

SERVANT- LEADER DISCIPLESHIP

**equipping people
to grow in love
for the work of service**



DR. JUAN M. VALLEJO

Servant-Leader Discipleship

Equipping People to
GROW IN LOVE
for the Work of Service

By Dr. Juan M. Vallejo

Foreword by Dr. Kathleen Patterson

Servant-Leader Discipleship:
Equipping people to grow in love for the work of service.
Copyright © 2021 by Dr. Juan M. Vallejo

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, without written permission of the copyright owner except for small quotations.

For more information: Dr. Juan M. Vallejo | www.juanmvallejo.com

ISBN 979-8-9853030-0-1

Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. www.lockman.org

Cover design by Juan Carlos Vallejo

Published by Foursquare Missions Press

Table of Contents

Foreword	vii
Preface	xi
Acknowledgments	xv
Introduction	xvii
Part One:	
The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ	1
Chapter 1:	
God's Love and The Incarnation	3
Knowing God	3
God as King	5
God as Shepherd	7
God is Love	9
God's Love is the Priority	10
God's Love Defined	12
God with Us – The Incarnation	19
Chapter 2:	
The Great Commandment and The Great Commission	25
Loving God	29
Loving People	39
Making Disciples	47

Chapter 3:

Being, Doing, and The Fruit of the Spirit 59

The Ethical Being and Doing 60

Christlike Behavior 62

The Fruit of the Spirit 66

Be Fruitful and Multiply 74

Part Two:

The Art of Making Servant-Leader Disciples 79

Chapter 4:

Servant-Leadership Theory 81

Leadership 82

Followership 86

Greenleaf's Servant-Leadership Theory 89

Spears' Ten Characteristics of Servant-Leaders 96

Patterson's Model of Servant-Leadership 99

Chapter 5: Servant-Leader Discipleship 113

Christian 114

Disciple 115

Discipleship 120

Servant-Leader Approach to Discipleship 122

Implementing Servant-Leader Discipleship 134

Chapter 6:

Ecclesial Leader Development	141
Discipleship Coaching is Leader Development	142
Paul's Directive for Coaching	145
Teaching	148
Coaching	150
Cross-Cultural Servant-Leader Discipleship	155
Conclusion	167

Foreword

The world is ripe with opportunities for us to serve one another — the call and need are there, but we often just do not step or leap!, into the moments before us. This book gives a different charge than you may have heard before. Dr. Juan M. Vallejo unpacks servant-leadership by showing us both necessity and applicability.

I have had the great pleasure of seeing Dr. Juan M. Vallejo's journey as a student and his emergence as a scholar in the growing world of servant-leadership. His book "Servant-Leader Discipleship: Equipping People to Grow in Love for the Work of Service" is the fruit of his scholarly endeavors providing a foundational approach to the 'how to' of serving.

And before you think this book is limited to the ministry context, it is not! This book is for any and every leader — the path to serve is the path we all need to be on, but oh so often, two things happen. First, we think we are Christian and, therefore, on the servant path, which is not always the case. The pursuit of Christ requires a more determined path to serve, to

build His Kingdom and not our own. Second, we just do not know where to begin — the how of serving others. Dr. Vallejo brings us to these imperative conversations and not just conceptually but with the purpose of actually getting on this path towards servanthood. He does so in a scholarly and practical format, all underpinned with a Biblical approach — what more could a reader ask for!

We are in this world as leaders—we are either building better human beings or not —there is no neutrality here. Who are you building to go forth — who are you equipping —building? Think about this as you read this book, ask yourself about your life’s journey and your day-to-day journey — and then ask about the love you give to your followers and those around you. Love is interesting in that it is undefinable in some ways and yet concretely exactly what we need to be as leaders. Yes, ‘to be,’ love is our being — it is who we are and what we do — a state of being. 1 Corinthians reminds us without love, we are nothing! And in a world where we try desperately to be ‘something’ — love is our key.

We are also in this world as followers — of Jesus Christ, and of course, following the leaders, we find ourselves led by. We need

to lead well, but we also must learn to follow well; Jesus showed us the way. And if Jesus was leader, follower — and servant in both — perhaps this deserves our consideration. We hear about servant-leadership, but the time has come for us also to consider servant-followership. What does it mean to follow well? Dr. Vallejo unpacks the followership perspective for us. Leading and following are both noble, both needed, and both endeavors where we can serve and love and reflect Christ.

