



Session 1: True servanthood

1-10 MAR

ICEBREAKER

What are the differences between a football fan who travels hundreds of miles to support his team in the depths of winter and an armchair fan following his team on TV?

KEY THOUGHT

We are called not just to believe in Christ but to follow His example and teachings in our daily lives. How can we be sure we are truly His followers, that we have committed ourselves to being 'apprentices' of our Master?

One way is to look at ten characteristics which Jesus displayed and see if they are evident in our lives also.

The first test of whether we are a true follower of Christ is if we, like Him, demonstrate the characteristics of a servant. Later sessions will look at the other nine characteristics.

KEY VERSE

"Come, follow me," Jesus said ...' Matthew 4:19
'But I am among you as one who serves.'
Luke 22:27

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Identify the different voices that clamour for our attention.
2. Who our leader is reveals important things about us. Why?

3. Contrast the leadership of Jesus and that of a politician.
4. Contrast a spectator believer and a participating follower.
5. Is questioning God ever right?
6. How is the twenty-first century similar to the first century?
7. Why is the modern cult of celebrity antithetical to authentic Christianity?
8. Why must leaders have a servant's heart?
9. Can a humble person be an effective leader?
10. What is the modern equivalent of washing feet?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'... he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet ...' John 13:5

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray for God to give you the strength to be a true follower of Christ.
- Ask God to show you the importance of servanthood in His kingdom and show you people you could serve in His name.

Session 2: Forgiveness

11-15 MAR

ICEBREAKER

There are so many special days on which we send cards, so should there be a national 'Forgiveness Day' when we send apology and forgiveness cards?

KEY THOUGHT

Jesus readily forgave others and if we are to be His true followers, so should we.

KEY VERSE

'Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.' Ephesians 4:32

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Do you find it difficult to 'forgive and forget'?
2. Why should we love our enemies?
3. How do you deal with resentment?
4. Why is resentment like poison?
5. Is a feeling of resentment sinful?
6. Why may resentment be enjoyable and forgiveness uncomfortable?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'Jesus said, "Father forgive them ..."' Luke 23:34

PRAYER POINTER

Make a list of those God brings to your mind whom you need to forgive. For each person confess your resentment, forgive them and ask God to bless them.



Session 3: Single-mindedness

16–20 MAR

ICEBREAKER

Ask someone to perform a simple task, like telling the story of the tortoise and the hare, and then try to distract them in some way (eg phone their mobile or release a pet mouse).

KEY THOUGHT

We should be committed to single-mindedly pursuing the goal of becoming like Jesus and refuse to be distracted by self interest.

KEY VERSES

'I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me ...'
Acts 20:23–24

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Are you double-minded or are you not sure?
2. Do you tend to give up too easily?
3. Why does double-mindedness result in ineffectiveness?
4. Why is hypocrisy actually dangerous?
5. How can we avoid deception and double-mindedness?

THE EXAMPLE OF MARTHA

'But Martha was distracted ...' Luke 10:40

PRAYER POINTER

Seek God, asking Him to show you things that distract you, and to give you determination to resist them.

Session 4: Joy

21–25 MAR

ICEBREAKER

Relate an embarrassing incident.

KEY THOUGHT

Jesus knew what it was to be joyful, and so should His followers.

KEY VERSE

'... the joy of the LORD is your strength.'
Nehemiah 8:10

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Should a Christian be a comedian?
2. What is 'the joy of the LORD'?
3. How do we balance joy and reverence in Christian meetings?
4. Should we allow dancing in church?
5. What can joy protect us from?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'... Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit ...'
Luke 10:21

PRAYER POINTER

Ask God to fill you full of an inexpressible and glorious joy (1 Peter 1:8; see also Isaiah 12:1–3).



Session 5: Good confession

26–30 MAR

ICEBREAKER

Share a testimony of how God has blessed you.

KEY THOUGHT

As we follow a suffering Saviour we, like Him, may be required to share our faith and belief in God in hostile circumstances.

KEY VERSE

'But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.' 1 Peter 3:15

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Does opposition silence your Christian witness?
2. Do you tend to wrongly avoid certain people and situations?
3. What is the difference between cynicism and genuine doubt?
4. How do you deal with unfair situations?
5. How could you be more resilient in the face of opposition?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'... Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession ...'
1 Timothy 6:13

PRAYER POINTERS

- Ask God to help you be calm and faithful in the face of opposition.
- Pray for Christian brothers and sisters who suffer persecution.

