

# SERVANT HEARTED

## Servant hearted

Taught at our Sunday morning service, 1st January 2023 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

**Reading:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

**Good morning. Let's pray.**

### Introduction:

#### Serving is a basic necessity

This morning, we're going to take a look at the topic of serving - which is of critical importance to both our Christian walk *and* this, or any church. Indeed, it is a basic necessity of the Christian life. While we can never earn our salvation, nor repay God for all He has done for us, serving God is a right response to His love for us. Charles Spurgeon commented:

He has done all this for you, has bled away His precious life, has died in agonies most exquisite upon the cross. What have you done for Him?

**Charles Spurgeon**

Not only is serving an appropriate response, but it is also an example that Jesus set. He washed His disciples feet - not that they would specifically wash each other's feet, but that they (and we) would follow His example of humility and service to one another. Willing to do even unpleasant, or uninteresting things for *His* purposes, for *His* glory, out of love for Him *and* each other. And further, that we would be willing to give our whole selves as He did. In Mark chapter 10 we read:

**Mark 10:42-45**

But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

John notes in his first letter:

**1 John 4:11**

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

No doubt he was remembering Jesus' words that he'd previously recorded;

**John 13:35**

By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

How do we show this love? Paul wrote to the Galatians:

**Galatians 5:13**

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.

So we are to serve God, and to serve one another. Following both Jesus example, and that of the early church - whether the division of labour in Acts 6 which saw both the spiritual and practical needs taken care of, or the numerous examples in Romans 16 such as Phoebe, described as "*a servant of the church in Cenchrea*", Mary who we read "*laboured much for us*", or Urbanus who is described as a fellow worker in Christ. Or those who laboured with Paul such as Timothy and Titus (both mentioned in various places), Epaphroditus (mentioned in Philippians), Tychicus (mentioned in Colossians), or Philemon. Or those who supported Paul's ministry and refreshed him, such as Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (mentioned in 1 Corinthians). Or Onesiphorus, who Paul also describes in 1 Timothy as often refreshing him - both in Rome and Ephesus. Or Mary who hosted a prayer meeting (in Acts 12), or Gaius among others who hosted whole churches in their home.

We have plenty of examples to follow!

**What does serving look like?**

Having then established the general need and imperative to serve, what does serving look like? There are three things I suggest we keep in mind which we can summarise as the goal, the whole, and our role.

## The goal

Let's start then with the goal, turning to Ephesians chapter 4 which we looked at just a couple of weeks ago...

### **Ephesians 4:11-16**

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

The ultimate goal of this work of ministry, which we are all to participate in, is that there may be unity among us in the knowledge of God, witness of the gospel to those outside the church, and that we may all grow up in Jesus, every part doing its share that there may be growth of the body so that we may edify each other in love.

### **The goal of ministry**

- Unity
- Witness
- Maturity
- Growth
- Love

That should sound like a good thing to all of us, right?! But who is to do this work? Well we've already read in that passage that every part should do its share. And that leads to the second point about what serving looks like...

## The whole

And that is, it is the whole body of Christ that is to serve. Indeed, it is at its healthiest when all parts are functioning as they should - just as with our physical bodies.

This division of labour, every part doing its share, is seen immediately following the first division of any kind in the early church, recorded in Acts chapter 6 where the church was growing rapidly, and as a result certain widows in the church were neglected practically. But perhaps most famously we read Paul's teaching to the Christians in Rome and Corinth.

In Romans chapter 12 we read:

### **Romans 12:3-13**

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

Then in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 we read:

### **1 Corinthians 12:14-25**

For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, on these we bestow greater honour; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honour to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

So, we are all to serve. And we are to value the different functions we each play in the body of Christ. Some parts are more visible than others - but as with our physical bodies, the less noticeable parts are often the most vital. Sure, it would limit our effectiveness with broken arm, but it's actually more impactful to have a broken liver or pancreas.

In a moment we'll get to our specific functions, but first, let's consider for a moment one thing that can prevent any of us from functioning at all, or as effectively as we should - and that's our attitude. This stems directly from our walk with Christ, and if that is not as it should be, then when it comes to serving we'll be saying things such as:

#### **Attitudes**

- "That's beneath me"
- "That doesn't entertain me"
- "I can't be bothered"
- "I have an issue with that person"

- "That will cost me"
- "I want to do that, not this!"
- "What's in it for me?"
- "It's not my priority"

The problem with each of these attitudes is they are an attitude problem - they in fact reveal we are not honouring the Lord in some aspect.

