A Servant to ALL People

Mrs. Meredith Winnberg
Inter-City Baptist Church

Introduction:
“As sinfully and culturally defined, pursuing greatness looks like this: Individuals motivated by self-interest, self-indulgence, and a false sense of self-sufficiency pursue selfish ambition for the purpose of self-glification. Contrast that with the pursuit of true greatness as biblically defined: Serving others for the glory of God. . . .This is true greatness as the Savior defined it.” (C.J. Mahaney in *Humility*, 44).

Scripture:
Mark 10:42-45: “And Jesus called them to him and said to them, ‘You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” [ESV]

Thesis Statement:
Since Jesus Christ, the Son of God, took upon Himself the role of a servant, so must we. He chose to be the One who served, the one who gave. **If we are to become increasingly more like Christ** (this is our goal!), **then we too are to give and to serve all people.**

I. Be a SERVANT of all.

A. What is a servant?

1. Definitions to remember
   a. **servant:** one who submits his will to the will of another and his wishes to the needs of another
   
   b. **minister:** one who attends to the next thing that will benefit the life of another

2. Characteristics to cultivate

Matt. 11:28-29: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am gentle and lowly [humble] in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”
a. Gentleness
   Ephesians 4:2: “... walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.

b. Humility
   I Peter 5:5: “... Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

   Definition: “Humility is a proper view of oneself in relationship to God. We see our sinfulness in light of His holiness, our insignificance in light of His greatness, and our weakness in light of His strength.” (Pastor Doran)

   1). It’s easier to clothe ourselves in humility toward one another when we realize that we are insufficient in and of ourselves.

   2). It’s easier to clothe ourselves in humility toward one another when we look at serving people as an opportunity for God to get glory in their lives.

   3). It’s easier to clothe ourselves in humility toward one another when we realize that we are all made in God’s image.

B. Why serve?

   1. Because it is a command.
      a. Galatians 5:13-14: “...through love, serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

      b. This verse show how love and service are very closely linked.
         1). Love is the means by which we serve.

         2). Love is a mandate(command) of God addressed to your will. It is not an option.

         John 13:34-35: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”
• Since He commands you to love, He will give you the ability to love.
• Love is a choice, a decision, an action; not a feeling to be generated.
• God didn’t love us because he felt love.
• God did not love us because we deserved it.

3). God’s love for us is the motivation for service.
   I John 3:16: “By this we know love that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.”

4). Love manifests itself in service.
   I John 4:9-12: “In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

I John 3:18: “Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”

5). Love is defined by and fleshed out in I Corinthians 13.
   See “God’s Love vs. Self Love” handout (taken from The Wilds Christian Camp Staff Training Notebook)

2. Because it is a testimony to the world
   • John 13:34-35: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.”

3. Because as believers, we are all one body
   • I Corinthians 12:12-13: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”

   • See “Relationships in the Family of God” compiled by Pastor Pearson Johnson
II. Be a servant of ALL.

A. Who is the “all?”
   1. Definition: “All” cannot mean all the people in the world; however, it
does mean all people within my sphere of influence, all types of people

2. Categories:
   a. Redeemed and Unredeemed
      • Distinction emphasized by God but often forgotten by man
      • Based on eternal destination
   b. Similar to and Different from me.
      • Distinction recognized ad often given by God but often
        over emphasized by man
      • Based on temporal categories
        1. Race/ethnicity
        2. Age
        3. Marital Status
        4. Physical capabilities
        5. Mental capabilities
        6. Socio economic level
        7. Educational level
        8. Personality
        9. Interests and hobbies/vocation
        10. Appearance
        11. Talents and abilities/gifts
        12. Values/Choices

