking for money. Peter and John didn’t give the man what he was requesting; instead, they gave him what he really needed:

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

1. How did Peter and John respond to the man’s request for money?

2. What was the man’s true need?

3. Why did Peter and John cite Jesus' name when telling the man to get up and walk (see John 14:14)?

4. How was the man's life changed when he was healed in Jesus' name?

apply

So, how closely are you following this model of being a servant? Do you actively seek out ways to be a servant to those in your home, school or community? Use the short true-false quiz that follows to evaluate how you are doing at being others-centered.

Others-Centered Quiz

- T F I believe it is more blessed to give than to receive.
- T F I think happy people are more focused on others than themselves.
- T F In the past week, I have sacrificed something to help another person.
- T F In the past week, I have looked for ways in which I can help others.
- T F In the past week, I have allowed my brother or sister to get his or her way, even though it cost me something to do so.
- T F In the past week, I have volunteered to help out on a project or have done some volunteer work for an organization.
- T F I feel that I can be an effective servant right where I am at today—I don't have to wait to be an adult.
- T F I think that there are incredible opportunities to serve in today's society.
- T F I don't worry about how little or how much others are serving.
- T F I believe that we are slaves for Christ.
- T F I look to Christ as my model for serving.
- T F I believe that serving sometimes involves suffering.

Total up the number of "true" responses.

- 1-3 "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35, *ESV*).
- 4-6 "Give, and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38).
- 7-9 "Whoever brings blessing will be enriched" (Proverbs 11:2, *ESV*).
- 10-12 "You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things!" (Matthew 25:23).

Now, as a group, identify some needs that each of you could effectively meet. Use the following questions to create the list:

1. What needs do most students care about?

2. Why do we care about these needs?

3. When you identify these needs, what themes do you find come up regularly?

4. What would be our purpose in caring for these needs?

5. What can our youth group do to meet these needs?

6. How can we follow Jesus' example as we serve the people on this list?

reflect

Our role in this world is to love others. In a world in which people are hurting and suffering from lack of meaningful relationships, we are called to love them as Jesus loves us. Karl Menninger, a famous psychiatrist, once said that 90 percent of all the people who came to him for help were seeking love. "Love is the medicine of the world," he wrote.

1. Someone once said, "If a person seeks not to receive love, but rather to give it, he or she will become lovable and will most certainly be loved in the end." That statement is a par-

adox! We all want to be loved, but it is only by going out and loving, caring and serving others that we *become* lovable and experience the joy of being loved in return. How does giving love make us more “lovable” people?

2. First John 3:18 states, “Let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” What actions could help you to become a more others-centered person?

3. In Romans 12:10, Paul writes, “Love one another with brotherly affection; out do one another in showing honor” (RSV). What can you do to treat others with honor?

4. Think of three people God is putting on your heart to treat in a special way. What can you do to treat them with honor?

5. In Luke 9:24, Jesus says, “Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me will save it.” How does this verse apply to serving others in love and becoming a more others-centered person?

6. When you ask Jesus to come into your life, He promises to take up residence there. You become a representative of Jesus to others. Because many people never go to church, read the Bible or pray, the only way they may ever discover the forgiving and loving power of Jesus is by seeing Him in your life. That’s why you may be the only Jesus somebody knows! How do you feel when you consider this?

- ☐ challenged
- ☐ overwhelmed
- ☐ scared
- ☐ excited that He lives in me
- ☐ I’ve got a long way to go
- ☐ hopeful

7. There are two types of people in the world: the I-centered, me-first people, and the others-centered people. Which kind of a person are you? Place a mark on the continuum to show where your heart is.

I-centered

Others-centered

8. What is one personal benefit of becoming more others-centered?

9. What is one way your church or youth group will benefit by you becoming more others-centered?

10. What is one way your home, school or community will benefit by you becoming more others-centered?

Sponsor a Compassion Child

Here's an idea for you and your family to consider: sponsor a Compassion child. I (Jim) can't think of anything more important in life than helping make an impact on the world in which we live than sponsoring a child.

Our family has sponsored a child with Compassion International for a number of years. The small amount we send each month covers the cost of clothing, health care and education for Ramiro Moises Santi. Our entire family looks forward to receiving Ramiro's letters, and we hope to visit him someday.

You, too, can sponsor a boy or girl who needs love, protection and encouragement. As a sponsor, you will receive your child's photo and personal story. Your child will know you by name and appreciate your love, help and prayer. Start today by calling Compassion International's toll-free number, 1-800-336-7676, or visiting them online at www.compassion.com.

meditation



A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others
will himself be refreshed.

PROVERBS 11:25

who dunnit?

Your name: _____

Find at least one person who has participated in one of each of the following activities. Have him or her sign the space indicated next to the activity.

_____ I have been on a missions trip to another country.

_____ I have volunteered to watch someone's children without asking to be paid.

_____ I have given food to a homeless person.

_____ I have helped an older neighbor with yard work without asking for any money.

_____ I have gone without lunch because I gave my lunch to someone who was hungry.

_____ I have given my shoes to someone in need.

_____ I have given up going to an event to sit and listen to someone who needed a friend.

_____ I have defended someone when others were making fun of him or her.

_____ I have gone a whole week without disobeying or grumbling at my parents.

_____ I have spent time making a younger brother or sister feel special.

_____ I have given money to help support a missionary.