

**Calvary Chapel O'Hare**  
**Men's**  
**Servant Leadership Study**

**Week 2**

***SERVANT LEADERSHIP***

Memory Verse for the Week: Mark 10:43, 44

As you work on this week's study take some time to record in the space below any results you've seen as you have applied last week's servant leadership principles to your everyday life.

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**Day 6    Servant Leadership**

**Reading - Acts 4:36, 37**

**Discussion** - Jesus was a great Servant Leader, but He was also the Son of God. Can we hope to measure up to the standard He set? Can regular people become true servant leaders as well? Before writing off this model as idealistic and unattainable, we might do well to read this brief statement about Barnabas, another true servant leader.

Barnabas was one of the church's all-time great leaders, and in this passage we discover why. Barnabas was a giver. *He believed that he existed for the good of the church more than he believed that the church existed to serve him and meet his needs.*

A leader can select from two fundamental but opposing orientations toward his or her organization. One paradigm prompts him or her to take from the organization as many perks and privileges as possible. In this model, the organization exists to provide a title, a job, status and service. The second orientation asks the leader to evaluate what he or she can contribute or put into the organization. In this scenario the leader takes what is needed from the organization, but his or her passion is to make it great, to serve its needs. The leader following the latter course is a servant leader, and Barnabas effectively modeled this approach. His life teaches its systematic principle. Simply put, Barnabas was a man who was convinced that God had placed him on earth to help others to live productive and satisfying lives.

Good leaders do good things. Their lives matter. That's good. Servant leaders do great things. *They help others' lives to matter by serving them.* Servant leadership is great leadership. Barnabas's life illustrates numerous leadership truths, but servant leadership is certainly one of the most important. Look at his character sketch and notice the manner in which he served Paul and Mark, nurturing them toward great leadership roles.

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1) Jesus was a great Servant Leader, but He was also the Son of God. Can we hope to measure up to the standard He set? Can regular people become true servant leaders as well?

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2) Do you agree with the author's assessment of Barnabas's life and reason for existence? If yes, does this change the way that you view your existence in the church? If you answered no, please explain your thoughts.

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3) Do you see this same type of servant mindset that Barnabas had as being prevalent in the church as a whole in America? How about in the church that you fellowship at?

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### **BARNABAS – A Study in Character**

Mentoring is an essential leadership function. Men and women that are discerning enough to spot young people with potential and competent enough to assist them with visibility and exposure are fulfilling a key leadership role. Barnabas was one of those leaders. His real name was Joseph, but he was known by his nickname, Barnabas, which means “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36). Several episodes of the book of Acts described how he earned his name and his reputation.

First, Barnabas sponsored Paul at a time when everyone else suspected and rejected him. This is one of the great mentoring stories of all time. Before his own conversion, Paul had done his best to destroy the church (Acts 9:1-2). After this miraculous conversion, the Christians refused to be convinced. They avoided Paul like the plague he had been. Paul was only introduced to the church because “Barnabas took him in and brought him to the Apostles” (Acts 9:27).

Later, Barnabas moved to Antioch. When he arrived, he encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts (Acts 9:11-23). As the result of his contagious witness many people came to believe. And when the work became too much for one man, Barnabas brought Paul back to Antioch. We can only imagine the mutual growth occurred as these two great leaders were together.

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Later, the believers chose this dynamic team to expand the church and new frontiers (Acts 13:2). The missionary trip, though difficult, was phenomenally successful. But a quiet event on that trip had a significant effect on the relationship between Barnabas and Paul: John Mark, one of the younger team members, deserted the effort and returned home.

As Paul and Barnabas organized their second journey, John Mark signed back on. But Paul refused to take Mark with them, so Barnabas had a decision to make: go with a highly effective and rising star he had launched or help another young champion whom others had written off? For Barnabas the choice was simple. His career was marked by a refusal to abandon good people who needed sponsorship, encouragement and development. "Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 15:39) - and into obscurity. Luke, who traveled with Paul, recorded his story.

Did Barnabas pick another champion in Mark? Did his investment pay a dividend? Peter thought so, referring to later as "My son" (1 Peter 5:13). And amazingly, so did Paul, who near the end of his life requested that Mark come to him in Rome "Because he is helpful to me in my ministry" (2 Timothy 4:11). Most importantly, however, God thought so.