B. Jesus was the perfect example of a servant of ALL.
   1. Race/ethnicity:
      • Healed the centurion’s servant, a Roman, a Gentile (Luke 7:1-10)
      • Ministered to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:7-42)
   2. Age:
      • Accepted little children (Luke 18:15-17)
      • Cast a demon out of the Syrophenician’s daughter, a child (Mark
        7:25-30)
   3. Marital Status:
      • Feeding of  5,000 men plus women and children—all families (Matthew
        14:13-21)
      • Heals Simon’s mother in law—a married couple (Mark 1:29-31)
      • Raises Lazarus from the dead, brother to Mary and Martha—singles
        (John 11:1-44)
   4. Physical capabilities:
      • Healed the lame man (John 5:1-9)
      • Healed the man blind from birth (John 9:1-41)
5. Mental capabilities:
   - Healed the demon possessed man, not in his right mind (Luke 8:26-39)

6. Socio economic level:
   - Jairus (a ruler of the synagogue) asked Jesus to come to his house to raise his daughter from the dead (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)
   - Heals the paralyzed servant of the centurion, a man who could say “Do this” to a servant and it would be done, a man of influence and authority (Matthew 8:5-13)
   - healed the blind beggar (Luke 18: 35-42)

7. Educational Level:
   - Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews and very educated man (John 3:1-15)

8. Personality: This is a large category; here are just a few examples:
   - worried, sensitive: Martha (Luke 10:38-42)
   - backstabbing: Judas (Luke 22:3-6)
   - antagonistic: healed the ear of Malchus the servant of the high priest, part of the mob coming to arrest him (Luke 22:49-51)

9. Interests/vocation:
   - Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen. (Matt. 4:18-22)
   - Matthew was a tax collector. (Matt. 9:9)

10. Appearance:
    - Healed a woman with disabling spirit who was bent over and couldn’t straighten herself (Luke 13:10-13)
    - Zaccheus, a tax collector, rich, and short (Luke 19:1-10)

II. Hindrances to Being a Servant of All

A. Partiality/favoritism (James 2:1)

B. Judgmentalism (Matthew 7:1)

C. Selfishness (Philippians 2:4)

D. Pride (James 4:6)
IV. Helps for Being a Servant of All

A. Generally

• Pray! Pray for strength, wisdom, love, compassion, forgiveness, and humility. Acknowledge your utter inability and total dependence on God for these qualities.

• Study key passages on servanthood such as Mark 10:32-45; John 13:1-20; and Philippians 2:1-10.

• Study I Corinthians 13; See “Biblical Love vs. Self Love.”

• Study “One Another” passages in Scripture; See “Relationships in the Family of God.”

• Read *Humility* by C.J. Mahaney; See especially “How To Weaken Pride and Cultivate Humility: A List of Suggestions,” pg. 171-172. (see Resource List)

• Read “Pride,” chapter in *Respectable Sins* by Jerry Bridges. (see Resource List)

• Read “A Heart That Encourages” and “A Heart That Shows it Cares,” chapters in *A Woman After God’s Own Heart* by Elizabeth George. (see Resource List)

B. Specifically

1. Race/Ethnicity

• Ignorance breeds fear/uneasiness about people who dress differently, eat differently, and speak a different language than us. Educate yourself by reading, by interviewing people who know about different people groups you come into contact with, and by reaching out to the actual people who are of a different race/ethnicity in your neighborhood or the businesses you frequent

2. Age

• Reach out to those not in your immediate age bracket; seek to have friends in all age groups.

• Sit with different age groups at showers, ladies functions.

• Invite people of different age groups over to your home.
  o Host a small intimate luncheon honoring mom and grandmas of all ages.
  o Take a teen girl on an “outing” she wouldn’t normally go on (i.e. tearoom)
  o Host a holiday (Valentines, Easter, Christmas party) for young children
  o “Empty nesters” adopt a family to help; families adopt an “empty nester”
3. **Marital Status**
   - If you are married, invite those who are not to your home; if you are not married, invite couples and/or families into your home.

4. **Physical capabilities/Mental capabilities**
   - Read Matthew, Mark, and Luke and note how many times the authors record Jesus ministering to an infirm person.
   - Read “Meeting the Needs of a Family with Special Needs in Your Church” by Kelly Thomas.

