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Series: Week 9
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THE ESSENTIAL PRACTICE OF SERVICE

God takes the Practice of Service seriously. He does not want loud songs, flashy words. He wants to see the results of grateful hearts overflowing the love received out into the world. (Amos 2:21-24, Isaiah 58:1-12)

The Essential Practice of Service:

“Practically ministering to those in need, in ways that deliver **Help, Hope, and Healing.**”

Help

- Addressing of the Immediate Concerns* (hunger, danger, isolation, poverty, illness, etc.)
- Does not demoralize, or disempower, but instead protects dignity and models direction.

Jesus' Example:

- Matthew 14:13-21 – Jesus has compassion on the crowd, heals them, then feeds the 5,000.
- Matthew 8:1-4 – Jesus is willing to touch and heal a man with leprosy, instructs him on next steps to take.

Our Challenge:

- James 1:22-27 – Don't just hear what is right, go and do it. Respond to God's heart for the vulnerable by willingly choosing to care for their needs.
- Matthew 6:1-4 – Serve without the need for public recognition, simply knowing that the person will be blessed, and God will be glorified.

Consider:

- Who has shown up with help in a time of need for you? Is it ever difficult for you to receive help? Why?
- What opportunities to help care for practical needs are you aware of? ***Are you willing? (Matt. 8:2-3)***

Hope

- Illuminating New Perspectives* (short-term to long-term planning, surface-level reacting to heart-level reflecting)
- Invites people to see outside of their present circumstances, to better days ahead, and even eternal peace.

Jesus' Example:

- John 5:1-15 – Crippled man at the Bethesda pool is healed, then instructed to see and deal with his sin.
- Mark 2:1-12 – Paralyzed man, lowered through the roof, is healed, as well as hearing that his sins can be forgiven.

Our Challenge:

- Romans 15:13 – May the hope, joy, and peace we have received from God fill us up to overflowing, naturally inviting those in need to experience it as well.
- Matthew 5:13-16 – Our acts of service should be a light that points the world towards the love of God.

Consider:

- The next time that you have the opportunity to serve someone, what might be some ways that you could point them towards the truth and love found in Jesus? (*Pray with them, share your story with them, invite them into deeper community*).

Healing

- A New Identity Embraced* (from weak to strong, from lost to found, from dead to alive, etc.)
- Confident in the story of personal transformation, and able to share it with others in need.

Jesus' Example:

- John 9:1-34 – Blind man can see, preaches to the Pharisees about Jesus' identity.
- Mark 5:1-20 – Demon-possessed man is freed, becomes a missionary and is sent back into his hometown.

Our Challenge:

- 2 Cor. 5:16-17 – Invite others to see themselves as “New Creations” in Christ, with the opportunity to bless others with the same news!
- Philippians 3:17-21 – Learn from the wisdom of others who have been healed, and pattern your life as those living as Helped, Hopeful, and Healed “Citizens of Heaven!”

Consider:

- How would you identify yourself? Do you believe that because of the finished work of Jesus offered as a free gift to you, that you can be a “New Creation,” Forgiven, Adopted, Spirit-Empowered, “Citizen of Heaven”?
- Do you have a unique language based on your healed experience? Who has He called you to invite along on this journey of healing and transformation?