Barnabas didn't pick a champion; he helped turn a young man who had earlier walked away from his commitment into a champion. A great mentor doesn't win just by going with the winners. He or she sometimes turns losers into winners. God always needs leaders with the vision and commitment to do that. Consider what you can learn from this "Champion who championed champions." Our world is desperate for men and women who can mentor through relationships. See *Mentoring* by Bob Clinton and Paul Stanley (Nav Press) for some hands on help with this important relationship.

- 1) Is there anyone in your life that you are investing in by mentoring? If yes, please share the benefits that you are reaping from this investment. If not, what is holding you back from obeying the Lord's command, and what practical steps do you plan on taking to change this?

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## **Day 7**

### **Servant Leadership and Who God Is**

We've been studying servant leadership now for the better part of two weeks. Today's reading gives a glimpse at what Jesus did as the ultimate Servant Leader, as well as providing some insights as to the bottom-line results of good servant leadership.

### **Read Mark 10:35-45**

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**Discussion** - One crucial message Jesus wanted His disciples to grasp was that in God’s kingdom leaders are servants. To drive that point home, Jesus stated that even He did not come to be served, but to serve (v.45).

Jesus taught that service is the path to legitimate leadership. Robert Greenleaf made an essential point about how an attitude of servant leadership begins and what kinds of results it can produce:

“The servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is a leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such it will be a later choice to serve – after leadership is established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature” (pp. 13-14).\*

How do we know whether a leader is genuinely serving? Greenleaf states that “The best test, and difficult to administer is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?” Let’s take a look at Jesus’ example. Jesus didn’t merely talk servant leadership, He lived it out. In fact, the only reason He came to earth was to serve God and, through His death and resurrection, to serve humanity. As for His inner circle of disciples, they became better people in every conceivable way after He had met them than they were before. Even though He had been present at creation and had every right to act as “leader-first,” Jesus’ statement in verse 45 shows that His paradigm was unquestionably “servant-first.” Jesus refocused His followers’ thinking to align more closely with the servant-first model. Greenleaf’s insightful distinction provides us with some mental tracks on which to run as we carry that focus into action.

\*Taken from *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* By Robert K. Greenleaf © 1977 by Robert K. Greenleaf; © 1991 by The Robert K. Greenleaf Center. Used by permission of Paulist Press.

- 1) The author quotes Robert Greenleaf who asks, “How do we know whether a leader is genuinely serving”? Before going back and looking at his answer consider what you read in Mark 10:35 – 45 and write your answer to the question. Does your answer share any similarities to what Greenleaf believes?

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- 2) Is it sinful to want to be “great” and “first” in God’s kingdom?

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- 3) What criteria must be met to be seen as “great” and “first” in the kingdom of God?

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## Day 8

### Servant Leadership and Who I Am

As the disciples struggled among themselves for the power positions, Jesus gently reminded them of who really held the power. It's a lesson that we'll do well to take to heart as we consider our own leadership positions. Read Luke 22:24-30 to learn more about who holds the power in God's kingdom.

#### Reading - Luke 22:24-30

**Discussion** - Here Jesus' instructions to His disciples take a slightly different tack. We've already analyzed this power struggle among the disciples as we've worked through what the Bible has to say about servant leadership, but here Jesus clarifies His own role in the power structure. Look at verses 29 and 30.

Jesus wanted His disciples to learn the important concept of leading first as a servant. But as the disciples contemplated their various roles in the Lord's kingdom, their minds immediately focused on the positions of power and prestige each wanted to inherit. Each thought He should have the most important role.

But the Lord interrupted their argument with words intended to bring about a perspective that they had perhaps forgotten: Jesus was the One who would confer on them a kingdom (v.29). He was the one who held the power because God the Father had conferred it on Him. And the power structure in the kingdom of God was radically different from what the world perceived as power. Imagine the disciples' downcast faces as they received this impromptu performance appraisal from the Master. For the disciples, Jesus' words must have been a wake-up call. And although they may not have fully understood what they were being called to do in service to God and to others, they would quickly learn enough.

Have you ever found yourself in a situation in which you were vying with others for power? Remember, in such situations who really holds the power. It is God who ordains and confers leadership. And the most successful leaders are those people who are willing to share in God's kingdom values and act as servants to those who follow.

- 1) Have you ever found yourself in a situation in which you were vying with others for power? Write a few details that you can share with the group. How did the Lord deal with your attitude?

