

## Weekly Devotions: LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER 12

### Serve One Another with Agape Love

Agape love is proactive, taking the initiative to do things that will benefit others. It involves giving of ourselves, our time, our resources and our energy to serve one another out of a humble, sincere, self-giving and loving heart.

In the New Testament the word *diakoneo* means to serve. For the early believers serving God is to serve one another. This includes looking after the practical needs of others (Acts 6: 2), sharing the gospel (Eph 3: 7), raising funds for those in need (2 Cor. 9: 1, 12-15), exercising their spiritual gifts to edify one another (Eph 4: 11-12) or helping others grow in faith. Every ministry is important and they were exhorted not to rank some as more superior to others and to look down on those 'less honorable'.

It is not what we do that is important but what motivates us. Do we serve out of love for God and for one another or out of self-interests? We are called not only to serve one another but to serve with the right attitudes; humility, self-sacrifice and grace.

### Read Matt 20: 17-28

Jesus' disciples were competing amongst themselves to be at the top of the rank or to be the righthand man of the Master. Jesus told them that greatness in the Kingdom of God is different from how the world defines greatness. In God's Kingdom, greatness is linked to servant-hood; the one who humbles himself to serve others would be considered great (26-27). Why? Because He Himself "...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (28).

The distinctive features of Jesus' ministry are humility, compassion, grace and self-sacrifice for the benefit of unworthy sinners. We are to follow His example in serving others, serving out of a heart of humility and grace, ready also to sacrifice our own needs for others.

### *Questions to ponder*

1. What are some reasons people refrain from serving in the church? How can the church help those who may be ready to serve but unsure of their ability overcome their reservation?
2. How does the world define greatness and who is considered great in God's eyes (25-27)? What are two things you can do that God will see you as 'great' in your ministry to others?
3. For whom and for what did Jesus sacrifice His life? What would it mean for you to serve like Jesus out of grace, humility, compassion and sacrifice?

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