

Leading with a Servant's Heart

Activity:	Duration
Dinner and Fellowship	45 Minutes
Teach lesson on "Servant Leadership – The Path from Success to Significance."	75 Minutes
Discussion of the book <i>Spiritual Leadership</i> – with Application Guide	75 Minutes
Sharing of "Intentional Acts of Service"	15 Minutes
Prayer Time	30 Minutes

Leader Notes:

1. The big idea this month is to show that the path from success to significance is servant leadership. So the objective is to communicate and challenge the men to cultivate a servant's heart and integrate that into a leadership lifestyle.
2. There are a few things (if any) about *servant* leadership that are too complicated to quickly and easily understand. However, consistently living a life as a servant leader is a significant challenge. Keep this in mind as you teach/discuss the **Lesson**, The Path from Success to Significance. Don't let the guys nod in easy agreement, keep them focused on how well they live what they know.
3. When discussing Sanders' book *Spiritual Leadership*, with the **Application Guide**, keep the discussion as personal and challenging as possible. As always, don't feel compelled to answer all the questions; hit the ones most relevant to your group that night. But, as always, the guys should have completed all the questions ahead of time.
4. Take time to have each of the men share at least one Intentional Act of Service they did in the last month.
5. Pray for the servant heart of Christ as a leader in the prayer time.
6. **Assignment for Special Project in Month 10:** Each guy will select a biography (see list) of a great leader and give a brief presentation to the group. See specific instructions in Month 10 materials.
7. There isn't a book to hand out this month. Instead, the biography they choose will be their book in Month 10.

Lesson

Servant Leadership

The Path from Success to Significance

I. There is a big difference between enduring through the leadership demands of life and leaving a joyful legacy.

A. Survival

1. You live day to day without a **plan** and without focus.
2. You are highly **reactionary** and achieve little results.
3. You are often caught in the tyranny of the urgent.
4. Life is not much fun, and key relationships are at risk.
5. You feel frustrated and personal **insecurities** are evident.

B. Success

1. You gain momentum, and things begin to land in your favor.
2. You realize measurable **productivity**. You get desired results.
3. Some of life's **rewards** and enjoyment begin to come your way.
4. You will likely experience a **false** sense of security.
5. There is a sense of **inner** unrest.

You are tired more than energized. You desire "something" deeper — something with more meaning- but are unsure how to get there.

The pathway from success to significance is a servant's heart.

C. Significance

1. You know who you are, and you are **secure** in Christ.
2. You experience a deep sense of personal peace.
3. You possess a clear sense of **purpose**.
4. Your passion level runs deep, and your focus is strong.
5. You experience a profound sense of **meaning** and fulfillment
6. Your constellation of relationships is flourishing.
7. You see abundant **fruit** as a result of your life and leadership.

II. Characteristics of a Servant Leader

A. A servant leader is **self-led** and attentive to character issues.

- Maturity
- Authenticity
- Humility
- Responsible
- Initiative
- Honesty
- Discipline

When any of the above breakdowns, life becomes all about you.

B. A servant leader puts others ahead of his own agenda.

Easy to say, difficult to live.

- **Sensitivity** to other's needs
Be aware of what's happening around you, and show concern. Is the Holy Spirit prompting you to do something?

Insert illustration

- **Availability** to other's needs

Do you make room for others?

How deep is your desire to meet others' needs and see *their life* changed?

³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:3–4

The issue is heart.

C. A servant leader is **confident** in his own identity.

"The remarkable thing is that we really love our neighbors as ourselves; we do unto others as we do unto ourselves. We hate others when we hate ourselves. We are tolerant toward others when we tolerate ourselves. We forgive others when we forgive ourselves. It is not love of self but hatred of self which is at the root of the troubles that afflict our world."

Eric Hoffer

We must see ourselves just as God sees us, nothing more and nothing less.

³*For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Romans 12:3*

God does not love us because we are valuable; we are valuable because He loves us.

The truth is, we can't serve others if we ourselves are too caught up in being served.

D. Servant leaders understand how to **integrate** servanthood and leadership.

"Yes, you lead by serving, but the major expression of your service is your leadership."

Fred Smith

"Take, for example, Lee Iacocca, a great leader. He is the servant of Chrysler Corporation, but he doesn't ask the assembly line workers to decide where the company should go. He may solicit opinions, but Lee Iacocca doesn't ask the man on the machine to do anything except run the machine and run it well — and have faith in the company. Iacocca's servanthood is expressed by his leadership. If he were to quit leading, he would no longer be a trustworthy servant of Chrysler."

