**Accelerate**

**Understanding the “Issues” of serving- Session #3**

**Small Group Notes**

**Introduction:**

**When it comes to opportunities for serving, are you more apt to say “Yes, I will” or “No, I won’t”? Why?**

**How can individualism (focusing only on personal needs and desires) impact our motives and abilities to serve?**

**How does our measure, “Am I putting my “yes” on the table?” inspire and challenge you?**

**Discuss: Read Romans 12:3-8 as a group.**

1. Serving is always a health issue!

* Serving accelerates individual spiritual health and corporate church health.
* We don’t become church members to access services; we are members of a church to engage in service. (1 Corinthians 12:14-19)
* Biblical service is Kingdom-focused, consistent, and communal

Explain: Without the witness of the Holy Spirit and the accountability that friends give us, we will be sure to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. Therefore, gifts are not for us, but to help us serve others in the church. We use our gifts to build others up in encouragement, and if need be, to warn and rebuke them of sin they might be pursuing. We need one another’s help to be the kind of believer that God wants us to be.

Ask:

**From what you have read and heard, why did God give spiritual gifts to each member of the church?**

**How does it challenge your view of serving that our gifts are not for ourselves? What is a way that you can begin to use your gifts for others in the church/community?**

2. Serving is a SHAPE issue, Romans 12:6

* Your SHAPE will often define your service
	+ S: Spiritual gifts: we are called to Discover, Develop, and Deploy spiritual gifts
	+ H: Heart: What stirs your heart is a great indicator of where you are called to serve
	+ A: Abilities: Natural giftings that you will either use for God’s glory or your personal gain
	+ P: Personality: There is a place for your personality in ministry.
	+ E: Experience: God redeems our past to change someone’s future.

Explain: The difference and distribution of gifts is all due to **the grace that is given to us**. Spiritual gifts are not given on the basis of merit, but because God chooses to give them. The focus then is for us to evaluate how we are using all of what God has “shaped” us to be for His glory.

Ask:

**How can it be encouraging to know that the God of all creation and glory has gifted you to serve? What are ways that you have struggled in understanding your SHAPE to serve?**

**Take a quick personal survey of each letter of the SHAPE acrostic. Were there any that are affirming to where you see God leading you?**

3. Serving is a “scheduling” issue, Luke 9:23

* Successful servants understand the purpose of red lights and green lights
* What do I need to say no to in this season in order to accelerate in service?

Explain: Jesus’ words in Luke point out the heart of our schedules. Daily surrender in our lives requires daily death of myself to God’s plans. In our western culture, we often put everything in our schedules and then Christ gets the leftovers. Yet for us to truly embrace serving, it requires us to allow God to dictate our schedules and align our lives to His plan first. (Matthew 6:33)

Ask:

**From the sermon, what do I need to say no to in this season in order to accelerate in service?**

**What can be ways that we sometimes “compartmentalize” our service between things outside the church and inside the church? What are ways that we can begin to remove any compartments of serving?**

4. Serving is a “heart” issue, Romans 12:1

* Serving in love takes an upward then outward focus.
* We can only serve as a living sacrifice when we realize Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice!

Explain: The demonstration of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross for our sin shows the ultimate motivation for why Jesus came, His love for us (Mark 10:45)! The same motivation carries us forward as our hearts are not serving out of obligation or to gain merit, but rather as an act of love like Jesus! It’s truly putting people before tasks!

Ask:

**Just as we learn how to say no to some things in order to serve, what are some personal obstacles that we need to set aside (sacrifice) in order to serve others?**

**How can having the right perspective change our motivation for why we serve?**

**What is one thing from today’s discussion that has challenged you to accelerate in serving?**