5. **Socio economic level/Educational level**
   - Recognize that giving to meet the needs of other believers is a command. **Romans 12:13:** “Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.”
   - Recognize that one of the reasons we are told to work is so that we will have in order to give to those who are in need. **Ephesians 4:23:** “Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, *so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.* [emphasis added]
   - Recognize that giving to a brother in need shows that God’s love abides in us. **1 John 3:17:** “But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?”
   - Study Matthew 6:1-4 regarding giving secretly.
   - Study II Corinthians 8 regarding giving generously and II Corinthians 9 regarding giving cheerfully; take note of the role of the local church in this ministry.
   - Study the Pauline epistles and note Paul’s commendations of both churches and individuals who give to meet the needs of other churches as well as other individuals including Paul himself.
   - Read “Meeting the Needs of the Poor” by Kristin Searcy.

6. **Personality**
   - Read “Pastoring the Porcupines,” chapter in *With Heart and Hand* by Beneth Jones and Bobbie Yearick. (see Resource List)

7. **Appearance; Interests and hobbies/vocation; and Talents and abilities/gifts**
   - Study James 2:1-13; See Faith and Partiality Lesson from Women of the Word.
   - Listen to “The Test of Impartiality,” sermon by Tim Potter. (see Resources List)
8. Values/Choices

- Study what the Bible has to say about Judgmentalism in Matthew 7; Luke 6; and Romans 14.
- Read “Judgmentalism,” chapter in Respectable Sins by Jerry Bridges. (see Resources List)
- Listen to “The Dangers of Judgmentalism,” sermon by Pastor David Doran. (see Resources List)
- Listen to “Making Wise Choices in a Wicked World,” sermon series by Pastor David Doran. (see Resources List)

Conclusion:

Restatement of Thesis: Developing Christ-like character traits demands serving other people.

“True love isn’t . . . learned among friends we have chosen. God’s kind of love is best learned where we can’t be selective about our associates. Perhaps that is why . . . two institutions established by God—the family and the church—are not joined by invitation only. We have no choice about who our parents or brothers or sisters will be; yet we are expected to love them. Neither can we choose who will or will not be in the family of God. . . . We learn agape love most effectively in our involuntary associations, away from the temptation of choosing to love only the attractive.” (Marshall Shelley in Well-Intentioned Dragons, 148.)
Relationships in the Family of God

How should we treat one another?
A list of the “one another” passages in Scripture

Compiled by Dr. Pearson Johnson
Pastor of Missions and Evangelism, Inter-City Baptist Church—Allen Park, MI

1. Prefer — lift up or outdo one another in honor (Romans 12:10)
2. Affectionate to — show devotion to one another in love (Romans 12:10)
3. Same mind to — have a modest view of yourself toward one another (Romans 12:16)
4. Edify — seek to build up one another (Romans 14:19)
5. Likeminded to — have a kindred spirit toward one another (Romans 15:5)
6. Receive — accept one another as Christ receives us (Romans 15:7)
7. Admonish — correct or confront one another (Romans 15:14)
8. Tarry for — be patient with one another (I Corinthians 11:33)
9. Care for — be sensitive to one another as you would yourself (I Corinthians 12:25)
10. Serve — by love be a servant to one another (Galatians 5:13)
11. Bear — carry the burdens of one another (Galatians 6:1)
12. Speak truth to — be truthful in every matter to one another (Ephesians 4:25)
13. Kind to — be kind, and tender hearted to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
14. Submit to — express humility to one another (Ephesians 5:21)
15. Esteem — think one another more important than yourself (Philippians 2:3)
16. Forbear — be tolerant and patient with one another (Colossians 3:13)
17. Forgive — accept one another (Colossians 3:13)
18. Teach — teach the Word to one another (Colossians 3:16)
19. **Love** – increase in love one toward another (I Thessalonians 3:12; I John 4:7)