Whether you are a novice, a scholar, or just curious — dig into these words — listen with your ears and your heart. Enjoy this journey; we do not get another go-around — we might as well enjoy it by serving and loving as many people as we can!

Kathleen Patterson, Ph.D.

Director, Doctorate of Strategic Leadership Program
School of Business & Leadership
Regent University

Preface

The book you are about to read came about due to my academic scholarship and Christian ministry experience. One of the recent joys of my life was the opportunity of studying the Master of Arts in Strategic Leadership at Life Pacific University (LPU) and the Doctor of Strategic Leadership at Regent University (RU). The Holy Spirit used these academic programs to enrich my life with many valuable insights that have positively impacted my character and conduct as a servant and a leader.

From the many leadership theories, servant-leadership's idea kept rising to the surface as one of the leadership approaches that best aligned with Biblical concepts of servanthood and leadership. Throughout my studies, I learned that servant-leadership theory and Jesus' discipleship approach have a lot in common and became convinced that contemporary discipleship should focus its efforts on reproducing servant-leaders who follow Jesus. These are the type of disciples Jesus developed, servants who led accordingly. In this book, I share proven insights to help those

who want to reproduce an infinite number of servant-leader disciples empowered to change the world in Jesus' name.

This book also results from the many lessons learned during the more than 37 years of Christian ministry experience dedicated to serving the Lord Jesus Christ in the U.S and abroad. My parents raised me from birth to know and love the Lord, but it was not until I was 18 years old that the Lord called me to “preach His word.” He would later add “winning souls” and “feeding His sheep” to my assignment. In the beginning, I understood those statements to align with the role of an evangelist and a pastor. Therefore, my career path went in that direction, and I began studying for the ministry and serving in the church.

Since I was the first person in my family to enter full-time ministry, I had no idea what that journey would entail nor all the beautiful lessons I would learn along the way. I began focusing on evangelism and discipleship. Evangelism was like a search and rescue mission because many people were lost and in need of a savior. My task seemed simple. I simply needed to find and introduce lost people to Jesus by going to them and preaching the gospel. Those who decided to follow Christ had the opportunity

to enter into the church's discipleship process to become entirely devoted followers of Jesus Christ. The focus was squarely on helping them follow and serve the Lord, but most of their service took place in church ministries. We were not intentional in teaching them to become servant-leaders able to serve the Lord and humankind in any sphere of influence in society.

If I knew then what I know now, the discipleship process would have been more effective. It would have included servant-leadership principles to help them fulfill God's purposes for their lives by loving God, loving people, and making servant-leader disciples in whatever arena of life the Lord led them to invest themselves. I pray this book enables you to connect servant-leadership principles to your discipleship process and enhance your effectiveness in equipping people to grow in love for the work of service.

Acknowledgments

Frist of all, I would like to thank God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit for loving me and calling me to become a servant-leader disciple in His kingdom. It has been and always will be an honor to love and serve God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. He has given me much more than I could ever deserve. Because of His grace, my life has been enriched by many amazing people, starting with my parents (Rene & Olga Vallejo), siblings (Maria, Rene, & David and their families), wife (Graciela), children (Juan Carlos & Hailey, Mariela, & Josué), grandchild (Camila), other family members, spiritual family, and friends. They have all helped me learn to love my neighbor as myself.

Secondly, I would like to thank my wife, Graciela, for the many years we have loved each other and shared our lives as one. Without her, I would not have become the man I am today, or achieve the goals she has so faithfully supported. Everything I have accomplished since we have been together is infused with her love and wisdom. Thank you, my love, for being who you are

and for loving me as you have done! This manuscript is dedicated to you.

Finally, I would like to thank all of my pastors, professors, mentors, colleagues, friends, and ecclesial and academic institutions that have invested in my life since my birth. From the person who held me up to the Lord on my infant dedication day to the person who just talked with me for several hours on the day I am writing these words, I say, “The Lord bless you, and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace” (Numbers 6:24-26, NASB).

Introduction

The life and ministry of Jesus Christ illustrate several characteristics of Jesus' servant-leader approach to disciple-making. Many recognize Jesus as the master disciple-maker who led His movement as a servant-leader. The movement He began almost two thousand years ago is still going strong today due to His masterful leadership style and disciple-making process. Jesus used an approach to leadership in His disciple-making strategy, which aligns closely with that of servant-leadership. The master disciple-maker is a servant-leader.

