



# PRACTICING Jesus

SERMON  
STUDY

11.24.2024

## Leader Corner

Practicing Jesus

Service

John 13:1-17, 34-35

“Actions speak louder than words.” No doubt we’ve heard this phrase uttered in multiple contexts. The truth remains, however, that simple acts of love can have enormous impact on transforming someone’s life. Since we can never predict the impact of a simple act of service, each moment is ripe with opportunity to display the radically transformative love of Jesus. However big or small that opportunity may be, it’s imperative for apprentices of Jesus to create space and capacity to be aware and available. This week we learn about the practice of service so that we may be people who serve others rather than people who serve ourselves.

**Main Idea:** Apprentices of Jesus are called to intentionally serve others, especially those in need.

**Main Practice:** Grow your everyday capacity to love and serve one another through specific actions.

**Main Teaching:** John 13:1-17, 34-35

A few more housekeeping items for this week:

- **Pro Tip:** We love for groups to serve together within our community. We call it living on mission. There are specific opportunities for your group centered around sponsoring special needs families or foster care families as well as serving together at the Community Center.
- As is our rhythm for this study, leave ample time to do the “with Practice” section of this guide and the “Practice” section of your journal.
- One of the main purposes for Practicing Jesus is to transform our lives by doing the things Jesus did. One of the main outcomes for this study is to craft “A Rule of Life,” a regular rhythm of practices to more thoroughly enjoy this journey with Jesus.
- Hopefully, you’ve heard about the Christmas Offering. Discuss as a group how you will approach this opportunity to give.

### As You Begin Your Group Time:

What is an ongoing “take away” from last week’s training on Sabbath? How will you / your household continue this practice?

## Connect with Prayer

Have someone pray the following over the group:

*Father, you have gifted us with unique skills to serve one another with humility and love. May we cheerfully give of ourselves to expand your kingdom. May we develop a servant heart not just to serve during this study but as a daily rhythm in our everyday lives. We want to be used wherever you lead us. May others see you in our service and may that draw them closer to you. May our actions inspire others to serve one another. We want to take your lead and step out of our comfort zone to love our church, neighbors, and community. Amen*

## with Praise

As a group listen to the words of “Do Something” by Matthew West. Reflect on where or how God is calling you to serve.

## with Principle

"And here's the truth: Not only does the practice of service have the potential to mend our fractured world, it has the power to mend us." (Practicing the Way, page 189)

1. What are some ways you have served with people or at places in our church or community? How did that shape you as a person?
2. Review and discuss any notes or takeaways in the "Learn" or "Listen" sections of your journal.
3. Read together John 13:1-17, 34-35.
  - a. Look at the actions of Jesus. What do we learn about his heart and character?
  - b. What instructions does he give his apprentices?
  - c. What does "unselfish concern for one another" actually look like? How have you received that concern from someone?
4. Jesus is serious about his apprentices living out an attitude of service. Read Matthew 16:24-26 in the NLT or AMP version.
  - a. What does Jesus call his apprentices to do in their everyday lives?
  - b. How does dying to self actually bring more life?"

## with Practice

Apprentices of Jesus think and act differently. Each day is full of opportunities to demonstrate the love of Jesus that we know to be true. This week's practice is to grow your everyday capacity to love and serve one another through specific actions.

As a group, **reflect** and **journal** through the following prompts. Then **discuss** as a group how you will train this week. Finally, **pray** over one another for boldness to act.

**Start** with your attitude.

What thoughts, behaviors, or lifestyle choices are currently blocking your desire and capacity to serve others?

**Identify** your resources.

What gifts, talents, influences, or resources do you have?

How can you use these resources to be a blessing to someone else?

**Consider** your current opportunities.

Where and with whom are you currently investing yourself in service to others?

*Your family* - How can you best serve your family?

*Your neighborhood* - Who are some people on your street that might need some attention or care?

*Your friend group* - How can you be an intentional friend?

*Your community* - Who are those with the greatest need?

*Your church* - What area of ministry can you serve in?

**Activate** your serve.

How is Jesus leading you / your small group toward intentionally and actively serving people around you?

**A few ways to serve together:**

- Adopt a neighborhood family.
- Offering rides to a neighbor or friend in need of transportation.
- Volunteer to serve a meal weekly or monthly at Safe Harbor Shelter or Home Sweet Home.
- Serve with ECC Food Pantry or Community Center.
- Sponsor a Special Needs or Foster Care Family.

**This Week's Training: Intentional Acts of Kindness**

At the beginning of each day, prayerfully consider someone you and/or your household could be intentionally kind and generous to. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what act could express that kindness and meet the needs of that person. As you pray for intentional opportunities, you are training yourself to increase your awareness of others and your capacity to demonstrate Jesus' love.

\*(Practice adapted from the "The Art of Missional Spirituality," Jeremy and Monica Chambers)

## For Further Study

Read Matthew 25

Take a Spiritual Gifts Assessment.

Watch and study the Bible Project Video - Justice