20. **Comfort** – encourage one another in light of His coming (I Thessalonians 4:18)

21. **Peace with** – live in peace with one another (I Thessalonians 5:13)

22. **Pray for** – intercede for one another (I Timothy 2:1; James 5:16)

23. **Consider** – be conscious of how you can stimulate love and good works in one another (Hebrews 10:24)

24. **Exhort** – spiritually encourage one another (Hebrews 10:25)

25. **Confess to** – be honest about your faults against one another (James 5:16)

26. **Hospitable to** – share with one another without complaining (I Peter 4:9)

27. **Minister to** – use your gifts to serve one another (I Peter 4:10)

28. **Subject to** – humble yourself toward one another (I Peter 5:5)

29. **Greet** – acknowledge and recognize one another in a caring manner (I Peter 5:14)

30. **Fellowship with** – communicate with and enjoy one another in the Lord (I John 1:7)
“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” (2 Cor 4:6-7)

These broken vessels are uniquely suited to reveal the treasure within, not just child-like qualities of sweetness and innocence, but the true value of a human soul to God.

“I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” (PS 139:14-16)

God makes no mistakes. If he made us the way we are, He must have something for us to do the way we are.

“And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them. Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of God.” (MK 10:14)

“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)

PRACTICALLY HOW TO SERVE:

- Love and acceptance:
  - Many parents of disabled children go to church on a Sunday morning with the desperate hope that this will be the one place where their son or daughter will be accepted – having already been rejected by classmates and neighborhood kids.
  - Our churches should be a refuge for families with special needs who are seeking a place to worship. So many families are staying home from church.
  - Draw near to, not away from families with special needs. Acknowledge the worth of their children.
One mom says: “I wish someone would have wrapped their arms around me when my son was born and said, ‘God made your child, and he will touch a lot of lives.’ That would have given me hope.” (Extraordinary Kids, 1997)

Most people distance themselves from things that they don’t understand or are uncomfortable with rather than ask for information.

- Never grow tired of listening or praying for the concerns of the family with special needs. Each stage of development often brings new challenges and new pain. Listen lovingly, with a willing heart to understand. Remember their problems are ongoing. While their friend’s lives usually progress predictably, theirs will be forever unique.

- Treat the family with special needs like a typical family. Realize that the members have careers, talents, interests, and hobbies, and that the family probably has children besides the one with special needs.

- Consider establishing a special needs ministry.
  - Many parents would like to be involved in different aspects of ministry during worship – choir, ushering, orchestra, etc. By offering a place for all children to be loved, cared for and taught about Jesus, both the parents and caregivers are using the special gifts God gave them to bless the body of Christ.
  - One suggestion, for higher functioning special needs children, would be to establish a buddy system. An older child or adult to accompany the child to their church class. This provides familiarity and trust for the special needs child, and a great opportunity for service by the buddy.
  - Special needs Sunday School classroom: staffed by at least two adults at all times. Allowing the child to have a safe and secure place of their own. Also, this provides opportunity where parents can connect and support one another.

- Realize most families will not ask for help but will accept it if offered.
  - Ask for advice on how you can effectively help.
  - Ask for advice on how you can effectively communicate with the special needs child.

“For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying: Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (MT 25:35-40)

Kelly Thomas is the wife of Doug, and is mom to Chelsea, Kyle, and Casey.
Meeting the Needs of the Poor

Mrs. Kristin Searcy
Grace Baptist Church—Hamtramck, MI

Kristin is wife to Jay Searcy, a church planter in Hamtramck, Michigan, and mother of six

This has proven to be an almost daily challenge for us living in the city. We have desired to obey God but have really wrestled with how and to what extent do we help those in need. Besides the important spiritual needs of people, the physical needs of the people can at times overwhelm us. The Bible is clear, however, that we are indeed to help the poor.

1. What is man’s greatest need?

Man’s greatest need is a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. Meeting someone’s need gives us an excellent opportunity to share the love of Christ with that person and to share the gospel with them. Rarely have we given someone something without sharing Christ with them. Our greatest desire is that their spiritual needs will be met in Christ.

