

## Small Group Study Guide -- TAKE THE NEXT STEP — Ministry

**Primary Text:** Ephesians 2:8–10

**Supporting Texts:** Mark 10:45; John 13:15, 34–35; John 21:15–17; 1 John 3:18; Matthew 25:40, 45; 1 Peter 4:11

### BIG IDEA

We are saved by grace, not by works—but we are saved for good works. Ministry is not how we earn salvation; it is how salvation shows itself.

### CONNECT

When you hear the word *ministry*, what comes to mind first—obligation, joy, fear, or opportunity? Why do you think that is?

### READ

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith... For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:8–10, ESV)

Teaching Emphasis

- Salvation is **God's gift**, not our achievement.
- Good works are not the **root** of salvation but the **fruit** of it.
- God has already prepared specific ways for His people to serve.

### DISCUSS

#### **A. Ministry Follows the Example of Jesus**

*“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...”* (Mark 10:45)

- Jesus did not merely teach servanthood—He **lived it**.
- From touching lepers to washing feet, Jesus modeled sacrificial love.

### **Discussion Questions**

- Why is it important that Jesus *showed* us how to serve, not just told us?
- How does remembering Jesus' humility reshape our view of ministry?

## **B. Ministry Makes the Love of Jesus Visible**

*“Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)*

- Love that remains only verbal is incomplete.
- God’s love was embodied in Christ—and now through His church.

### **Discussion Questions**

- What are some ways the church can unintentionally talk about love without showing it?
- Where have you seen Christ’s love made visible through service?

## **C. Ministry Is an Expression of Love for Jesus**

*“If you love me... feed my sheep.” (John 21:15–17)*

- Jesus connects loving Him directly to caring for His people.
- Our service flows from relationship, not guilt.

### **Discussion Questions**

- Why do you think Jesus tied love for Him so closely to caring for others?
- How does this protect us from serving with wrong motives?

## **D. Ministry Is Service Rendered to Christ Himself**

*“As you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:40)*

- We are not saved *by* serving, but those who are saved *will* serve.
- Serving others is one of the primary ways we serve Christ.

### **Discussion Questions**

- How does seeing service as ministry *to* Jesus change everyday acts of kindness?
- Who might be “the least of these” in our own community?

## **E. Ministry Is for God’s Glory, Not Our Own**

*“...whoever serves... by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 4:11)*

- God supplies the strength; God receives the glory.
- Ministry is never about building our reputation, but exalting Christ’s name.

## Discussion Questions

- What are some subtle ways pride can creep into serving?
- How can we intentionally point people back to Christ when we serve?

## RESPOND

- In what ways might you be tempted to separate faith from action?
- Are there areas where God may be calling you to move from observation to obedience?

## APPLY

### Personal

- Identify one gift, experience, or passion God has given you.
- Pray this week: *“Lord, where have You already prepared good works for me to walk in?”*

### Church

- Review the ministries Grace Fellowship supports.
- Talk with a pastor or leader about where you might serve—inside or outside the church.

### Prayer

- Ask God for willingness, humility, and dependence on His strength.
- Pray that your service would make Christ visible and God glorified.

## COMMISSION

Go in the name of Jesus—  
to **serve** by the strength God supplies,  
to **love** in deed and in truth,  
to **care** for the least of these, knowing you serve Christ Himself.  
May God use your hands, your feet, and your life  
so that in everything **He may be glorified through Jesus Christ. Amen.**