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- 2) How does this principal of servant leadership apply in the work world, especially for those of you who hold a position as a “boss” at your job? Can a person be a “boss” over others and still be a servant?

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- 3) Who do you find it hardest to serve and lead at the same time? Why do you think it’s so hard to serve that person as a “slave” (Mark 10:44) would serve his master?

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## Day 9

### Servant Leadership and How I Works (How I Think)

The manner of which a leader uses his or her power will indicate the quality of his or her leadership. Leighton Ford reminds us that our power is to be used to serve others. How do we do that? Paul gives us some practical guidance in 1 Timothy 5:1-25.

#### Reading – 1 Timothy 5:1-25

**Discussion** – In his book *Transforming Leadership* Leighton Ford observes, “Next to truth, the power question is the most important issue for the leader. And it is precisely in relation to power that the leadership of Jesus stands in the greatest contrast to popular understandings of leadership” (p.140).\*

Ford concludes that no one has ever had at his or her disposal greater power than that possessed by Jesus. He could calm the raging storm, cast out demons, open blind eyes, or curse a fig tree and cause it to wither (p.144). Yet, Jesus consistently used His power to serve others (Matthew 20:28; John 13:1-17). And He has called His followers to do the same thing (John 13:15).

How do we go about doing that? The apostle Paul urged the early church leaders to treat others as members of their own families. When a leader perceives followers in this light, the idea of using his or her influence to help those in need comes into sharper focus. While Paul’s instructions apply to the church, they would work just as well in the marketplace, classroom or neighborhood.

You’re a leader. As such, you hold some power and influence over those you lead. Have you ever thought of the people in your organization as members of a family? Consider the many parallels between a fully functioning family

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and a fully functioning organization. The qualities of care, concern and love for one another come through as top priorities. Those were high on Jesus' list as well. As a leader, follow Jesus' example and serve those whom you lead.

\*Reprinted from *Transforming Leadership* by Leighton Ford. © 1991 by Leighton Ford. Used with permission from InterVarsity Pres, P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515.

- 1) Pinpoint the specific instructions in this chapter and list them here (I.E. Keep yourself pure).

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- 2) In verse 21 Paul says, "I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism." Which, if any, points listed above do you struggle to obey?

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## **Day 10**

### **Servant Leadership and What I Do**

Paul singled out Timothy as one of a rare breed when he commended him to the Philippian church as a leader who would serve them well. In Philippians 2:19-24, Paul provided a brief character sketch of a true servant leader. Read it and discover the qualities which, in Paul's opinion, contribute to great leadership.

**Reading** - Philippians 2:19-24

**Discussion** - In this passage Paul explained why Timothy was a great servant leader. He takes a genuine interest in the welfare of others (vv.20-21). Timothy embodies three principles of servant leadership.

First, the servant leader must define what his or her leadership is going to produce. If the leader hopes to produce privilege of prestige, he or she won't serve but will expect to be served by the followers. Timothy had genuine interest in others' welfare. Each word is loaded.

Second, the servant leader knows whom he or she serves. With that understanding comes a knowledge of the accountability that he or she has to others and, ultimately, to God. Timothy served Paul by serving those whom Paul had commissioned him to lead. In turn, both Paul and Timothy served the Lord and helped the Philippians to achieve what the Master had commissioned them to accomplish.

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The servant leader who loses sight of this model ceases to lead. Such an individual can inadvertently communicate the idea that no one is in charge, that the “leader” runs nothing more than the organization’s errands. But a thorough knowledge of “who leads the leader,” and the accountability and authority which that structure conveys, empower the servant leader to lead with God’s kingdom in mind. Timothy understood this and Paul contrasted him with those who were looking after their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ (v.21).

Finally, servant leaders are rare. Paul stated that he knew of no one else like Timothy (v.20). Jesus taught that the greater the service, the greater the leader (Matthew 20:26-28). To be truly unique – or highly valuable – be a leader who, like Timothy, serves the organization by helping followers succeed.

1) Summarize the author’s 3 principles of servant leadership.

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2) Do you take a genuine interest in others generally speaking?

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3) Do you make an effort to take a genuine interest in those whom you don’t have much in common with or with those who try your patients?

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4) What areas of servant leadership discussed over the past two weeks are in need of improvement in your life and what specific steps will you take to make them a part of your life?

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