Before returning to His former glory, Jesus entrusted His disciples with His same mission. Their mission is to preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations. Jesus expects His disciples to follow His example. What He did for them, they are to do for others. The way Jesus led, they are supposed to lead. The master disciple-maker demonstrates how He came to serve instead of being served. His life and ministry prove that His primary motivation is an unconditional love for humanity shown through

service. His disciples should follow His lead and use the servant-leader approach in their disciple-making process.

Servant-leader discipleship is an excellent approach to disciple-making that equips people to grow in love for the work of service. They learn to follow Jesus as servant-leaders who love, serve, and lead others to become servant-leaders who follow Jesus and repeat the process with others. This infinitely reproducible process consists of learning to love God, learning to love people, and learning to make servant-leader disciples. Servant-leader discipleship reproduces people who are simultaneously servants, leaders, and disciples. These servant-leader disciples learn to love as God loves and demonstrate it through a natural outflow of service to God and others. The underlying principle of this approach is that God's love encompasses service and leadership.

This book has six chapters equally divided into two parts. Part one examines the life and ministry of Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture by focusing on God's Love and The Incarnation, The Great Commandment and The Great Commission, and the Fruit of the Spirit. The study of God's nature, the incarnation, two imperatives Jesus gave to His disciples, and the fruit the Holy Spirit produces in those who follow Jesus offers insights

concerning the style of leadership Jesus used for making disciples. The first three chapters lay the foundation for why Jesus' followers became servant-leaders, choosing to emulate their Lord and obey the mandate to make disciples, a leadership act. They discuss pertinent portions of Scripture and provide the findings that show similarities between Jesus' disciple-making leadership style and servant-leadership theory.

Part two discusses the art of making servant-leader disciples by addressing Servant-Leadership Theory (including Patterson's Model), Servant-Leader Discipleship, and Ecclesial Leader Development. Chapter four pays special attention to Robert K. Greenleaf's seminal teaching on servant-leadership, the ten servant-leader characteristics Larry C. Spears popularized, and Kathleen A. Patterson's servant-leadership model. Chapters five and six discuss servant-leader discipleship and ecclesial leader development, founded upon the servant-leadership principles drawn from these scholars' teachings and Jesus Christ's life and ministry.

Servant-leader discipleship is the result of integrating servant-leadership principles into the disciple-making process. Jesus' leadership style, which includes aspects of Greenleaf and Spears'

servant-leader's characteristics and Patterson's seven virtuous constructs of servant-leadership, informs this viable approach for making disciples. The book also offers three practical steps to implement servant-leader discipleship, helping others to love God, love people, and make servant-leader disciples. It hopes to prove that servant-leader discipleship provides an excellent way to equip people to grow in love for the work of service.

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of each chapter.

Part One: The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Chapter 1: God's Love and The Incarnation

The first chapter discusses God's love and the incarnation. It begins with information about knowing God and His kingship that provides insight into His leadership. The evaluation of the God as shepherd metaphor also enhances our knowledge of God. We discover that God's nature is love and everything He does is an act of love. The chapter then provides a Biblical description of God's love based on the Apostle Paul's definition written to the church at Corinth.

This chapter also discusses the incarnation, a pivotal moment in humankind's history when God the Son emptied Himself and became God with us in human form. This historical act serves as the foundational example of what it means to become a servant and servant-leader discipleship's genesis.

Chapter 2: The Great Commandment and The Great Commission

The second chapter discusses two essential emphases of the Lord's great commandment, loving God and people. It begins with a discussion on the priority of learning to love God with your entire being and above all else. Learning to love God enables people to love others, which includes a healthy love for themselves.

This chapter also discusses the Lord's great commission to His disciples. It examines Mark and Matthew's biblical accounts of what Jesus told His disciples was their assignment. Mark's version records the call to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15, NASB). There is an emphasis on preaching, believing, and baptism (Mark 16:15-16). Matthew's version contains the call to go and make disciples of all the

nations, emphasizing baptism and teaching them to observe all of Jesus' commands (Matthew 28:19-20).

Chapter 3: Being, Doing, and The Fruit of the Spirit

The third chapter discusses the ethical being and doing and the fruit of the Spirit in connection to servant-leader discipleship. It explains how a person's character influences their conduct and vice versa. People act according to their character but can change their character by developing different habits. I like to say it this way; people must become to behave and behave to become.

