

EQUIP

PUTTING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS INTO ACTION

SESSION 1 – CALLED TO SERVE

Session Symbol:



Purpose: To hear God's calling to ministry and respond to Christ's love by giving heartfelt service to the Master.

Answers Question:
Why Should I Serve?



SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

1. You don't have to share if you'd rather not. Just say "PASS."
2. Please avoid giving other people ADVICE.
3. Keep personal information shared in your group in confidence.



GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Share your name and where you are from.
2. What makes serving at church (or your workplace) a positive experience for you?
3. What makes it difficult or challenging for you to serve at church (or your workplace)?



PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

What is a talent?

- The largest unit of currency available in the New Testament.
- Equaled 15 to 20 years wages for a common laborer.

What is a servant?

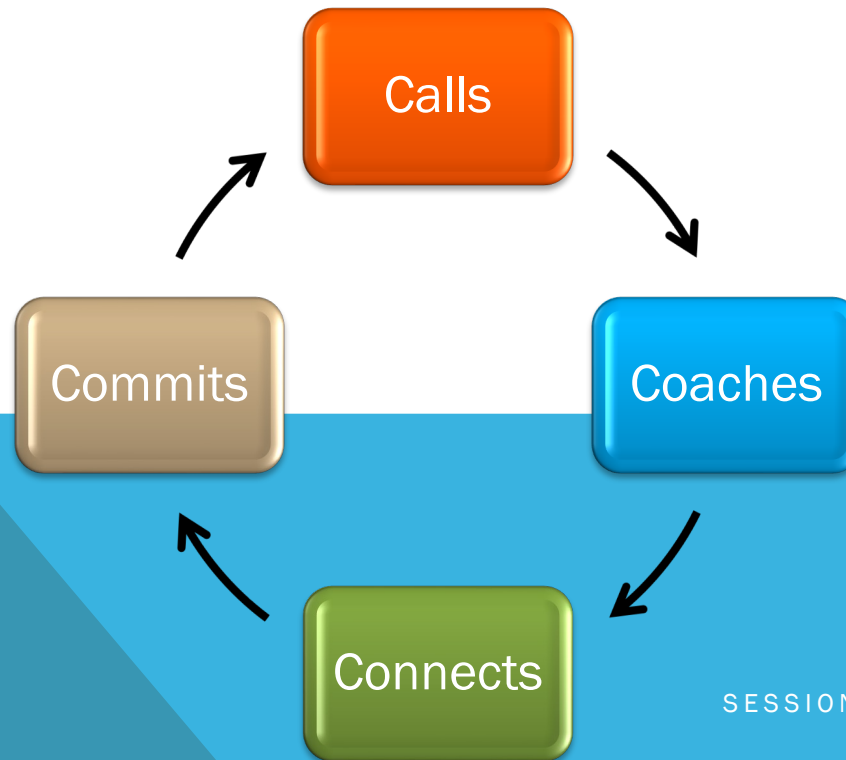
- Many servants in Scripture were given **LARGE** responsibilities.
- Some were considered an intimate part of the household.

MATTHEW 25:14–18

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who CALLED his own servants and DELIVERED his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ABILITY and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents WENT and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money.”

FOUR ACTIONS

1. The master CALLED his servants. (Calling)
2. He DELIVERED talents to them. (Coaching)
3. He MATCHED their abilities with their responsibilities. (Connecting)
4. Then he LAUNCHED them into service. (Committing)



ALL BELIEVERS ARE CALLED

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who **CALLED** you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love **SERVE** one another” (Galatians 5:13).

MATTHEW 25: 19–23

“After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’

His lord said to him, ‘Well done, **GOOD** and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and **FAITHFUL** servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”

WHAT TYPE OF SERVANTS?

GOOD

- Greek: *agathós*
- Useful, agreeable, excellent
- These servants were MINDFUL of their jobs.

FAITHFUL

- Greek: *pistós*
- Trustworthy in duties
- These servants were reliable because their HEARTS were in their service.

MATTHEW 25: 24, 25

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a HARD man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’”

A TURNING POINT

- The leading character in Jesus' parable is the third servant.
- He defends his actions to the master by revealing his ATTITUDE.



MATTHEW 25: 26–30

“But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

REASONS FOR NOT SERVING

- Challenges in the church
- Challenges with life
- Challenges with the heart



KEY POINT OF PARABLE

Our attitude toward
God shapes our
SERVICE for God.



MARK 10:45

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”



MATTHEW 10:39

“He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”



PERSONAL REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Mark the statements to which you can identify.

- I've never really found my niche...
- I admit that I've compared...
- I am open to serve...

ASSIGNMENT

1. Complete the *Spiritual Gifts Inventory* on pages 33-39.
2. Hand out the *Gift Input Surveys* on pages 43-48 to three other people.



NEXT SESSION: ***COACHED TO SERVE***

- What the Bible teaches about spiritual gifts
- Discover your gifts and abilities