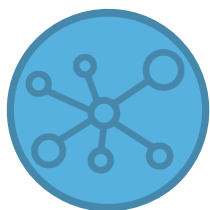


Serving in the church



Guide



REPRODUCING
God's life in others

Part of Gold Hill's 'Take a Step' discipleship pathway.
www.goldhill.org/disciple

If we're honest, there are different kinds of serving in a church. Some are a life-giving, enjoyable and fruitful way of genuinely making a difference. And others are...not! Sometimes it feels like we are just filling a rota. Sometimes it is hard to see the bigger purpose of what we're doing. This simple guide lays out how we view serving, and why it can be a wonderful way of taking what God has given you and releasing it to bless others.

Why serve?

The biggest reason we serve is because Jesus calls us to do so. Shortly before His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus set a radical example by washing His friend's feet. Then He said:

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done." (John 13:14-15)

We serve because Jesus served. He was not above it, and did not expect all those around Him to serve Him rather than the other way round. If we want to take steps to become more like Jesus, serving is part of the package.

The other reason that's important to mention is that we serve because we have something unique to offer. We have all been made carefully by God, who has given us gifts and abilities. So we all have a part to play. As Paul says:

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Who are you serving?

This is such an important question. If we aren't careful, we slip into thinking we are serving the person who leads a team, or only those who benefit from what we do, or (sadly) we are really serving ourselves.

We need to work with those around us, and respond well to those who lead us. We need to look to benefit those we are serving, absolutely. And it's great for us to enjoy and benefit from serving. But above all else, we must always remember that it is God we are serving! He always comes first and we do everything for Him and to serve His purposes.

How should you serve?

When we remember it is God we are serving, it can change so much about the ways we serve. Because it means we serve in ways that honour to Him.

So we serve humbly, listening to feedback, making sure we are accountable rather than going it alone. None of us will ever be the complete package, so

we need to learn from others and always be ready to grow in whatever area it is that we are serving.

It also means we serve in teams and work well with others. We give care and attention not only to the task, but to how we treat others. We keep an eye on our character, not just our competency.

We serve consistently, honouring commitments we've made. While most of the ways we serve will not be our 'job', we treat it as a real commitment not something we take lightly and duck out of without warning.

And finally, since we are serving God, we do it to the very best of our ability, and seek to grow in the areas God has led us to serve. Paul reminds us:

"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Colossians 3:17)

What area should you serve in?

The first way to seek an answer to this question is to ask God. We should all pray regularly about the areas where we serve. Where does God want us to be giving to others? He might guide us through others speaking to us, or by a conviction He places in us.

Another way we discern God's leading is by looking at who He made us. We each have abilities, personalities and gifts, so what is it that He has given you you could release by serving others. (If you aren't sure about your spiritual gifts, use the ['Find and Use Your Spiritual Gifts'](#) resource to help.)

You should also ask what it is you are passionate about. What excites you (or frustrates you when it's done poorly)? It might be that God wants you to step into those very areas and has given you a burden for them already.

Remember too, this is not just about fitting into someone else's rota! There might be a dream or passion or desire God is giving you. Pursue it! And there are also lots of ways to serve others not through the church. It is good to be investing into the community of faith that is your family, and we encourage everyone to do so, but don't neglect other important areas as well.

What now?

The best thing to do now is to pray about it all, and then speak to someone. If there's a particular area you want to explore and know who leads it, speak to them. If you don't know or want a chat to explore this a little more, talk to one of the team at church and they will gladly help you.



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