The Holy Spirit partners with the person to become the kind of person who will behave as a servant-leader disciple by producing the corresponding fruit. The chapter examines the nine virtues of the fruit of the Spirit as they pertain to a servant-leader disciple's attitude toward God, social relationships, and Christian principles of conduct.

Part Two: The Art of Making Servant-Leader Disciples

Chapter 4: Servant-Leadership Theory

The fourth chapter begins by laying a foundation for servant-leadership theory by addressing the multiple meanings and varied

definitions of leadership and followership. Many have tried to define leadership throughout the ages, but there is no consensus for a standard definition of leadership. Nevertheless, reflecting upon the several components of these complex concept's definitions provides a more robust comprehension and better informs servant-leadership theory.

The chapter then focuses on Greenleaf's servant-leadership theory. Over 50 years ago, he introduced the idea of servant-leadership, coining the term, and bringing it to prominence. From his teachings, Spears identified and popularized ten servant-leader characteristics. Whereas these focus on behavioral aspects, Patterson's virtue-based model of servant-leadership takes an ontological approach. Her model enhances the theory by introducing seven virtuous constructs.

Chapter 5: Servant-Leader Discipleship

The fifth chapter begins discussing what it means to be a Christian and a disciple. The term Christian began as a derogatory statement but eventually became a popular way to reference Christ's followers. For some, it is synonymous to the

word disciple, which refers to someone who is following, being transformed by, and on mission with Christ.

The chapter then discusses discipleship. After looking at a few examples of the process people use to make disciples, it features Jesus' servant-leader approach to discipleship, which I coined servant-leader discipleship. Jesus exemplifies a five-step servant-leader discipleship system, which incrementally advances servant-leader disciples from observers to practitioners. This system allows for customization based on contextual needs. The chapter concludes with a three-step recommendation for implementing servant-leader discipleship.

Chapter 6: Ecclesial Leader Development

The sixth chapter discusses leader development from a discipleship perspective. Through discipleship coaching, ecclesial leaders can solve one of the most significant challenges facing today's churches. Many churches struggle because of the lack of leaders equipped to serve in the church, the workplace, and the world. Jesus' example and Paul's directive for coaching explain how discipleship coaching can serve as leadership development.

The final section examines cross-cultural servant-leader discipleship. Making disciples of all nations is challenging because of cultural and linguistic differences. Through personal and biblical examples, I offer insight and guidance to overcome these differences to fulfill the great commission.

Conclusion

Part One:

The Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Chapter 1:

God's Love and The Incarnation

- Knowing God
- God as King
- God as Shepherd
- God is Love
- God's Love is the Priority
- God's Love Defined
- God with Us – The Incarnation

Knowing God

Fundamental knowledge about God's character and nature provides a good foundation for understanding God's leadership approach. We can learn more about God based on how He has revealed Himself to humankind. The book of Acts contains a great example of God's revelation to humanity. When Paul arrived in Athens, he discovered that the Athenians were a very religious people, but they did not know the one and true God. Paul noticed they were given over to idols and identified an altar dedicated to

the unknown God. He could use their belief in an unknown God's possible existence to reveal the one and true God. God was already working within the Athenian culture, revealing Himself. Paul used this door of opportunity to preach the good news.

Compellingly and concisely, Paul revealed the unknown God to the Athenians. He declared that God is the creator of everything, sovereign Lord of all, omnipresent, self-sufficient, giver of life, and provider of everything. He explained that God made every nation inhabit the whole earth, determining the times set for them and the exact places for them to live with the purpose that men would seek him, reach out for him, and find him. Paul assured them that God is not far from them. He spoke of God's mercy, His justice, and His power (Acts 17).

In the book of Ephesians, Paul provides further information about God. He declares that the resurrection and ascension of Christ serve as proof and testimony of the mighty power of God (Ephesians 1:15-19). Paul reveals some essential truths about Christ, the Son of God, who is the express image of God's person (Hebrews 1:3). Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father in the heavenly places. He is above all principality, power, might, and dominion. Christ is greater than any other name or title for

all of eternity. God, the Father, has put all things under His feet and placed Him as the head of the church, His body, His fullness. This passage also reveals that the triune God is alive, powerful, sovereign, wise, and eternal. He gives hope to those he calls and works in and through them. He shares His wealth and power with those separated unto Him and delegates His power and authority to them. From heavenly places and from within every believer, God is actively involved in humanity's daily affairs, hearing our prayers and revealing Himself to us. God is the ultimate authority, to whom all must give account.