2. Do people have legitimate needs other than spiritual?

Absolutely, all people have the basic need for food, shelter and clothing.

3. Who owns us and all of our possessions?

God owns us and all of our possessions. We need to resist the urge to be greedy and hoard our possessions. We must be aware that all that we have is from the Lord. As believers our very beings are the Lord’s. We are a living sacrifice to him, and we need to consider that all of our possessions are available for His use when He desires.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you brother by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship.

Psalm 50:10 For every beast of the forest is Mine. The cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird of the mountains and everything that moves in the field is Mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you. For the world is Mine and all it contains.

1Corinthians 10:26 For the earth is the Lord’s and all it contains.

Deuteronomy 10:14 Behold to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens the earth and all that is in it.

4. What does God say about the poor?

God’s Word doesn’t condone how people may feel about the poor, it simply records it as fact. Meeting people’s needs can be very demanding and become tiresome.

Proverbs 22:2 The rich and the poor have this in common the Lord is the maker of them all.

Proverbs 19:4 Wealth makes many friends, But a poor man is separated from his friends.
Proverbs 19:7  All the brothers of a poor man hate him. How much more do his friends abandon him.

5. What warnings are given in regard to our dealings with the poor?

Proverbs 14:21  He who despises his neighbor sins. But happy is he who is gracious to the poor.

Proverbs 14:31  He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.

Proverbs 21:13  Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard.

6. How are we admonished to treat the poor?

1John 3: 17,18  But whoever has the world’s goods and sees a brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed an truth.

Proverbs 19:17  One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his good deed.

Proverbs 22:9  He who is generous will be blessed, For he gives some of his food to the poor.

Matthew 5:42  Give to him who asks of you and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

**Suggested Guidelines for Meeting the Needs of the Poor.**

A. Keep in mind that many of us tend to be on the conservative side of giving. We could probably be giving more than we are. Have a budget and live like you have a budget. Purpose to set aside money to be able to give to someone in need. It makes it easier to say yes when you have already set that money aside. I can think of many things I could sacrifice for the needs of another. It all adds up. Be willing to sacrifice: lunch out, that new shirt, a movie rental, etc. Keep in mind that everyone who asks for something doesn’t have a genuine need—use discernment. You may be able to be a blessing to them in providing a want. Remember how God has blessed you and be generous.

B. Be prayerful. Pray about what you can give. Pray for wisdom and discernment when there is a need. Pray that you will give generously and that God would convict you of any greed or unwarranted fear you may be feeling about giving. Pray that you would honor Him with your giving. Ask God to bring people into your life that may have a need you are able to meet. (You won’t be so surprised when they show up on your doorstep, and it WILL change your attitude toward them.) And then pray and thank God for giving you the opportunity to be a blessing in His name to someone.

C. Be aware that people who have a drug, alcohol, or gambling addiction also struggle with lying. Be careful not to provide a way to support their sin habit. It’s okay to question them. They may say they need money badly to buy a prescription for their baby when they really want money for street drugs. One man even went so far as to say his mother died and he was out of a place to
live and needed money. My husband talked to this man’s mother on the phone two weeks after hearing she had died. Sad but true.

D. **Don’t make it a practice to just give money to whoever asks.** Provide for their needs. If they need food, it is better to give them food. If they need transportation, try to provide it. If they need clothing, provide them with clothing. If you just give them money, you don’t know what it is going towards and it may not be going towards a need. We have found that some people just make a profession out of begging. Try to find out why they aren’t able to work.

*1Thessalonians 3:10* For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat either.