1. The root of saying "That's beneath me" is pride, which CS Lewis describes as spiritual cancer. We must be willing to do anything, no matter how unpleasant or unenjoyable. Remember that Jesus washed the dusty, dirty feet of his disciples.
2. When we turn from serving because it doesn't entertain us, we become like Demas, who despite having been counted with the believers in Paul's letter to Colossians and Philemon, we read in 2 Timothy had forsaken Paul, having loved this present world.
3. Apathy, laziness and idleness cause us to say "I can't be bothered" - all of which are contrary to Jesus example of being willing to lay down His life for us.
4. When we fail to serve because we have an issue with someone we have served with or might now serve with, we are acting contrary to scripture - we are not to point out the speck in our brothers eye, and ignore the whopping great plank in our own (that's paraphrased of course!). The Bible sets out examples such as Philemon and Onesimus, or Paul with Mark who despite their earlier disagreement were still able to serve the Lord together.
5. Counting the cost is probably the most ludicrous attitude of all, given what Jesus did for us, yet it one of the most common reasons we won't serve. We don't want serving to cost us our time, money, friends, family time, job opportunities, or anything - yet Jesus made it abundantly clear that being his disciples will cost us!
6. Sometimes we look at the task someone else is doing, and think "I'd rather do that" - but we need to guard against jealousy, and especially against pride that wants the limelight - such as with Diotrephes who John warned about in his third letter, for wanting the preeminence in the church.
7. When we ask "what's in it for me?" rather than "how can I serve", we have become parasites that contribute nothing to the body, but only sap it's resources. This can be particularly evident when looking for a church. When you notice something is missing from a potential church to join, do you walk away, or consider that God may want YOU to serve that need right there?
8. And finally, when we don't consider serving a priority, we're focussing on our own selfish desires. Elisabeth Elliot said well; *"As long as we are preoccupied with ourselves, we will never qualify to be servants of others."*

We are all to serve, every part doing it's share. With each of us having a close relationship with Jesus, so that our attitude is that sweet-smelling aroma that the Bible speaks of, rather than an attitude that stinks.

## Our role

But how do I serve? What do I do? You might ask.

Well, to some extent, I can't tell you that, as you need to seek the Lord. However, there are some basic responsibilities, some principles and plenty of opportunities that I will briefly touch on this morning.

First our basic practical responsibilities start at home. God's Word teaches us to honour our parents, love our wives, husbands, and children as God blesses us with. We are to take care of widows in our own families that the church need not be burdened, and we are to be good stewards of all that God has given us. But our responsibilities don't stop at home. While we are not to abandon our responsibilities at home for serving in the church, we are not to worship our home life and neglect serving others either. And the practical responsibilities are many - it is no great request for us to keep this building tidy, the gardening under control, the kitchen clean or the bins emptied. That is something any one of us can help with one way or another. But let us also look for practical ways to help others - whether that is preparing a meal for someone in a trial, giving a lift to a church meeting, or helping those in need.

Second, our basic spiritual responsibilities also start in our homes. From our personal Bible reading and prayer time, to family prayer time, talking back over the sermon, teaching our children the Bible and praying for others. But again, our spiritual responsibilities are certainly not limited to ourselves, our families, or our homes. We are to fellowship with others - not only for our own benefit, but for theirs! And we are to encourage, strength, challenge, rebuke, exhort, correct, and love others in this church family, or any church you commit to - and you should commit to one. And these things require time spent with each other.

---

Now, those are the most basic of responsibilities that we each have. And as such we haven't begun to touch on areas of ministry our church family has - from our children's groups to youth club, from our Sunday school to mid-week meetings, or Sunday services to outreach events and the many things needed to allow all those things to take place.

But before we consider the many other ways in which any one of us could possibly serve, let's consider some Biblical principles of serving - for as much as we don't want an attitude that *prevents* us serving, we DO want an attitude that allows us to serve God in a way that *pleases* Him.

## The principles of serving

So here are 7 Biblical principles of serving God...

- Humility
- Effort
- Focus
- Passion
- Kindness
- Perspective
- Faithfulness

### Humility

The first of these principles is **humility**, which should result in a willingness to serve others and to do anything - no matter how tedious, boring, simple, uninteresting, unpleasant, unenjoyable or unfulfilling it might seem. A test of our humility comes when someone else asks us to do something and we wrestle with thoughts of "who do you think you are?!" or "who do you think I am?". But perhaps a bigger test is when we see something that needs doing and we think "well, I'm not going to do that". Humility is the opposite of pride.