God as King

The book of Psalms gives the most definitive treatment to the theme of God's kingship. For example, the Enthronement Psalms reveal several aspects of God's rule and reign. The Psalmist wrote, "Yet God is my King from of old, who works deeds of deliverance in the midst of the earth" (Psalm 74:12, NASB). He is victorious "over the waters of chaos or rebellious sea monsters (Psalms 74:12-14; 89:10-11) as well as earthly opponents (Psalms 48:3-4; 68:30), responsible for the guarantee of justice and peace among

the underprivileged (Psalm 82), and able to order and sustain creation (Psalms 24:1; 74:15-17; 89:11-12; 29; 68:9).”¹

This theological description of God as King includes aspects we learn from the name He revealed. The narrator in Exodus 3:14-15 informs us that God revealed His name to Moses, as “I AM WHO I AM” and as YHWH, the LORD God. God uses the expression “I AM,” and the Israelites used Yahweh, which means “He Is.”² God reworks an existent divine name, which resembles forms of the verb “to be,” to produce the name Yahweh, a term that implies that Yahweh is a person with unique individuality and one that we can know.³ The phrase I am/will be who I am/will be is not a name; instead, it is more theology. This phrase implies that “while there are no formulas for capturing this God in words; God will always be there for and with Moses and Israel and will be what they need God to be.”⁴ It is an open-ended promise from God their King that He will be whatever they need, or He needs to be whatever the circumstances require.

The signs and wonders performed during the Exodus account demonstrate to Israel and Egypt that Yahweh is King overall; the only one with absolute power, there is no other god like Yahweh God. He provided experiential confirmation that the God of

Israel is THE GOD, the one and only, and they know this to be true because they have seen Him in action. In the Exodus, Yahweh said what He would do and did what He said without anyone or anything being able to stop Him. Therefore, Israel and Egypt serve as proof that there is only one true God, and His name is Yahweh.

Yahweh as “I am who I am, I will be who I will be” clearly demonstrated through His mighty works in the Exodus that He is autonomous. In His sovereignty, He alone decides what He is and does. Others or outside forces do not control Him. God’s mission was to be known. Through the signs and wonders, Israel learned through God’s grace, and Egypt learned through exposure to God’s judgment that the Lord God, He alone is God, Holy, Creator, Unique, and Incomparable.⁵ He is King, par excellence, without comparison.

God as Shepherd

God as Shepherd is a metaphor that helps us to further learn about God’s approach to leadership. The Scriptures contain narratives that equate leadership with shepherding. Some of those passages speak of a divine shepherd, and other portions refer to

human shepherds who He entrusts with caring for His sheep's needs. For example, in the Old Testament, we find Psalm 23:1, which begins with the assertion, "The Lord is my shepherd." This Psalm illustrates how God as Shepherd leads those under His care. He provides for their every need, leading them towards required resources, restoring and comforting their soul, protecting them from all peril, and anointing them to overflowing. Like a shepherd, God exercises His ultimate authority and power to rule and reign over His flock as a servant-leader.

In Ezekiel 34, we find a vivid picture of what God expects from those to whom He gave authority over His flock, whom He refers to as the shepherds of Israel. Ezekiel prophesies against those shepherds of Israel in obedience to God because they had been feeding themselves instead of feeding the flock, among many other failings (Ezekiel 34:2). Therefore, the Lord God said He would search for the sheep, seek them out, care for them, deliver them, gather them, feed them, lead them, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick (Ezekiel 34:11-16). Since the shepherds of Israel did not serve or lead their flocks as God intended, the sheep needed the good shepherd.

In the New Testament, John quotes Jesus' words, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11, NASB). Similar to the Lord God's words in Ezekiel, Jesus presents Himself as the good shepherd and makes a stark contrast with the hirelings who do not own the sheep or care about them. Their behavior stands in stark contrast to that of the good shepherd. The relationship which exists between shepherd and sheep should be one of intimacy and mutual recognition. A good shepherd gives his life for the sheep, knows their sheep, and their sheep know him (John 10:11-16). The willingness to sacrifice oneself, even unto death, is the mark of a good shepherd. Each of the previous passages illustrates that God is the good shepherd who loves His sheep.

