

DEEP



WIDE

v GROUP STUDY



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Deep & Wide: vGroup Study

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WIDE-SERVICE

“Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” You might be familiar with this quote. Often attributed to Francis of Assisi, the quote highlights the importance of not just speaking the gospel, but living out the gospel. Interestingly, many believe this quote is falsely attributed to Francis because there is no record of him ever writing this. Some take issue with the quote because many use it as an excuse to never open their mouths and tell people about Jesus. However, the quote has some merit and truth.

Christians are, after all, called to serve people. People should not just hear that God loves them but experience his love first hand. Jesus himself demonstrated this truth throughout his ministry. In almost every setting he proclaimed the gospel and simultaneously showed the gospel. He served the needs of the people around him. As we looked at evangelism in quarter 1 of Deep & Wide, this quarter we’re going to study service.

- What has been your experience with service? Do you regularly serve others? Have you yourself ever been served?

- Why do you think some Christians don’t serve or don’t serve on a regular basis?

- Why do you think some Christians do serve regularly?

¹⁴And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

¹⁶And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

*¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,*

¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Luke 4:14-21

Jesus has just begun his earthly ministry. Last week, we briefly looked at Jesus' time of silence, solitude, fasting, and temptation in the wilderness. Luke 4:14-21 immediately follows Jesus' time in the wilderness. This passage practically serves as Jesus' state of ministry address. Jesus returns in the power of the Spirit and enters into his hometown, Nazareth. He enters the synagogue where all the Jews would have been, including those who had known him for some time, and he picks up the scroll of Isaiah and quotes Isaiah 61:1-2 and part of Isaiah 58:6. In quoting these two passages he asserts (1) he is the servant of the Lord/Messiah and (2) that his ministry will be characterized by what Isaiah says.

- What is the significance of Jesus' returning in the power of the Holy Spirit? How does this connect with what he reads in Isaiah?
- Using Isaiah, how does Jesus characterize his ministry?
- What are some specific examples from Jesus's ministry of how he fulfilled this prophecy?
- Why do you think meeting needs is so important to Jesus' ministry?

Jesus makes it clear that his mission entails meeting not only spiritual needs but also physical needs. But how does Jesus' ministry of service relate to his church? Are we called to the same ministry? Isn't Jesus unique? In Paul's letters, Paul makes an interesting and practical association between Jesus and his church. Let's take a look at Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

¹⁶Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

1 Corinthians 12:27

- How does Paul describe the church—you and I—in 1 Corinthians 3 and 6? How is this connected to what we just read about Jesus?
- What does Paul mean when he says we “are the body of Christ?” What is the connection between the church as the temple of the Holy Spirit and the church as the body of Christ?
- If we are the body of Christ then that means we should live, both personally and corporately, as Christ lived. What then are the implications for us and Christian service?

“Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” Maybe there is some truth to this pithy statement, but perhaps it is better to say “We are the mouth, hands, and feet of Jesus!” Christ is the head of his church and we are his body. Each one of us in Christ make up all the parts of Christ’s metaphorical body, and the reason we do this is because we are filled with the presence of Christ, the Holy Spirit. So, if we have the Spirit of Christ and are the body of Christ then we are to fulfill the ministry of Christ.

- How does knowing and understanding that Jesus’ ministry is our ministry make you feel?

- 2,000 years ago Jesus had unique needs that he was meeting. When you look around your world and context, what unmet needs do you see?

- Take a look at servenola.com and see all of the needs Vintage Church is trying to help meet. What needs are we meeting? What needs are we not meeting? How can we as a church begin to help meet those unmet needs?

- Vintage Church is hosting a ServeNOLA day on April 17th. As a vGroup commit to serve on that day with one of our ServeNOLA partners. Similarly, as an individual or family, commit to serve a need at least once a month. Once you identify how or with whom you will serve, share with your vGroup for accountability.

- Name your priorities. What are the most important things in your life that you need to prioritize above all else?

- Create intentional rhythms. What are the rhythms of your life?

- Live it out. What is the first step you will take to begin to live out your rule of life?