

The Walk: Five Essential Practices for the Christian Life
Adam Hamilton

Session 3
Serve: Here I Am, Lord, Send Me

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2)

Review

Essential Practice #1: Worship (weekly) and Prayer (daily); 5 components of prayer
Essential Practice #2: Study (5 verses a day, moving toward 5 chapters a week)

Checking In (Table Groups)

- Did you read 5 verses of scripture a day over the past week (or more)? What part(s) of the Bible did you read?
- What did you hear from God in your study over the last week?
- In the weeks to come, what practice of reading scripture do you think will work for you so that you can maintain this essential practice? (Morning, evening, midday; how much time daily?) Or, if you have been reading scripture for a long time, what practice has worked for you?

Video Discussion (Table Groups)

- Based on the video and reading Adam's book (if you are doing that) and your own experience: why is the discipline of service important to our lives as followers of Jesus?
- Adam says God doesn't normally send angels but people to help other people and to make a difference. When have you been an agent of God's love to someone else?
- When has someone else been an agent of God's love to you?

Some Key Passages in Scripture (Table Groups)

As our time allows, read the following passages of scripture and then discuss these questions:

- What speaks to you in this passage?
- What does the passage say about serving others?

Romans 12:1-2 (printed above)

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

learn to do good;
seek justice,
 rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
 plead for the widow. (Isaiah 1:17)

‘In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.’ (Jesus speaking) Matthew 7:12

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

 ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
 because he has anointed me
 to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
 and recovery of sight to the blind,
 to let the oppressed go free,
 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’ (Luke 4:16-19)

Speak out for those who cannot speak,
 for the rights of all the destitute.
⁹ Speak out, judge righteously,
 defend the rights of the poor and needy. (Proverbs 31:8-9)

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
 and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
 and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, ‘Which commandment is the first of all?’ Jesus answered, ‘The first is, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” The second is this, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.’ (Mark 12:28-31)

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Interruptions as Opportunities to Serve (Table Groups)

Adam says that interruptions in our busy schedules are God's way of offering us unexpected opportunities to serve.

- Can you think of a time when this has happened to you?
- How did you feel about the interruption?
- How did you feel after you served?

Corporate Opportunities to Serve (Table Groups)

- Who are the people in our community who cannot speak for themselves, who are destitute, vulnerable, and needy?
- Given the resources of our church, what are some new ways we might serve together in our community? How is God calling us to serve together at this time?

The Challenge

- Continue to practice the disciplines of Worship (weekly) and prayer (5 times daily)
- Continue to practice the discipline of Study (5 verses of scripture per day; or more)
- Practice the discipline of Service: try to find ways to help 5 times in the coming week)

John Wesley's Covenant Prayer (Contemporary Version)

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed by you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low by you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing:
I freely and fully yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be confirmed in heaven. Amen.