



Group Session



Small Group Study

Volume Overview

How do I live for God?

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” (Matthew 6:33)

As we explore how to live for God, our goal is to find out what that looks like in our everyday life. But this journey is full of questions. How do we put God first? How do we get through all the confusion and uncertainty in this world? What does God expect when it comes to giving? How can we show others we care? One way we discover the answers is through the Bible speaking to us. But we don't have to do that alone. We also learn from other believers as we live connected to them like God intended. In these sessions, we'll consider what the Bible has to say about devoting our life to God.

You Will Need

No items needed.

Getting Ready

- First time leading Learn for Youth? Look here for the Facilitator Guide.

To access the Bible Engagement Project library from a computer, visit App.BibleEngagementProject.com.

Engage

Welcome

Take this time to welcome everyone, introduce new students, learn names, and thank them for coming.

QUESTION

What was your favorite cartoon or video when you were a kid?

Opening Prayer

Prayer thoughts: Thank God for everyone who is present today and thank Him for bringing everyone safely to the small group. Ask Him to use this session to fulfill His purposes. And ask for Him to illuminate His Word for each person.

Introduction

What immediately pops into your mind when I say the word *serve*? Is it images of you volunteering in a soup kitchen? Do you see yourself helping the elderly walk across the street? To serve means that you're performing duties or services for another person or organization that rarely benefits you in any way. Today, we'll look at how our serving others relates to living for God.

Group Activity

Who's in Charge Here?

Let's start with a game. I'll choose someone to be the Guesser, and that person will step outside the room. Then I'll select someone to be the Leader, and everyone else will be Followers. The Leader's job is to make funny motions. You can stomp in place, clap your hands, jump around, anything you want. The Followers will imitate the Leader's actions as quickly as possible. When all the Followers have caught on, the Leader should switch up the action.

Here's the goal: None of you want the Guesser to figure out who the Leader is. That means the Leader will need to change actions when the Guesser isn't looking, and the Followers need to avoid watching the Leader. The Guesser gets three attempts to guess correctly who the Leader is. We'll see if the Guesser or the group wins the round. Then we'll choose others to be the Leader and the Guesser. Any questions? (*Allow responses.*)

- *Have everyone form a circle.*
- *Choose the Guesser and have them leave the room.*
- *Choose the Leader and have them start the first action.*
- *Invite the Guesser back into the room and have them stand in the middle of the circle. Encourage the Guesser to watch closely and guess who the Leader is.*
- *Optional: Incorporate a timer to speed up the game.*

QUESTION

For those who got to be Guessers, what was the most difficult part of guessing who the Leader was?

QUESTION

To those who were Leaders, did you enjoy leading and thinking quickly, or would you have rather been a Follower and playing along? Why?

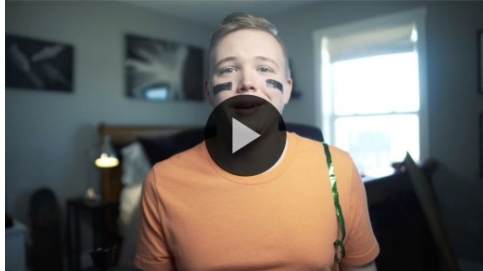
QUESTION

And for those who were just Followers, what was the most difficult part about following?

To be a good leader in this game, you had to avoid moving while the Guesser is looking at you. The Leader also couldn't leave the Followers behind, not caring whether or not they caught on to the change in motions. Otherwise, it would be pretty obvious who was in charge. In some way,

a good leader had to serve the best interest of his or her followers. Let's take a look at this video as we learn more about today's discussion on serving others.

Watch



Consider What the Bible Says

Ensure each student has access to a Bible, preferably the same version.

Let's look at what the Bible has to say about serving others and how that relates to living for God. We can't be great leaders if we care nothing about putting others before ourselves.

Inheriting Eternal Life

Read Luke 10:25–29.

This man was a religious expert, so he probably thought he knew the answer to his question. So why bother Jesus? He wanted to test Jesus to see how He would answer the question.

QUESTION

How did Jesus respond to the expert in the Law who asked about inheriting eternal life?

QUESTION

What might it look like to love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind?

The man knew how to answer Jesus, but he once again asked Jesus a question. He wanted to clarify what Jesus meant by "neighbor."

QUESTION

How would you describe loving your neighbor as you love yourself?

Serving Others Is a Choice

Jesus decided to tell a story as His response. The hero in this story was a surprising one for the people listening to Jesus. It was a Samaritan—someone that people in Jesus' audience likely had racial and cultural tension with. Keep this in mind as we read this next passage.

Read Luke 10:30–33.

QUESTION

Who were the three individuals that saw the beaten man?

The priest and the temple assistant were both Jewish religious workers. While those two and one Samaritan saw the injured man, only one person stopped to help. The only one whose compassion motivated him to take action was the Samaritan.

