

Created with Purpose Pt. 2: To Serve God

Discussion Notes— April 19, 2026

1. What's one job, chore, or task you actually enjoy doing for other people—even if it's small or unglamorous?

God has uniquely designed each person with gifts, talents, and personalities. When we invite Jesus into our lives, we receive spiritual gifts meant to be used for others. Too often we excuse ourselves from serving with thoughts like “I don't have time” or “I don't have anything to offer,” but the truth is that God doesn't call the already-equipped, He equips the called. The world tells us that success, career, and influence are what give life meaning, but Scripture points us to something deeper: significance. Significance is found not in what we accumulate, but in what we give away through a servant's heart. Ultimately, we are saved to serve and blessed to be a blessing. Every act of faithful service, no matter how small, is seen by God and will be rewarded for eternity.

Read 1 Peter 4:10–11

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Peter writes to a scattered, struggling church and reminds them that their gifts aren't just personal blessings; they're given for the benefit of everyone around them. The phrase “faithful stewards” is significant: a steward manages something that belongs to someone else. Our gifts aren't really ours to hoard. They belong to God, and we're entrusted with them for His purposes.

2. What excuses have you used (or heard others use) to avoid serving, and what do you think is usually behind them?

Read Romans 12:6–8

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Paul lists a wide range of gifts here and notably, none of them require a stage or a title. Serving, encouraging, giving generously, showing mercy cheerfully; these are the quiet, everyday expressions of a servant's heart. This passage pushes back against the idea that only certain people with certain abilities are “qualified” to contribute. Everyone has a role, and every role matters.

3. When you think about your own gifts or strengths, even ones you might not consider “spiritual”, where do you see an opportunity to use them in serving others right now?

Read Galatians 5:13

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

Paul reframes freedom in a surprising way here. We often think of freedom as the right to do whatever we want but Paul says true freedom is the ability to choose love and service over self-interest. Humility isn't weakness; it's the posture that makes genuine community possible.

Serving one another isn't a burden placed on us. It's actually the fullest expression of the freedom we've been given.

4. How do you think a church community changes when more people embrace a servant's heart? What have you personally experienced or witnessed when that kind of culture is present?

Read Matthew 25:19-21

"Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'"

This is one of the most longed-for phrases in all of Scripture and it's spoken over someone who was faithful with what seemed like very little. The master doesn't say "well done, talented servant" or "well done, successful servant." He says faithful. God isn't measuring the size of what we do. He's watching whether we show up, again and again, with a willing heart.

5. What is one specific way you can step into serving; in your church, your home, or your community, this week?

Prayer Points

- For hearts to be freed from pride, excuses, and fear that keep us from serving
- For eyes to see the needs around us and the courage to meet them
- For faithfulness in the small things, trusting that God sees and rewards every act of service done in His name

Deeper Dive: Dorcas — A Life That Spoke Without Words

Dorcas, also called Tabitha, rarely gets the attention she deserves in Scripture. She wasn't a prophet, an apostle, or a teacher. She sewed. She cooked. She showed up for the widows and the forgotten in her community with consistent, practical love that was not to be seen, not to be praised, but simply because the need was there and she had something to give. And yet when she died, the grief was so deep and the impact so undeniable that Peter was called from a neighboring town and God raised her back to life. Her story is a quiet but powerful reminder that service done in hiddenness and humility is never invisible to God, even when it goes unnoticed by everyone around us.

Read Acts 9:36–42

“Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, “Please come to us without delay.” So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then, calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.”

The detail that stands out here is what the widows bring to Peter; not words, not arguments for why Dorcas deserved to be raised. They bring the clothing she made. Her work was her testimony. She had no platform, no title, and seemingly no awareness that her service was extraordinary. She simply used what she had, for the people in front of her, over and over again and her community was transformed by it.

Read John 13:3–7

“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?” Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.””

What makes this passage so striking is the setup. John is deliberate to tell us that Jesus knew exactly who He was and where He was going and then He picked up a towel. Greatness, in the kingdom of God, doesn't exempt you from the lowest work. It draws you toward it. Dorcas understood this intuitively. She didn't wait for a more dignified assignment. She served in the way that was needed, with the gifts she had, without fanfare mirroring the posture of Jesus Himself.

1 Corinthians 12:4–7, 14-20

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good... For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the

ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

Paul's point here is both freeing and sobering. Every gift, whether it looks like preaching or sewing, leading or organizing, teaching or quietly meeting needs, comes from the same Spirit and serves the same purpose: the common good. God didn't accidentally place you where you are with the gifts you have. Dorcas's gift of practical service wasn't a lesser version of a more important gift. It was exactly what her community needed, placed there on purpose by God.

Discussion Questions

1. Dorcas served quietly and without any apparent desire for recognition yet her impact was impossible to ignore. What do you think is the difference between serving to be seen and serving from a place of genuine love? How can you tell the difference in your own heart?
2. Jesus washed feet from a place of total security in who He was. How does knowing your identity in Christ free you from needing recognition for the ways you serve?
3. Paul says gifts are given "for the common good" and not for personal fulfillment or status. How does that reframe the way you think about discovering and using your own gifts?