Try to deal with the root of the problem. This is sometimes very complex and takes a lot of time. We don’t want people to be financially dependent on us. If they know you are always happy to help they tend to not deal with the problems that have them in this situation. Some people may need guidance in planning out a budget, making wise choices, not being lazy, being disciplined, and dealing with sin which can ultimately lead them to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

E. **Trust the Lord that He will care for your needs as you obey his Word and care for the needs of others.**

*Philippians 4:10* And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

*Matthew 6:25-34* For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink: nor for your body as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow: they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace will He not much more clothe you? YOU of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear for clothing?” For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

F. **It's okay to say no.**
Some times we really aren’t able to help. We have bills to pay, and maybe this month all of our money is spoken for with our own needs.

G. **It's okay to say yes.**
God has commanded us to help the poor. We don’t need to over analyze and wonder if we help this person now if we will have the money in ten years to send our child to college. (I don’t mean to sound so sarcastic, but that would be what I would tend to worry about).

H. **There are many organizations and resources that are available to help those in need.**
It may be beneficial to point them in that direction for help; however, many of these organizations are not going to share the gospel of Christ with people who need Him. That is something you can do as you help meet their physical needs.
I. Pray for compassion: the deep awareness of the suffering of another, together with the desire to relieve it.

Luke 10:33  But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend when I return I will repay you.’ Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands? And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”

This is the most beautiful example I found in the Bible concerning meeting the need of another. This Samaritan could have feared for his own life when he came upon this man in need. The Samaritans were not well liked in the region where this took place. This Samaritan immediately felt compassion. It sounds like he didn’t spend time worrying—wondering if he should or if he shouldn’t, wondering how this would affect his own possible needs down the road. This Samaritan bandaged his wounds. This man he cared for was not a good friend, one that he would have done anything for; he was a stranger. This Samaritan took time out of his schedule to help this man. He bandaged him. He used his own oil and wine on him. He put him on his own beast. He found an inn for him and paid for him to stay there with his own money until he was well enough to leave and put no limit on it.

And….God tells us to “Go and do the same.”
Resources for Learning How to Serve All People

While we at ICBC do not agree with some of the teachings and positions represented by several of these ministries, these resources may be helpful.

Online Audio Resources:

http://www.dbts.edu/mp3/macp/2008/08mc02.mp3

At this year’s Mid America Conference on Preaching, Mrs. Conley presents a workshop in which she discusses the children of Israel’s actions in the wilderness and the response of God and Moses to the Israelites when they grumbled and complained. She challenges us to respond in meekness and humility when we too encounter “sheep that bite.”

http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=1020718405810

In this sermon on Matthew 7:1-5, Pastor Doran shows the differences between righteous judgment and unrighteous judgment. “Do not judge” does not mean that we are to suspend all judgment. In fact, we are commanded to judge certain things. For example, we are to discern between right and wrong and to evaluate doctrine on the basis of God’s Word. However, we are not to judge other people in a condemnatory way because we must realize that we, too, are sinners. Rather, we must seek to restore them in a spirit of humility keeping in mind that we too are susceptible to the same sins.


Pastor Doran’s stated goal for this series is to help us have a little more sensitivity to the way in which the Scriptures might speak to the choices that we make. He states four foundational truths that must guide us in making choices: the Supremacy and Sufficiency of Scripture (II Tim. 3:15-17), the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Rom. 14:5-9), our Confidence in God, but our Suspicion of the Flesh (Gal. 5:16-18; Rom. 13:14; I Cor. 10:12), and our Care for and Commitment to our Spiritual Family (Rom. 14:13-23). Pastor Doran then gives several application questions that correlate to each foundational truth that will help guide us in making wise choices in a wicked world. We must all agree on the Scriptural principles; we will not all agree on the application of those principles. We must leave room for disagreement within the body of Christ. I found this to be very helpful in understanding how Christians can come to different convictions and still be accepted by the Lord.
Tim Potter, pastor of Grace Church of Mentor in Mentor, OH challenges the students at Bob Jones University in Greenville, SC. from James 2:1 to “hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ” with partiality. Pastor Potter shows from Scripture how God is impartial and how partiality among believers is incongruous with faith in Jesus Christ. Impartiality is a test of true saving faith.

