
SERVICE THAT BRINGS A SMILE

STUDY NOTES FOR CARE GROUPS - (1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-26)

The following are resource questions that you can use with your Care Group for discussion. They are based on the sermon preached on Sunday, March 7, 2010, by Pastor Arnold Wong at the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The sermon is available online at <http://www.gracebap.org.sg/worship/series.html>.

March 7, 2010

Introduction: The last week we studied that the basis of service is by understanding that we have been saved through faith and by grace alone (1 Corinthians 15:1-10) less we give the flesh ground to boast of our achievements (Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 2:15-17). We discovered the relevance of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1-11) and that God has given generously, all kinds of gifts with the purpose of building up the Church and not so much for self edification—a common misunderstanding. The process of discovering, developing and deploying our gifts is a life long journey for every believer. We emphasised the need for every believer to encourage rather than criticise the wonderful gifts given to each one of us.

In this third sermon in the series on **SERVICE**, we begin by asking “*What are the ingredients that make our service bring a smile to our Lord?*” Service can be dry. We may end up doing services that bring a frown instead, falling into Satan’s snare and bringing much bitterness and disunity. As you study the scripture below, ponder over the KEY THEME: “Service That Brings a Smile”

God Unites Believers Together Spiritually

1 Corinthians 12:12-13: *The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

Question:

1. Why did Paul use the body as an analogy?
2. Though we are different, what is one thing we have in common?

God Unites Believers Together Differently

1 Corinthians 12:14-19: *Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be?*

Question:

3. Discuss the statement “Unity without Uniformity” and why being different is good and diversity of opinions are essential in developing a forward-looking church. Can diversity lead to disunity?

God Unites Believers Together Essentially

1 Corinthians 12:20-26 *As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.*

Question:

4. Relationship needs nurturing and needs to be guarded against: a) Pride and jealousy; b) Self importance and c) Self sufficiency. Share from your personal experience some events in your life or the church that are the related to the three points.
5. In the context of GBC which ministry or which age group are the weakest presently? How do we honour the weakest? Share some practical ways.

Applications

"In Ephesians, the church is described as a body, a household, and a mystery. This imagery points to the dynamic nature of people joined together by a common redemption, purpose, future, and family. Building effective churches requires more than "buildings, bodies, and bucks." It necessitates drilling deep into God's Word to discover His intentions and expectations." Pete Briscoe, "BUILDING A GOD-HONORING CHURCH"

It is natural for us to highlight and honour those that are in the forefront and miss out completely those unseen servants. Encourage your CG to pray: "Lord cause our eyes to be open to see how we can honour those unseen servants; the quiet ones, the elderly, the shy teenager, those serving while we worship and those who for some reason remain most of the time at home. It is not natural for us to serve with a smile. Teach us to be sensitive so that we can make You smile in all our services."