

LIVING A LIFE OF SERVICE

Objectives

To understand that one of our purposes in life is to serve others and to learn about ways of implementing this principle to our lives. Our main purpose is to glorify God in all that we do. Service is one of the greatest works that we can do to honor and glorify God.

References

1. "Committed Service Instills Fulfilling Happiness" by HG Bishop Youssef, www.suscopts.org
2. "The Spiritual Service and the Spiritual Servant" by HH Pope Shenouda

Scriptural Verse

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all" (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

Lesson Outline

1. Service is one of our greatest missions in life – we must develop this mindset. We were placed on this earth to serve just like the Lord Christ. Once we develop this attitude we become more aware of the opportunities for service and of the needs of others (Luke 22:26)
2. Serving others requires that we empty ourselves of our desires and comfort because many times serving someone else will come in direct conflict with our own comfort and desires (Acts 20:35)
3. A love for all those around us – in order to be able to identify the needs of others we must love them. If we are bitter towards others, we will be indifferent to their needs.
4. We must realize that our joy in life is directly linked to service of others. When we serve, we feel a sense of satisfaction and happiness that is more rewarding than the joy we get from satisfying our desires. This will lead us to want to serve more.
5. We need to identify our God given talents and see which service they are most appropriate for (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)
6. Our service to others is directly linked to our relationship with God. The closer we are to Him, the more we will desire to serve Him through others. Therefore, if we have a lifelong relationship with God that continues to develop, we will have a lifelong service that will continue to grow.
7. Do not be discouraged by a lack of earthly reward – many times we may serve someone and that person may not be appreciative of it or may not respond to us when we are in need. Although this may seem discouraging, always remember that ultimately you are serving God and that you will receive a heavenly reward that is far weightier than an earthly one and that you are called to love your enemies and persecutors (Matthew 25:34-40)
8. Always remember that the purpose of service is not to acquire more popularity or friends but ultimately to bring people to the knowledge of God and repentance (Isaiah 61:1)

9. Start by serving your family – the young through biblical stories and stories of the saints and those family members who may be spiritually ill. Encourage and love them. This is a commandment, as St. Paul said “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8)

Conclusion

We are called to live a life of service because serving others is a sign of our love to God. It may be hard to identify opportunities for service but if we start out with the right attitude we will find plenty of opportunities. We should always begin by serving our families.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. What are ways we can be involved in service inside and outside of the church?
2. What are ways we can serve our family?
3. What is the relationship between service and worship?