Print Resources:


Bridges frankly and directly confronts the “subtle” sins that we tend to tolerate in our own lives as well as in others. The first six chapters help the readers to see sin for what it is—an offense against a holy God, and therefore, in light of this truth, to grasp the seriousness of all sin. In chapters 7 through 20, Bridges deals with fourteen different “respectable” sins in a biblical way, showing the problems with and Biblical remedy for each one. These sins are, in chapter order, ungodliness; anxiety and frustration; discontentment; unthankfulness; pride; selfishness; lack of self control; impatience and irritability; anger; the weeds of anger; judgmentalism; envy, jealousy, and related sins; sins of the tongue; and worldliness. In Chapter 21, Bridges concludes by asking the practical question, “Where Do We Go From Here?”

Bridges is very readable and conversational in his writing style. He writes short chapters that get directly to the point. Each chapter deals with each sin specifically and Biblically. Bridges often tells the reader how he has used Scripture to combat each sin in his own life. Much more could and has been written on each individual sin; however, Bridges accomplishes his goal by presenting all of these sins together in one book so as to point out how common these sins are as well as to show the lack of seriousness that professing Christians often place on them. Bridges confronts many of the sins that keep us from being a servant to all. This book would work well for either individual or small group study. It hits home to where we really live; be prepared to be convicted as you read!


Elizabeth George encourages her readers that “with every encounter, make it your aim that people are better off for having been in your presence. Try in every encounter to give something to the other person” (205). Among the practical ideas she gives are writing a note, making a few phone calls, speaking words of grace, and modeling God’s priorities. However, George pointedly remarks that “we can’t give away what we do not possess” (207). I believe that she rightly stresses the importance of taking time to be filled by God’s Spirit as one studies the written Word. It is then that God’s servant has what she needs to give to others.

Elizabeth George gives Biblical principles and practical advice about how to show care and concern for others. Among other topics, she discusses learning to reach out, learning to look out, and going to give. I especially appreciate her Biblical approach to priorities. Our care for others spills out of the full pools of first meeting our God-given responsibilities of caring for husband, children, and home.


In “Pastoring the Porcupines,” Beneth Jones and Bobbie Yearick describe difficult people in ministry as “porcupines.” The chapter begins with several fictional vignettes of typical women in the church, such as Nellie Know-It-All, Anita Arguer, Gertrude Grudge-Bearer, and Tillie Talker, who are hard to love and serve. The authors then discuss two main reasons that “porcupines” are “prickly”: patterning and pain. Jones and Yearick then give four helps for dealing with “porcupines”: compassion, consideration, constraint, and courage. The chapter ends with a brief discussion on how the Great Shepherd Himself deals with “porcupines.”

This chapter (and the entire book) is packed with practical information from two long-time ministry ladies who have dealt with many different and difficult people in their two different yet equally demanding ministries. (Mrs. Jones is a former Christian university president’s wife, and Mrs. Yearick is a former pastor’s wife.) Without downplaying the real struggles that “porcupines” present to those in ministry, the authors share what they have learned from God’s Word about how to deal with difficult people and give practical steps to take to not only endure the “porcupines,” but also to positively integrate them into the flock of God, remembering that “the best of us prove to be porcupines when we measure our attitudes and actions against God’s standard for us” (188).


*Humility* is direct, and therefore compelling; it is entertaining, while still insightful; but most of all, it is *Biblical*, and thus convicting. An excellent summary of *Humility* is given by the author himself in the book’s introduction. Mahaney states, “The structure of this book is simple and straightforward. In the first part we’ll learn that, no matter our age or vocation, humility is our greatest friend and pride our greatest enemy. In part two we’ll discover that genuine humility requires a radical redefinition of success. We’ll learn from Jesus Christ as He teaches His disciples the nature of true greatness, and why this greatness is attainable only through His death on the cross for sinners like you and me. Finally, in part three we’ll get very practical. We’ll examine how to cultivate humility and weaken pride each and every day” (14).
Mahaney stresses the importance of the One who is the source of, the reason for, and the greatest example of humility, Jesus Christ Himself. He suggests that one of the best ways to cultivate humility in one’s life is to constantly reflect on the wonder of the cross of Christ. He asks, “How can anyone be arrogant when he stands beside the cross?”

