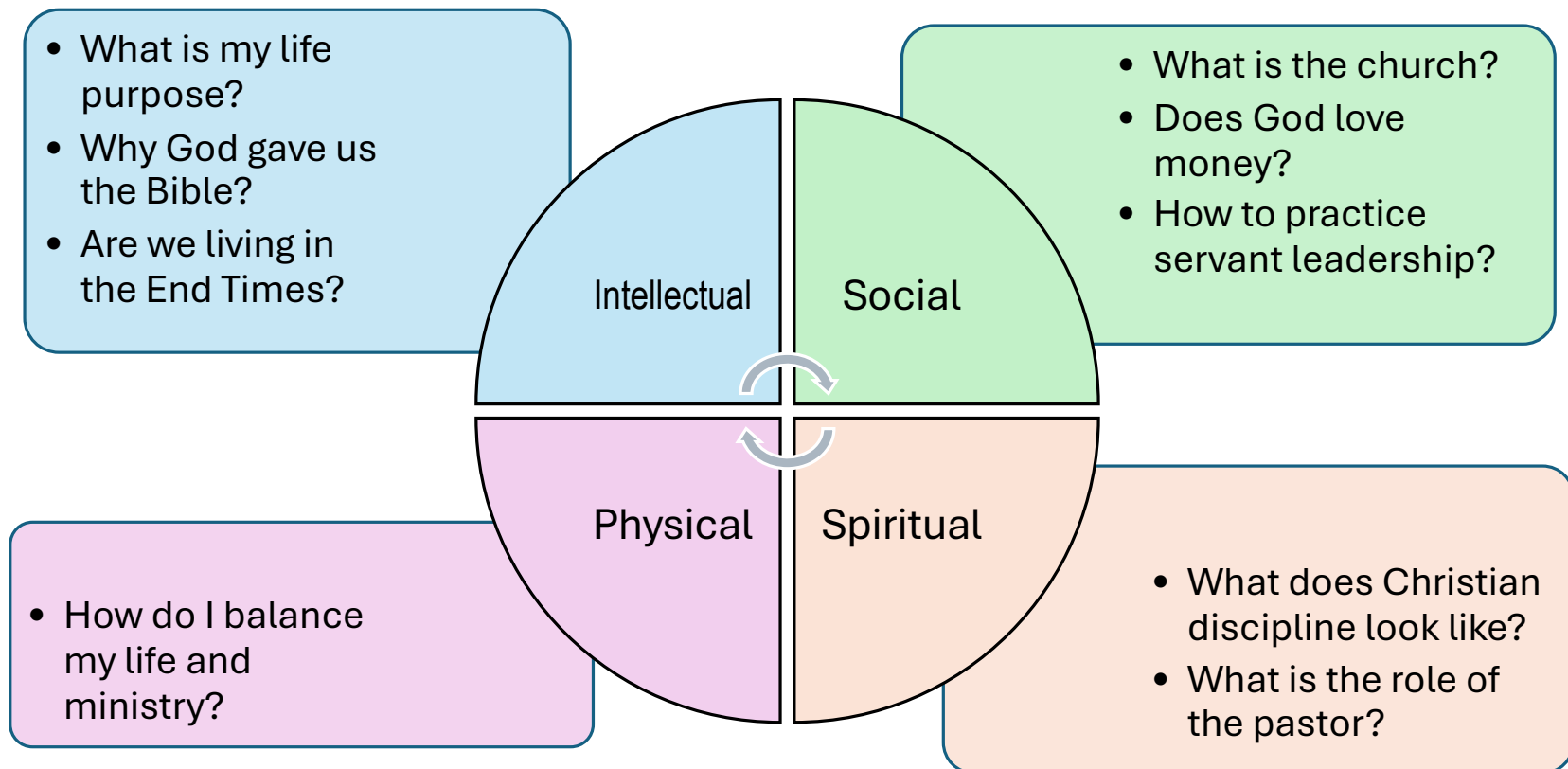




Holistic Growth For Ministry Impact

Session 6
Servant Leadership

Session Topics



Biblical Foundation of Servant Leadership

- Servant leadership
 - Servant leadership is not a modern management theory but a core theological principle rooted in God's nature and covenant with humanity.
- Christ command
 - Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:43-45).
- The Kenosis (self-emptying) model
 - The act of Christ taking on a human nature with all of its limitations, except with no sin.
 - Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God... rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant...he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:6-8).
- OT contexts
 - Leadership in the Old Testament was often characterized by prophetic service and shepherding (e.g., Moses, David), setting the precedent of leading through care and covenant faithfulness.

