

Application

1. What practical steps can you take to "build others up" in your family, workplace, or church?
2. How can you recognize and avoid behaviors that might cause others to stumble?
3. Is there someone in your life who would benefit from an act of sacrificial service this week?

Prayer

1. Pray for a heart of humility to prioritize the needs of others over your own.
2. Ask God for wisdom to recognize and avoid being a stumbling block to others.
3. Thank God for Jesus' example of servant leadership, and commit to following His example in your daily life.

Selfless Leadership Small Group Materials

Week 1: Servant Leadership

Warm-Up

1. Describe a time when you had to give up something for someone else. How did it feel?
2. What's a small act of kindness someone did for you recently that made a big impact?
3. If you could spend a day volunteering for any cause, what would it be and why?

Word

"We who are strong must be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this. We must not just please ourselves. We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord. For even Christ didn't live to please himself." —Romans 15:1-3a (NLT)

At the beginning of this year (2024), we set out as a local church to consecrate ourselves as a people set apart for God and His purposes. We have learned and are continually learning about the righteousness and holiness God has given us as a gift. It's so precious that, by faith, we have received it and desire to honor God through a life of living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2). Individually, we prayed, *"Less of me, more of God."*

As the year wraps up and we prepare for the upcoming gospel mission, our prayer is that we would continue to grow as selfless leaders, becoming more like Jesus Christ our Lord. Over the next three weeks, we will rediscover and be refreshed in what it means to be selfless leaders—people of God who serve, connect, and glorify Him as we honor Him and make disciples.

Here are three insights on servant leadership:

1. Servant Leaders Avoid Causing Others to Stumble

“So let’s stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall.”

—Romans 14:13

Paul urges believers to avoid being stumbling blocks to others. Imagine a little child learning to walk who trips over a small box we’ve left scattered on the floor. While the child may still manage to walk, woe to us if our actions discourage them from continuing. Servant leadership means being intentionally mindful of how our actions impact others’ faith walks and discipleship journeys. Selfless leadership is sacrificial, prioritizing the spiritual welfare and growth of other believers, especially those new to the faith.

(Share your story in response to this question as the leader of the group: Have you ever been discouraged or offended by a fellow believer because of their actions or how they mistreated you? How did you feel about it? What did God teach you through that experience? How has it shaped your faith and relationships with other believers?)

2. Servant Leaders Prioritize Building Others Up

“So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.”

—Romans 14:19

Harmony doesn’t mean playing the same notes; it’s about different notes working together to create a beautiful sound. The Bible encourages us to make this our goal. How can our church community grow more united and solid in harmony?

As selfless servant leaders, we are peacemakers, seeking ways to promote growth and unity within our faith community. If offenses arise, we work to extinguish the flames of division, seeking counsel, facilitating reconciliation,

and ensuring harmony prevails. We are called to build each other up—not tear one another down.

(Share your story in response to this question as the leader of the group: Has someone ever come to you offended by another believer? How did you handle the situation? What did God teach you through it?)

3. Jesus is the Ultimate Servant Leader

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.” —Mark 10:45

Jesus, the greatest servant leader of all time, is our ultimate model of selfless service. He came not to be served but to serve and give His life. As leaders, we are called to emulate His example by serving God’s people and inspiring them to look to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

His humility and selfless service should motivate and empower us to live for the benefit of others, especially their spiritual growth and progress in faith.

(Share your story in response to this question as the leader of the group: Who inspired you to serve as a small group leader and disciple-maker? What traits did you admire most about them? How has serving others and teaching God’s Word helped you grow as a disciple of Christ?)
