

Life Application Notes

Week beginning 23rd Feb (West End) 8th March (Lordshill/Central).

Culture Revealed. *Service - All hands on deck!*

Jon Lawn. Following on from Letter 4 (Thyatira) - Revelation 2: 18-24 and multiple verses

Opening Up.

Jon introduced service within the Church as a 'means of grace' - ways which God uses to bring His blessing to us. Can you remember what they were?

[Preaching; baptism; the Lords Supper; praying for each other; worship; giving; use of spiritual gifts; fellowship; evangelism; ministering to each other - to name some!]

- What do you think of the fact that God uses you and I to bring His blessing to each other and to the world around us? Why do you think he does this?

Digging In

In Revelation 2:18-19 we read in the letter to the church in Thyatira that Jesus knows and commends their 'deeds, love and faith, their service and perseverance, and that they are now doing more than they did at first'.

Remember: There are visible ways of serving in the church and invisible ways which go under the radar (often because they are not given a rota!)

1. Read Eph 2:8-10. It is vitally important before we start talking in detail about any kinds of work, we have a foundation of grace. We are not saved by our good works ("so that no one can boast"), but for good works ("which God has prepared in advance"). How does it feel to know that, wherever you are serving at present, God has prepared that specifically for you to do?
2. Read Heb 10:24-25. Part of our act of service to Jesus and his church is simply committing to being together with God's people - meeting together both on a Sunday and in smaller groups throughout the week. That is a really high commitment we have here at Life Church. What are the benefits of meeting together? Do you think of Sundays as 'what will I get out of the meeting?' or 'what can I bring to the meeting and others?'
3. Read Matthew 25:14-30. One person's service is just as important as another's - it doesn't matter what area it is in, what does matter is that we are faithful with what God has given us! Why did the third servant bury his lot? *[A: He was afraid]* What might get in the way of us faithfully using what we've been given to glorify God and bring blessing to others?
4. One way we can be 'all hands on deck' is to steward wisely all that God has given us, and give back to Him what he ultimately owns anyway! How are you doing with your financial giving? Is this something that you see as part of serving the church and a 'means of grace' - to bring God's blessing to both yourself and others around you?

5. Read Acts 2:42. The early church devoted themselves to each other through fellowship - spending time and serving alongside each other. The way we go about serving at Life Church is a key part of our culture. We want people to enjoy serving on teams, which means we should consider our heart when we do so. Do we serve out of a place of humility, filling in where help is needed, with a reasonable self assessment of our gifts, making sure we are a blessing to be around? The enemy of humility is pride - do you see this creeping in anywhere in your service (either through duty or comparison?).

Rounding Off

Depending how the discussion has gone, you could consider praying for some of the following:

- Are there people who respond to point 3 (buried something God has given them) - offer to pray with them?
- Are there people who responded to pride creeping in (point 5) - offer to pray with them that they find joy in service, contentment in the measure that God has given them (note in the parable of talents a different measure was given to each) and security knowing that they are serving Jesus, the King of Kings.

[Note to Life Group leader and person leading this section] Other things may have been exposed during the discussion - be alert to the Holy Spirit's guidance and be willing to pray for those, especially if people have been hurt in previous service, or feel there are barriers to them being able to serve - including sin, inequality, physical or mental illness, unemployment, time pressures, expectations....etc. Some of these may need specific follow-up, or not be appropriate to discuss further in a group setting, so please be willing to engage further or speak to the pastoral team if extra support is needed.