As a mom, I appreciated the last chapter entitled “The Legacy Of Greatness” which, among other things, encourages parents to be examples to their children, to teach their children to admire true greatness, and to teach their children to serve.

Mahaney handles his topic both Biblically and practically. All those who struggle with the sin of pride would benefit from reading this book. And those who don’t struggle with pride should probably read it too!


This is a Bible study book designed to aid in the study of selected “one another” passages in the Bible. Each lesson (12 total) contains different questions relating to the following topics: Love one another, Don’t Judge One Another, Be Kind to One Another, Submit to One Another, Bear One Another’s Burdens, Honor One Another, Comfort One Another, Show Hospitality to One Another, Lie Not to One Another, Wash One Another’s Feet, Forgive One Another, and Encourage One Another. Suggested answers are given in the back.

Although the believer (with the help of the Holy Spirit) could certainly study the “one another” passages without the aid of this Bible study guide, it would be a good tool to help one get started in this type of topical study or for use in one-on-one discipleship situations or small group study. For the most part, I thought the questions demanded thought and focused on drawing the meaning and interpretation from the text rather than imposing the author’s ideas into the text.


This book is mainly written to pastors who are struggling with problem people, or as the author labels them, “the dragons,” in their churches. I think that any ministry wife could benefit from reading this book as she too will often be dealing with difficult people on a regular basis. According to the author, “This is a book about ministering while under attack. . . It is not a psychological study of problem people nor is it an exhaustive catalog of the difficult individuals pastors will encounter. Instead it is a book based on the accounts of veterans of the dragon wars. The lessons offered are lessons of experience. They may or may not apply in other situations, but they at least provide a glimpse of the potential conflicts. Perhaps the wisdom of battle-tested veterans will prevent others from walking unaware into an ambush” (13). As the author readily admits, it is not an exhaustive handbook on how to deal with all types of people problems. Shelley’s main intent is to make the pastor aware of the difficulties he may face when leading a church so that he will not be caught blind-sided. Since he states this as his intended purpose, I believe that he accomplishes his goal.
In keeping with his purpose, Shelley uses extensive case studies of actual problems in
different churches to give general Biblical guidelines on how to deal with problems that may
arise and the people responsible for causing them. I believe the author uses Scriptural
principles to answer the problems he deals with; however, little Scripture is actually given in
the book. The book relies mainly upon examples and advice from churches and pastors of all
denominations. What struck me is that examples of board-led/run churches seem to prevail.
Although differences in church polity and leadership styles are obvious and sometimes anti-
Biblical (one example is given of a young woman pastor!), one can still learn from the
principles and practical advice given. Most are universal Biblical truths that apply to all
people. Perhaps one of the most valuable sections of the book is the extensive bibliography in
the back listing several book titles for additional study on this topic.

Swindoll, Charles R. *Improving Your Serve: The Art of Unselfish Living*. Minneapolis,
MN: Grason, 1981.

Is it possible for a Christian to live the kind of life that Jesus calls His followers to live when
He presents the idea that those who would be great must serve others? This is the question
that prompted Swindoll to do an extensive study on the topic of servanthood, and this book is
the result of that study. Swindoll discusses many aspects of servanthood. Among them are
what it means to be a servant in the truest sense, what it takes to be a servant, how to think
like a servant, the powerful influence a servant can have, the dangers a servant must face, the
rewards a servant can expect, and the internal struggles connected with learning to be a
servant.

The main strength of this book is that it is a fairly comprehensive treatment on the topic of
servanthood. I believe that weaknesses include the fact that the author tends to be heavy on
stories and illustrations and seems to portray self-esteem in a positive light.