Fred Smith, Learning to Lead

We are willing to do anything but wisely serve by leading.

E. A servant leader is a mature listener.

One of the greatest gifts you can give anyone today is the gift of loving listening.

People are so intensely rushed today...listening is nearly a lost art.

Who is the best listener you know? What makes you say that?

We've long known that the power and importance of touch listening is equally important.

- Listening communicates **care** and concern

- Listening communicates that you **value** the person
- Listening communicates the **love** of God

F. A servant leader has a generous spirit.

- Giving is at the heart of servanthood.
- Giving is the **true test** of a servant.
- Giving according to God's heart is evidenced by **joy**.
It doesn't bug you that people treat you like a servant.
- Giving ultimately is following the example of Jesus.

G. A servant leader is willing to give up his rights.

- The right to put yourself first. Philippians 2:3–4
- The right to complain. Philippians 2:14, I Thessalonians 5:18
- The right to do whatever feels good. Galatians 5:16–17
- The right to hold a grudge. Colossians 3:13
- The right to live by our own rules. John 14:23–24
- The right to understand God's plan before we obey. Hebrews 11:8
- The right to be honored and served. Mark 10:42–45
- The right to spend money any way we please. Matthew 5:11
- The right to popularity. Matthew 5:11
- The right to personal revenge. Romans 12:19–20

Which of these "rights" is most difficult for you to surrender?

H. A servant leader **forgives** easily and quickly.

³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

The leader is responsible for setting the example, no matter the circumstances.

Insert illustration

An unforgiving heart cannot lead with the love of God.

I. A servant leader is not position-conscious.

Tell a story of a servant leader.

- Non-servants reach for **titles**
- Servants reach for **towels**

¹It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. ²The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; John 13:1–3

In a dramatic act of washing his disciples' feet — including Judas, John sees Jesus' love still trying to reach the traitor.

There is more in the background of this passage than even John himself tells us. If we turn to Luke's account of the last meal together, we find the disappointing circumstance:

"And there was a strife amongst them which of them should be accounted the greatest." Luke 22:24

Even at the last meal together, within sight of the cross, the disciples were still arguing about matters of precedence and prestige. This argument may well have caused Jesus to respond as He did.

The roads of Palestine were quite unfinished and unclean, nothing like you and I would be accustomed to. In dry weather, they were hot and inches deep with dust. In rainy weather, they were up to their ankles in mud. They wore sandals. You get the idea. Because of this, there were always water pots at the door of a house and a servant with a towel to wash the feet of guests as they entered.

Jesus' little band of friends had no servants to wash anyone's feet. The duties that servants would perform in wealthier circles would have to be shared by the disciples. But they got themselves in such a competitive state of pride that not one of them would accept the duty of being responsible for seeing that the water and the towels were there to wash the feet of the company as they came in.

Jesus saw it, and Jesus assumed the servant's role.

⁴so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. John 13:4–5

In the hour of darkness Jesus thinks of others instead of Himself.

Servanthood exposes pride.

Insert illustration

⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"
⁷Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." ⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" John 13:6–9

Peter is humble enough to see the incongruity of Christ's actions yet proud enough to dictate to his Master.

Peter knows that if Jesus will do this, then he might have to.

Insert illustration

- Non-servants love **power**
- Servants love **people**
- Non-servants find joy in **fame**
- Servants find joy in **fruit**

III. **Practical Application of Servant Leadership through the Local Church**

The church is not the only place to serve, but it's a great place to serve. Christ gave us the model and method by which to live out the Great Commission. It is our opportunity to live life so that we make a difference for eternity.

A. Support your leader.

- Give your leader permission to dream big dreams.
- Give your leader permission to **be him/herself**.
- Give your leader permission to **make mistakes**.

B. Make a commitment to **pray** for your church.

Colossians 4:2 "Devote yourselves to prayer"...

You can use this as a list for prayer.

- Pray for people who are far from God to trust Christ as Savior.
- Pray for God's favor and His power through the Holy Spirit.
- Pray for a spirit of love and unity.
- Pray for a maturing of the body of Christ.
- Pray for the leaders in the church.

C. Devote yourself to a spirit of servant leadership that results in life change.

Questions to ask the group.