Chuck Smith, the late pastor of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, was a great example of humility. On one occasion, right before he was about to conduct a wedding service, he walked past an overflowing drain that had become blocked with leaves. The other members of staff looked at it thinking "someone should really sort that". While Chuck took off his jacket, rolled up his sleeves, cleared the drain, then walked on inside and led the wedding service.

Are you willing to do anything? Even when others ask you? Or when no-one asks you?

## Effort

The second principle is that of **effort**. And we have plenty of examples in scripture of those who served with their whole heart - the disciples included. We read of Paul who worked day and night so as not to be a financial burden to the church in Thessalonica, and we read of Tryphena, Tryposa and Ersis in Romans 16 who Paul notes as having laboured much in the Lord.

What of us? I can't put it better than Phillips Brooks who wrote:

Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle.

**Phillips Brooks**

## Focus

The third principle of serving is focus. We live in a busy world, where many things compete for our attention. Some good, but most of them have little to no eternal value. Jesus warned in Luke 16:

### **Luke 16:13**

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

So what are you going to focus on? Following Jesus, and serving Him is not compatible with loving this present world as Demas did. Is it wrong to watch the news, spend time on social media or support a sports team? No. But we need to keep a check on how much time we are spending there. We read in 2 Timothy...

### **2 Timothy 2:4**

No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

How battle ready are you for 2023? Have you been exercising spiritually by reading your Bible, or have you been on a junk food diet of TV shows, social media and the such?

CS Lewis warned:

We are always falling in love or quarrelling, looking for jobs or fearing to lose them, getting ill and recovering, following public affairs. If we let ourselves, we shall always be waiting for some distraction or other to end before we can really get down to our work.

**CS Lewis**

Remember sacrifice is the example that Jesus set. If we don't have time to serve, we should be cutting something else from the list.

## Passion

The fourth principle is passion. A half-hearted soldier is not much use on the front line. We need to be all in, willing to serve the Lord. And willing to do a good job. Not just a good-enough job. Not asking how can we make a task easier for ourselves, but how can we do it better for His glory!

We read in Colossians chapter 3:

### **Colossians 3:23-24**

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

I think it was Oswald Chambers who said, "if it only be for 5 minutes, let it be done well". Perhaps passion is the opposite of complacency - when we moved into this building, we were excited, passionate, looking for the next thing to do. Today, many of us are so used to it is that we don't even notice that the trees are currently overgrown, that the outside notice board needs cleaning, or that there's dust on the back of the chairs.

## Kindness

Now, passion is important. But kindness should take priority. Yes, we are to serve. And we really should be passionate about it. But we must not let our passion for it cause us to snap at others, or be unkind in any way. We read Galatians 5:13 earlier, but let's read it again and the following verses:

### **Galatians 5:13-15**

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. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

Oh, may we be passionate about serving in this church. But let us not be found arguing. We read...

### **2 Timothy 2:24a**

And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all...



In other words; don't be hard to work with! Be open to what others say, listen to their point of view, neither be unkind when instructing, guiding, correcting, or encouraging others in their serving.

## Perspective

The sixth principle in serving is that of perspective, for we must keep the main thing the main thing. That is, we mustn't be so busy serving God that we forget about Him, for that is exactly what Jesus rebuked the Ephesian church for in Revelation chapter 2:

### Revelation 2:2-4

I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have laboured for My name's sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

But perspective should also keep us from forgetting WHY we are doing any given task. That means we keep the building clean inside so visitors are not repulsed, and that we warmly welcome them so they might come back. And it means we keep the outside tidy so that we're not "the church with the overgrown field" as someone outside once described it. But it goes further than those things - the well run PA system is so people can easily hear the Word of God taught, the video stream is so no-one housebound is cut off from services or mid-week meetings, the clean kitchen is so people don't get food poisoning. None of these things are tasks without purpose. And ultimately we do all these things and more because we love Him.

## Faithfulness

The seventh, and final principle in serving God, is faithfulness - and this is perhaps the most important of all. Because it is not about what you or I want to do in serving. It is not OUR ministry so to speak. We are each to do those things His Word tells us to, and His Holy Spirit directs us to.