QUESTION

How is serving others a choice we have to make?

QUESTION

Have you ever felt compassion for an individual or group? Were you moved to action? Tell us about it.

Did You Know?

There's debate about whether the priest and temple assistant were justified in avoiding contact with the beaten and dying man due to ritual purity laws. The Law outlined that if they came into direct contact with a dead body, they would be ritually impure and unfit for temple service for a time.

There are a few things to consider about this. First, it's possible that this man would have been considered a *goses*—one who was at death's door but not dead yet. Therefore, it's arguable that these two should have lent help regardless of purity laws because he wasn't dead. Second, the preservation of life surpasses all laws of ritual purity in Judaism. So, even if he had died, they would have been found in service of a higher moral law. Third, certain clues in the passage indicate that the men were traveling to Jericho from Jerusalem. This suggests that they weren't traveling to perform temple duties, and thus, likely had no immediate religious reason for bypassing the desperate man.

Serving Others Is a Sacrifice

Read Luke 10:34–35.

QUESTION

What all did the Samaritan do for the man who was beaten?

The Samaritan didn't just stop and talk to the injured man. He didn't help him quickly and then hurry on his way. Instead, he did what was needed to be sure the man was taken care of then and in the near future.

QUESTION

What does this suggest about how Jesus might expect us to serve others?

QUESTION

Have you ever taken action to help someone you didn't like or who didn't like you?
What happened?

Read James 2:14–18.

The author of this passage, James, challenged his readers by saying it's not enough to just have faith. We must put action to it. Action is a natural result of our faith in Jesus, and it's how others can see our faith in Him.

QUESTION

Why do you think James tells us faith on its own is useless without action?

QUESTION

How can serving others be a sacrifice?

Jesus Commands Us to Serve

Let's look at how Jesus' story ends.

Read Luke 10:36–37.

QUESTION

Do you see compassion as a feeling or an action after reading the story of the Good Samaritan?

QUESTION

Can you think of a time when Jesus set the example and had compassion on someone in the Bible? What comes to mind?

Jesus did many things to show compassion to others. He healed a blind man, a woman with a bleeding disorder, and many others. He raised Lazarus from the dead. He taught crowds of people. He even stepped in to save a woman who was about to be executed in the streets. We'll look at a few of these in the daily devotions this week.

QUESTION

How would you explain to someone what it means to have compassion?

QUESTION

How does having compassion for our neighbor display our love for God?

QUESTION

Why do you think Jesus commands us to serve others?

Reflect

I Serve Others

Jesus' life on earth was spent serving others. When the disciples argued about who would sit next to Jesus in heaven and be called the greatest among them, Jesus had an unexpected response. He told them that in order to be first, they must really be last. Jesus not only taught them about serving, but He also demonstrated serving to them when He washed His disciples' feet. To serve others is the highest honor one can have. It's not the trophies, the number of likes on social media, or the highest GPA (although we want you to work hard in school). Living for God means we honor Him when we serve others.

Listen to God

Let's pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. These questions are meant to serve as a conversation between you and God. However, you may want to share your response with the group, but no one should feel obligated.

- *Pause for a few moments of silent reflection before asking students if they want to share.*

QUESTION

James wrote in James 2:14, "What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions?" How has today's discussion challenged you to live out this verse?

QUESTION

What or where are some areas in your town, church, youth group, or school that you can get involved in and serve people?

Activate

If we can get our eyes off ourselves and really look at the people around us, we'll see plenty of areas that we can serve in.

Pray and ask God to guide you to one way you can serve others this week. It could be helping a family member with a chore that they normally do. Or it could be helping a classmate study for a test in a class they struggle with. Whatever you choose, use this act of service as a starting point to a lifelong commitment to live out your faith through actions.

Salvation Opportunity

Include this if you think there may be some in the group who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Jesus displayed the greatest act of compassion by giving His life on the Cross for our salvation. He put action to His love for us. He did that so He could have a relationship with us.

Is there anyone here that we can pray for who doesn't have a relationship with Jesus or wants to renew their relationship with Him?

Take a moment to acknowledge those who respond, and thank them for their desire to make things right between themselves and God. Pray with them as we close in prayer or after the group time is over. Following group time, talk more about where they are in their walk with God and how you might be able to help.

Conclusion

Serving others is one of the ways that we live for God. When we put others ahead of ourself, we aren't only honoring God, but we're a living testimony to other people about Jesus. We're His hands extended to the world.

Prayer

Father God, thank You for reminding us that living for You means serving others. Please help us on this great adventure of serving and helping those who need You. You have called us to live in such a way that people will wonder what we have that's different. Help us to take our eyes off ourself and lean into who and how You are leading us to serve. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Don't forget the personal devotions provided for you on the app. These allow you to have time with Jesus, learning more about how we're living for God when we serve others. I look forward to seeing each of you next time as we continue our journey through God's Word.