



Jesus Provides Strength for Service **Adapted from “Jesus Is” series by Wayne Murray**

Serving has become a foreign concept to many in today’s world. It seems as if the motto of many is “what have you done for me lately.” In the church, this is no different. Many believers have become consumers of religious goods and services. Serving and giving back is a way to gain personal growth and happiness. Read the following article:

There is a Chinese saying that goes: “If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody.” For centuries, the greatest thinkers have suggested the same thing: Happiness is found in helping others.

“For it is in giving that we receive.” — Saint Francis of Assisi

“The sole meaning of life is to serve humanity.” — Leo Tolstoy

“We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.” — Winston Churchill

“Making money is a happiness; making other people happy is a super happiness.” — Nobel Peace Prize recipient Muhammad Yunus

“Giving back is as good for you as it is for those you are helping, because giving gives you purpose. When you have a purpose-driven life, you’re a happier person.” — Goldie Hawn

And so we learn early: It is better to give than to receive. The venerable aphorism is drummed into our heads from our first slice of a shared birthday cake. But is there a deeper truth behind the truism?

The resounding answer is yes. Scientific research provides compelling data to support the anecdotal evidence that giving is a powerful pathway to personal growth and lasting happiness. Through fMRI technology, we now know that giving activates the same parts of the brain that are stimulated by food and sex. Experiments show evidence that

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altruism is hardwired in the brain—and it’s pleasurable. Helping others may just be the secret to living a life that is not only happier but also healthier, wealthier, more productive, and meaningful.

But it’s important to remember that giving doesn’t always feel great. The opposite could very well be true: Giving can make us feel depleted and taken advantage of.¹

In this lesson, you will read about Jesus at the Last Supper. This is the night that he was betrayed by Judas. Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane and crucified at Calvary. In the midst of this story unfolding, Jesus assumed the role of a servant and served his disciples.

¹ Jenny Santi, The Secret to Happiness is Helping Others, <http://time.com/4070299/secret-to-happiness/> August 4, 2017 (Accessed May 24, 2018).

COURAGE

C1: When you hear the phrase, “they are a strong person,” what comes to your mind?

C2: When you hear the phrase, “they are such a servant,” what comes to your mind?

C3: Describe a time in your life when you saw the greatest display of someone who served.

STRENGTH

S1: Read and answer the following.

John 13:1-17 (ESV)

- What are two – three principles you learn from this passage of Scripture?

S2: John makes a point to let us know that Jesus was secure about who He was. Read and answer the following.

John 13:3-5 (ESV)

- From these verses, why do you think it is difficult for some people to serve others?

S3: On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how comfortable you are with your identity. Write out a plan to improve.

ENDURANCE

E1: Each of the Gospel writers highlighted a different component of the same event. Read and answer the following.

John 13:1-17 (ESV)

Matthew 26:14-39 (ESV)

Luke 22:7-27 (ESV)

- Make a chart of the different pieces of the same night from each writer. What can you learn from these three accounts?
- From these verses, who is the most important?
- Who is the most significant?

E2: In our culture, we are preoccupied with our own importance. Read and answer the following.

John 4:2 (ESV)

Matthew 5:44 (ESV)

- Where does one gain true significance?
- Why do you think the verse in John listed above specifically mentions, "... the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas ...?"
- How difficult was it for Jesus to wash the feet of Judas? Why or Why Not?

E3: If we are to follow the example of Jesus, answer the following.

- Would it be easier to wash the feet of someone we love or someone who has betrayed us?
- How did Jesus wash the feet of Judas?
- How can we wash the feet of those who have betrayed or wounded us?

E4: In the next seven days, spend your lunch hour, praying and reflecting on servanthood. Write down what you sense the Holy Spirit telling you. When will you begin to wash feet?

- Who is your Judas? How can you serve them? How can you wash their feet?

- What does it mean to wash the feet of your family? How can you make this happen?
- What does it mean to wash the feet of the company or people you work for or with?
- What does it mean to wash the feet of the body of Christ?
- What does it look like to wash the feet of your community?