Of course, we don't need to hear God's calling to empty the bin. But maybe God wants you or I to do something specific. Something that costs us our time, our finances, or our friends. Maybe it will cost us a promotion, or require us to move house, town, county or country. Maybe it will require you to stay right here. We each need to seek the Lord on these things. But whatever God wants you and I to do, we are ALL to be faithful to Him. That is a certain requirement. One comment I read recently was this:

At the end of it all, Jesus will not say "well done good and successful servant" or "well done good and influential servant," or "well done good and high-capacity servant," but, "well done good and faithful servant." Success is being faithful to what God has called us to do.

**Rich Villodas**  
**@richvillodas**

As Christians, we should replace the word success with faithfulness.

## The opportunities for serving

So far we've considered the need to serve, that we should *all* do it, that there are basic responsibilities, and also Biblical principles of *how* we serve. But what about the specific ways in which you or I can or will serve this week, this year, or in the future? Again, I can't say exactly what *you* should do. But I know there are more opportunities than our collective time would allow us to fulfil even if we all quit our schools, courses or jobs today.

A Bible teacher once said something that stuck with me, and that was "if you're a Christian and bored, there's something wrong with you". And find it hard to disagree with that. The problem I think is we don't always take the time to sit back and consider what needs doing, or ask others how we can help them. And we sometimes forget that serving doesn't require a lot of formality - often it's just something that needs doing. Some of it is right in front of us - in this church, in the areas of ministry we have here. Some of it is in ministries that span across multiple churches - not just teaching ministries either.

So here's a few thoughts on just some of the opportunities around us. I'm sure if we sat down and talked, we'd find even more together.

First, Jesus commanded us all to go and make disciples of Him - not just converts. And that starts with bringing others to Him. Indeed, that's the very first Andrew did, bringing Peter to Jesus. For us, that might mean witnessing to someone while queueing for coffee, or spending time sharing the gospel with a colleague. It may be going out intentionally to witness to others you meet in town, or getting involved in prison ministry. But it's also talking to a visitor at one of our outreach BBQs, or truly welcoming someone who has walked in in here the first time on a Sunday morning.

Of course, some of you are confident and gifted enough you could start a conversation with a lamppost. And some of us are shy. But just like an outgoing nature can't be an excuse for being annoying, controlling or harassing, neither can a shy nature be an excuse for not talking to people. It takes little effort to say - how are you? How was your week? What have you got going on this week? Where are you from? Do you go to church regularly or is this your first time?

One way to serve is being at services early precisely to welcome newcomers & church family alike.

And of course, fellowshiping with one another is a way to serve also. So, try talking to members of this church family after the service - but not just about sport, or work, or how your Christmas was - but talking about the sermon. Charles Spurgeon said:

"...after the sermon, try talking to strangers. The preacher may have missed the mark, but you don't have to, or the preacher may have hit the mark, and a kind word can assist to deepen the effect. "

**Charles Spurgeon**

Ask someone how they are doing spiritually, or what they are reading in the Bible personally at the moment. Likewise, talk to the children in the church to see what they learnt at Sunday School that day. Talk to those who are alone. Do these things with urgency - don't put it off for another week.

We can serve through many practical things too - serving tea and coffee, emptying bins, cleaning the loos, hoovering the hall, straightening the chairs in here, or setting up in the hall for the next meeting taking place. And the ways to serve are never limited to Sundays - come down during the week to do some gardening, or pressure wash the car park, repaint the gates, or tidy the shed. We're not in the business of running flower shows, but we don't want the place to look a mess.

Another really important way to serve is practically helping others - see if someone needs some help with a DIY job, a bit of gardening or a meal cooked. Or simply ask how someone is doing - we all need that, but how often do you consider that there are people in this church, here this morning, that struggle with loneliness? You can serve by buddying up with someone who is off to uni, or has just come to this area because of uni.

There's also great opportunity to serve the young people in the church through Sunday School, our children's clubs, and youth club - not just directly, but by supporting those who are already actively involved. Or what about schools ministry? There's a great need for that!

One area we're specifically instructed to serve in is hospitality - whether buying someone a coffee out, or inviting them into your home for a cuppa, or a meal. It could be opening your home for church meetings or a BBQ.

But also consider the skills and talents God has blessed you with. Of course, you can't take it as read that because you play the guitar you will play in the band, or because you have this or that skill that that is how God will use you - sometimes God calls us to leave behind things we're good at for following His lead and calling. However, God *does* bless us with skills and talents - not simply for our own ends, but for His. Consider these things;

If you are technically capable, maybe you could be building web sites, making apps, editing audio or video, setting up computer systems and networks or such - not merely in this church, but in support of all kinds of Christian ministries.