Why Servant Leadership Matters

- A vital, counter-cultural corrective to the pressures of modern ministry.
 - Servant leadership offers a firewall against the temptation to use the pulpit for personal gain, fame, or control. It re-centers the pastor's role as steward, not CEO.
- Addresses Church Skepticism:
 - Many young people and non-believers are wary of hierarchical, institutional power. A visible commitment to selfless service provides authentic witness and builds relational credibility.
- Promotes Sustainable Ministry:
 - Focusing on the needs of the congregation and empowering others (rather than carrying the entire burden) prevents burnout and fosters a shared sense of mission and ownership among the laity.

Servant Leadership is Characterized By

- Persuasion over coercion
- Sustaining spirit over ego
- Foresight over control
- Listening over directing
- Healing over judgment



Self-serving Leadership	Servant Leadership
Objective is to be served	Objective is to serve
Seeks 1st to be understood, then to understand	Seeks 1st to understand, then to be understood
Sees and treat others as inferior	Sees and treats others with respect
Rejects input	Encourages input
Takes credit	Shares credit
Uses expediency as main criteria for action	Uses moral principles as main criteria for action
Is accountable only to superiors	Is accountable to God and others
Clings to power and position	Will develop others to be more capable

10 Servant Leadership Attributes

- Listening
 - Only a true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first.
- Empathy
 - Men grow taller when those who lead them emphasize, and when they are accepted for who they are.
- Healing (to make whole)
 - The servant leader recognizes the shared human desire to find wholeness in oneself and support it in others.
- Awareness
 - Self-awareness (recognizing your own strengths, weaknesses, emotions, and values) and awareness of your team and environment.

- Persuasion
 - Building group consensus through gentle but clear and persistent persuasion and does not exert group compliance through position power.
- Conceptualization
 - The servant leader can conceive solutions to problems that do not currently exist.
- Foresight
 - Foresight is a better than average guess about what is going to happen when in the future.
- Stewardship
 - Concerned not only for the individual followers in the organization, but also the organization as a whole.
- Commitment to the growth of people
 - A demonstrated appreciation and encouragement of others.
- Building community

Jesus Christ: The Ultimate Servant Leader

- Jesus did not just teach servant leadership
 - He lived it perfectly. Highlight these powerful examples:
- Washing Feet (John 13:1-17): Visual example
 - By performing the task of the lowest slave, Jesus showed that no task is beneath a leader, and true authority is earned through humility and practical care.
- Prioritizing the Marginalized
 - Jesus consistently spent time with those deemed socially, morally, or economically insignificant (tax collectors, Samaritans, the sick).
 - His leadership was focused on lifting the lowliest rather than networking with the powerful.
- Ultimate Sacrifice
 - His willingness to give his life as a ransom is the ultimate act of service, defining spiritual leadership as self-giving love (agápe) that places the needs of others above self-preservation.
 - Do this in remembrance of me.

Applying Servant Leadership in Church Ministry

- Empowerment:
 - Shift from a top-down model where the pastor dictates, to a bottom-up model where the pastor identifies, equips, and releases lay leaders to minister using their gifts.
- Vision Casting (Not Command)
 - Instead of issuing orders, involve the congregation in discerning God's vision for the church. Lead through compelling shared purpose and clear communication.
- Active Shepherding:
 - Prioritize pastoral care (visiting the sick, counseling, intentional listening) over purely administrative tasks. Your calendar should reflect your commitment to serving people, not just programs.
- Modeling Vulnerability:
 - Be honest and authentic about your own faith struggles and limitations. A servant leader doesn't pretend to be perfect; they model dependence on Christ.
- Develop Successors:
 - The ultimate act of servant leadership is investing in the next generation of leaders, ensuring the health of the ministry continues beyond your tenure.

Servant Leadership Self-Assessment

1. Do I consistently prioritize listening to the needs, concerns, and ideas of my team/congregation before offering my own solutions or directions?
2. Am I willing to take on the most menial or difficult tasks (the "foot-washing" jobs) to meet a core need, demonstrating that no work is beneath me?
3. Do I actively look for opportunities to develop and empower others, even if it means delegating power or potentially making myself less central to the ministry?
4. Is my primary motivation to build the people, or is it to build the program/institution/my personal reputation?
5. Do I lead through persuasion and influence (explaining the "why") rather than relying on my formal title or positional authority to demand compliance?

6. Do I handle conflict with empathy and a desire for healing and reconciliation, rather than focusing only on being right or asserting control?
7. Am I committed to my own ongoing spiritual and professional growth, understanding that I cannot serve others effectively if I am not developing myself?
8. Do I serve as a responsible steward of the resources (time, talent, money) entrusted to me, always acting in the best long-term interest of the whole ministry?
9. Do I consistently hold myself accountable to the same, or higher, ethical and behavioral standards that I set for my team or congregation?
10. When decisions are made, do the people I lead feel more whole, valued, and more capable afterward, or do they feel diminished or drained?