



SESSION 2

# CHRIST CAME WITH A MISSION

Jesus came to serve God and set us free.



# WORSHIP

## READING PLAN

Continue exploring the Book of Acts throughout this week. Use the space provided to record your thoughts and responses as you read.

### Day 1

Acts 5:1-16

### Day 2

Acts 5:17-42

### Day 3

Acts 6:1-15

### Day 4

Acts 7:1-36

### Day 5

Acts 7:37-60

### Day 6

Acts 8:1-25

### Day 7

Acts 8:26-40

## CHRIST CALLS US TO SERVE GOD

When we read through the Scriptures, we find a number of concepts and situations that were common in ancient times but are uncommon today. Think of kings, for example. As modern readers of the Bible, we can recognize the concept of a king on an intellectual level. However, in an era of democracy, it's difficult to really understand what it must have been like to live under the complete, all-powerful rule of a single person.

The same thing is true for the concept of servanthood. As modern readers, we can understand the definition of a *servant* as someone who serves others. However, we typically think of this service in terms of a job. Meaning, the servant serves his or her master for a certain period of time—8 or 10 hours each day, for example—and then “clocks out” to return home and enjoy some rest and relaxation.

In reality, servants in the ancient world were entirely dedicated to meeting the needs and wants of their masters at all times. In fact, it may help us understand things better if we think of the word *slave* instead of *servant*.

*Read the following passages of Scripture and record what they teach about life as a servant (or slave) in the ancient world.*

*Genesis 16:1-6*

*Exodus 21:20-21*

*Deuteronomy 15:12-18*

*Ephesians 6:5-9*

When we accept the call to follow Jesus as His disciples, we are servants (or slaves) of God.

In obedience, Jesus Himself came to earth in obedience and service to God. He took the form of a slave (Phil. 2:7). As disciples of Jesus, we model Him and become more like Him in every area of life (see 2 Cor. 3:18). Therefore, we serve as servants of God.

Do not believe that serving God is a part-time occupation. When we focus on our own interests throughout our day, we feel justified in pursuing our own interests and not God's each day. Again, we often treat serving God as a 9 to 5 occupation, when the examples of Jesus require a 24/7 commitment.

Our service to God must be all-encompassing:

A master having a slave tending sheep or plowing will say to the slave when he is in the field, "Come at once and sit down to eat"? Or will he tell him, "Prepare something for me to eat, get ready, and then I will eat and drink; later you can eat and drink"?<sup>9</sup> Does the slave say, "I did not eat and drink because he did what was commanded"?<sup>10</sup> In the same way, if you have done all that you were commanded, you should say, "I am only a slave; we've only done our duty."

***Reaction to these verses? Why?***

***Should we be rewarded whenever we obey God by doing good or rejecting something negative? Explain.***

God, just as He serves and obeys the Father in all things. The wonderful life is not a burden or a shackle. Instead, only by fully embracing our identities as children of God can we experience the fullness of life God designed us to enjoy.

## CHRIST CALLS US TO SERVE OTHERS

Jesus came to earth with a mission. Though He is God, He willingly emptied Himself in order to enter our world and fulfill that mission, thus serving the Father. As disciples of Jesus, we're also called to serve God, and we're also called to do so by joining Jesus in accomplishing His mission.

Given these truths, it's logical to ask, "What *is* the mission?" What is it we're supposed to aim for or accomplish when we become disciples of Christ? Interestingly, Jesus provided some clear answers to that question when He first announced His ministry (and mission) in a public way:

<sup>16</sup> He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. As usual, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.

<sup>17</sup> The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him, and unrolling the scroll, He found the place where it was written:

<sup>18</sup> The Spirit of the Lord is on Me,  
because He has anointed Me  
to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent Me  
to proclaim freedom to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to set free the oppressed,  
<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

<sup>20</sup> He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him. <sup>21</sup> He began by saying to them, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled."

**LUKE 4:16-21**

*In what ways did Jesus fulfill the prophecy from Isaiah?*

*How do these verses help you understand your responsibilities as a disciple of Christ?*

spiritual implications of Luke 4:16-21. Through His death and resurrection, those in spiritual poverty, freedom for those held captive to sin, life to the blind, and sight to those blind to their own need for salvation.

Mission on a practical level. Specifically, we can be:

Jesus shared the good news of the gospel with clarity and variety. He was mindful of the personalities of individual hearers, relevant to their needs (see John 3:1-16; 4:3-26; Mark 10:21-22). Likewise, He requires us to be competent, creative, and confident messengers of His good news to spread the good news.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus took notice of those who needed help. His ministry was spiritual, yet He still took the time to focus on physical needs and earthly needs of the poor, the captives, the blind, and the oppressed—and He has called us to do the same.

Just as Jesus left paradise in order to save us, we are called to go out of our comfort zone to make a difference in the world. This may mean going out into our neighborhoods, or going out across the world. The key is obedience and willingness to go in order to serve those in need.

***How do you feel most confident about sharing the gospel?***

***When you think about people with practical needs, who comes to mind?***

***What motivates you to go in order to serve Him and others?***

physical needs of those He encountered and those He sought out. As His mission was both spiritual and practical, ours should be the same.