- Do you believe you have the **heart** of a servant?
- Who, among those close to you, would say you have a servant's heart as a leader?
- Are you leading/serving in your area of passion and giftedness?

Spiritual gifts — Romans 12, I Corinthians 12

Pastor is coach — Ephesians 4:11–12

You are not helping the pastor(s) do their ministry; they are helping you do yours.

- Are you producing **solutions**?
- Whose **life** are you impacting? (In the gym, Coffee Shop, Golf)

Not just who's competency am I advancing, but who is actually changing as a person — growing spiritually and in life competency. This is a life of significance.

Application Guide Spiritual Leadership

J. Oswald Sanders

Chapter One An Honorable Ambition

1. Do you seek leadership, or does leadership seek you? (There is a thin line between the two.) How do you answer this personally? How do you think it should be?

2. If it's true that true greatness comes from giving yourself away in service to others (Mark 10:42–44), how do you integrate this with your concept of leadership?

Chapter Two The Search for Leaders

1. No answer is needed here; instead, make this quote your meditation and prayer.

"The road to spiritual authority and leadership"...

Is not won by promotion, but by many prayers and tears. It is attained by confession of sin, and much heart-searching and humbling before God; by self-surrender, a courageous sacrifice of every idol, a bold uncomplaining embrace of the cross, and by an eternal, unfaltering looking unto Jesus crucified. It is not gained by seeking great things for ourselves, but like Paul, by counting those things that are gain to us as loss for Christ. This is a great price, but it must be paid by the leader who would not be merely a nominal but a real spiritual leader of men, a leader whose power is recognized and felt in heaven, on earth, and in hell.

Samuel Brengle, Salvation Army

Chapter Six Insights on Leadership from Paul

1. I Timothy is a classic section of scripture on the qualifications for leadership. Reflect again through the categories Sanders offers and make brief notes on where you excel and where you need improvement.

- Social Qualifications
- Moral Qualifications
- Mental Qualifications
- Personality Qualifications
- Domestic Qualifications
- Maturity

Chapter Seven Insights on Leadership from Peter

Great chapter; just enjoy, no questions.

Chapters Eight and Nine Essential Qualities of Leadership

These chapters are two of the best; read them thoroughly. You do not have to give any answers, *but you are to find someone to answer these questions about you.* You can select anyone. You can choose an employee, a teenage child of your own, someone you mentor, or even your spouse.

1. Here's how this will work. First, the person you select reads both chapters and then jots down a few brief comments about you and your leadership under each category.

- Discipline
- Vision and Inspirational Power
- Wisdom
- Decision-making
- Courage
- Humility
- Integrity and Sincerity
- Humor
- Anger (self-control)

- Patience
- Friendship
- Tact and Diplomacy

Chapter Ten Above All Else

1. Are you a spirit-filled leader? How do you know? Describe the evidence.

Chapter Eleven Prayer and Leadership

Another great chapter...since we have spent time on this topic in month two, just read and soak in the truth of this chapter — no questions.

Chapter Twelve A Leader and Time

1. William James said that the best use of one's life is to spend it on something that will outlast it. What do you believe will outlast you, resulting from your life on earth? (Reflect on your purpose statement)

Chapter Thirteen The Leader and Reading

Well, enough said ... keep on reading!

Chapter Fourteen Improving Leadership

1. How do you keep your spiritual life/spiritual leadership at a boiling point?

Chapter Fifteen The Cost of Leadership

1. Choose one of the following categories and briefly describe how you have paid the price as a leader.
 - Loneliness
 - Fatigue
 - Criticism
 - Rejection
 - Pressure and Perplexity

Chapter Sixteen The Responsibilities of Leadership

Edward White Benson (1829–1896) The Archbishop of Canterbury offers us a great list to reflect upon of the responsibilities of a leader. Read and Reflect. No need to write your answer, but marking the book is a good idea.

Chapter Seventeen Tests of Leadership

1. Which is your greatest leadership "test"? Why?

- Compromise
- Ambition
- The impossible situation
- Failure
- Jealousy

Chapter Eighteen The Art of Delegation

1. Do you believe you delegate well? Why/Why not?

Chapters Nineteen and Twenty Replacing/Reproducing Leaders

1. Do you have an apprentice leader you are investing in? Who? What are you doing?

Chapter Twenty-one The Perils of Leadership

Chapter Twenty-two The Leader Nehemiah

Two great chapters; read and reflect. Enjoy and soak up the good stuff!

(No questions to answer.)