If you have strong literacy skills, consider the need for proof-reading books, study notes, blog posts, web sites. If you have project management or organisation skills, consider how those could be put to use serving the Lord. If cooking or baking is your thing, consider how that could be used - yes you could cook for a church event, but maybe you could run a cooking class in order to share the gospel. If you have building, plastering, carpentry, roofing or electrical skills - those could be used anywhere from here to a missionary trip to struggling country.

If you have a love and passion for history or geography, think how you could put together Biblically and historically accurate materials for pastors, Sunday school teachers - whether researching the cultural background at the time each part of the Bible was written, or making maps that show where Biblical events took place, or of Paul's missionary journey.

If you're an avid photographer, there's many ways you can help - both in this church, and far beyond. Or if you're a talented painter or illustrator - there's needs from book covers, to children's books, to aids for Bible studies. If you're a musician there's many ways to serve, whether as part of our sung worship here - or writing and recording music that encourages others in their walk with the Lord. If you're a writer, then maybe God would have you write, books, blog articles or more. If you're a paperwork person, maybe you can serve this or other churches with the various tasks that need doing.

Opportunities to serve are so abundant, that they are not limited to the skills we do or don't have either. Something as simple as a lift gives someone else the opportunity to hear God's Word taught, to get to a prayer meeting, or to fellowship with other believers. And babysitting can enable someone else to serve in a way that you can't. If you have time on your hands, there are great opportunities to serve at Christian conferences, retreats and missions in all sorts of ways.

And last, but certainly not least, as it's so critical for us to do - we can serve by praying for others. Whether that is for our children's group and youth club leaders as they serve on a Friday evening, for the music team as they practice, or praying for me or others as we prepare to teach God's Word each week. We sometimes look at the powerful ministries of preachers such as Charles Spurgeon, and think "if only we had preaching and responses like that today?!". Well, one part of his ministry that is often not recalled, is that while he preached at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, up to 300 other people were in the basement praying that God's Word would be faithfully taught, and openly received. May we follow the example of Epaphras in praying for others - we read in Colossians:

**Colossians 4:12**

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

This list is just a start - but I really do hope it sparks in you some thoughts as to how you might serve God in 2023 and beyond. Before you say you can't do anything, take time to think of all that needs doing. And if you can't think of anything at that moment, turn to the person next to you and ask how you can help them in their ministry.

**The blessing of serving**

I hope you're energised thinking of all the ways that you can serve your Saviour. But if any of us feel weary thinking about the task, let us remember Jesus words:

**Matthew 11:28-30**

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Serving God is one the most rewarding thing you'll ever do. Yes, it can be tiring. But it's a joy too. And if you throw yourself into it, you'll find it to be a huge blessing in your life.

First, do you not want to be part of a church that puts others first? That serves each other in love? That shows hospitality? That cares for each others needs? Where the young and old mix well? Where disciples are made? Where people are won to Christ?

And second, when you let God order your life, your ministry will be a blessing far beyond what you expect. I could tell you several stories of how something I have learned in ministry here has helped me enormously at work, and likewise, how God has used skills I have learned in my day job to help in ministry here. It's incredible! And then some of the best Christian friends I have are those I have met through serving at conferences, retreats or missions. Pete is a dear friend of mine, not because we go to the same church, but because we served together on the youth team for years and got to know each others hearts. And that's not unique to me - I know I can speak for Sian that some her very best friends are those she met through serving at various Christian camps or in churches.

## Conclusion

In conclusion then, we are to serve. We're to serve God. And we're to serve each other in love. When a couple truly love each other, you'll see them doing little things to help each other, without asking, but simply to save the other person doing it. Whether unloading the dishwasher, or making a cup of tea. In the same way, let us try and out-serve each other. Not for gain, or reward. But through love.

And if you're ever tempted to think "why isn't the church doing this? or that?" Well, you're it! You're the church. A year from now this church could be double the size or half the size. Or the same size. Any of those options are OK so long as we've been faithful. But if any of those options occur because we've compromised, been apathetic, self-consumed or lazy, that's a problem.

## Application questions

Let me leave you with three question to ask yourself in the coming days...

- How are you going serve God this year?
- How are you going to serve others in this church this year?
- How can you support others in their ministry this year?

**Let's pray.**