Session 6: Interpreters of God

31 MAR–4 APR

ICEBREAKER

Mime a parable or Bible story for others to guess and award points to see who interprets the message most effectively.

KEY THOUGHT

All of us have a responsibility to represent the true God to those with whom we come into contact. We should endeavour to ensure that our representation of Him is a faithful interpretation and that we do not interfere with the signal He is transmitting through us.

KEY VERSE

'We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.'
2 Corinthians 5:20

DISCUSSION STARTERS

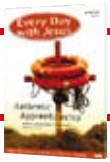
1. Are you an interpreter or interferer of Christ's message?
2. How could you more truly interpret Jesus Christ in your life?
3. How could you evangelise in the unavoidable parts of your day?
4. Do your friends and colleagues know they need the Lord?
5. What barriers do people use and how can we overcome them?

THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL

'Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.' 1 Corinthians 11:1

PRAYER POINTERS

Pray for one another that God would give you special opportunities to clearly share the message of His love with others.



Session 7: Seeing potential and being positive 5-14 APR

ICEBREAKER

• As on programmes like *Antiques Roadshow*, have you ever realised something others regarded as ordinary was actually quite valuable?

KEY THOUGHTS

Jesus did not look at people as they were, but perceived what they could become. Just as a sculptor envisages the beautiful sculpture he is going to create from an ordinary block of stone, so we must learn to do the same with people.

As followers of an omnipotent God, we should be able to generate faith and be positive in every situation.

KEY VERSES

'My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...' Galatians 4:19

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.' Romans 8:28

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How can we see and encourage potential in others?
2. How would you define spiritual maturity?
3. How can we help people see their potential?
4. Why should we avoid 'church-hopping'?

5. Is it wrong for a Christian to be logical and realistic?
6. Do your natural senses suppress your supernatural faith?
7. How could you turn your own 'negatives' to 'positives'?
8. When should we 'try, try again' and when should we stop?
9. What does the resurrection mean to our faith?
10. What potential does God see in you?
11. What may limit people achieving their full potential?

THE EXAMPLE OF DAVID

'He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skilful hands he led them.' Psalm 78:70-72

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray that we might realise our potential and that we might see and release potential in others.
- Pray that in difficult situations you may tune into God and become a positive beacon of faith in the negative darkness.

Session 8: Courage 15-19 APR

ICEBREAKER

Describe an act of courage.

KEY THOUGHT

We need to have the courage to confront issues that are wrong in our own lives and in the society in which we live.

KEY VERSE

'Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.' 1 Corinthians 16:13

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How may we compromise our faith?
2. Do you avoid confrontation or will you not answer the question?
3. How can we prevent fear controlling us?
4. Discuss the story of Polycarp.
5. How can Christ's life give us courage?

THE EXAMPLE OF CALEB AND THE MEN

'Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."

But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are."

Numbers 13:30-31

PRAYER POINTER

Pray for Christians to have the courage of their convictions to act like Jesus and speak as God's mouthpiece.



Session 9: Constant communion

20-30 APR

ICEBREAKER

How often do you use a mobile phone and what are their benefits?

KEY THOUGHT

Jesus' communion with God was something that went far beyond the daily appointment He kept with His Father. He lived in the Father's presence and was aware of Him every moment of His waking day.

KEY VERSE

'So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.'

1 Corinthians 10:31 (See also Colossians 3:17.)

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How can you be more aware of God in your daily life?
2. How beneficial is a daily Quiet Time?
3. Describe your own sense of how God has led you.
4. How is practising the presence of God different to a daily Quiet Time?
5. Discuss Ephesians 5:18.
6. Why is the morning a good time for communion with God?
7. How could you turn to God more regularly throughout the day?
8. Why may people reject their Christian faith?

9. How can we ensure commitment is permanent?
10. Does confusion distance you from God or draw you closer to Him?
11. What may distract you from following Jesus?
12. Of the ten characteristics, which is your strongest and which your weakest?
13. What has impacted you most from our studies in this issue and what do you need to change to be a more faithful follower of Jesus?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.'

John 8:29

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray for a deeper level of intimacy with God throughout the day.
- Pray that you may know the fellowship of the Holy Spirit as a real experience and not just a doctrine.
- Pray that people's weakest areas will be strengthened.
- Pray that you may follow Jesus so closely that you will inspire others to follow you and that in following you they will follow Him.