God is Love

The Scriptures inform us that one of the powerful aspects of God's nature is love. John wrote, "Beloved, let's love one another; for love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:7-8, NASB). I want to highlight three significant points from this passage. First, love comes from

God. He is the origin of the kind of love humankind should demonstrate toward one another. Second, there must be a connection to God to love according to God's love. For there to be a natural outflow of the love of God, that love must come from within a person's being. They must be born of God and know Him. Third, God is love. Love is an inseparable part of God's character and conduct. Because He is love, everything He does is an act of love, an outflow of His nature. John wrote, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NASB). His love is what motivated God to send "His only Son into the world so that we may live through Him" (1 John 4:9b, NASB). This illustration demonstrates how God's actions reveal His love nature. He is love, a noun (*agapē*), and loves, a verb (*agapaō*).

God's Love is the Priority

God's love is the foundation for servant-leader discipleship. Please note that the preceding sentence identifies the love I am referring to as God's love. The reason for this emphasis is due to the varied meanings that exist for love. It is vital to understand the kind of love required to achieve the desired results of servant-

leader discipleship. Everything we could become or do in this approach to disciple-making is meaningless unless built upon and motivated by God's love. Paul wrote to the Corinthians,

If I speak with the tongues of humankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give away all my possession to charity, and if I surrender my body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it does me no good" (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, NASB).

Paul mentions certain things that the Corinthians had and were doing that may have been good and necessary, but was love missing? Paul believes that no matter what gifts or talents a person has or what actions a person performs, it is pointless if they do not have God's love. People can go through the motions and do many good things, but it does not matter if there is no love. Therefore, it is critical to our servant-leader discipleship efforts that God's love is the priority.

God's Love Defined

Agapē is the kind of love required to achieve the desired results of servant-leader discipleship. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Paul used the Greek word *agapē* to represent God's love and listed 15 of its characteristics in his definition. "Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, NASB).

Matthew Henry posits, "The apostle gives us in these verses some of the properties and effects of charity, both to describe and commend it, that we may know whether we have this grace and that if we have not, we may fall in love with what is so exceedingly amiable, and not rest till we have obtained it."⁶ In these few verses, Paul gives us one of the best Biblical summaries of God's love. His descriptions help us to understand God's love better and encourage us to pursue the God of love so we can love as He does.

The subsequent section briefly describes each characteristic with contextual definitions of Paul's prominent Greek word

choice in each statement. The characteristics fall under one of these categories, what love is and does (Figure 1), or what love is not and does not (Figure 2).

Figure 1 – What Love Is and Does

Love Is	
Patient – <i>makrothumei</i> ⁷	“to persevere patiently and bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles, longsuffering.”
	“to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others, to be mild and slow in avenging; to be longsuffering, slow to anger, and slow to punish.”
Kind – <i>chresteuetai</i> ⁸	“to show one’s self mild, to be kind, use kindness.”
Love Does	
Rejoices with the truth – <i>aletheia</i> ⁹	“sincerity of mind and integrity of character, or a mode of life in harmony with divine truth.”
Bears all things – <i>stegei</i> ¹⁰	“to cover over with silence; to keep secret; to hide, conceal, to keep off something which threatens, to bear up against.”
Believes all things – <i>pisteuei</i> ¹¹	“to think to be true; to be persuaded of; to credit, place confidence in; to trust, confidence in the goodness of men.”
Hopes all things – <i>elpizei</i> ¹²	“to hope, hopefully trust in, to wait for salvation with joy and full confidence.”
Endures all things – <i>hupomenei</i> ¹³	“to endure, bear bravely and calmly: ill-treatments.”

Love Is Patient. Love can withstand the test of time. It is not a momentary emotion; instead, it is an enduring commitment. Love suffers long and can manage people's imperfections and injurious behavior without becoming resentful or vindictive. Love equips people to be firm and courageous in the midst of trials and tribulations.

Love Is Kind. Love manifests itself in tenderhearted and gentle behavior towards others, seeking what is best for the other person instead of focusing on what is best for oneself. Love actively does good, both in words and in deeds. Love does not say or do anything that would be harmful, cruel, or mean. Love acts positively in favor of others with a meek and mild demeanor.

Love Rejoices with The Truth. Love seeks out and recognizes the value of truth. Love celebrates when truth triumphs over lies and false witness. Love delights when people are sincere and have integrity. Love rejoices when people live in alignment with divine truth.

Love Bears All Things. Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). Love chooses to work in favor of those who need to be reconciled. Love defends them from those who would prefer to

cause harm by exposing their faults publicly. Love stands in the gap for others in need.

Love Believes All Things. Love chooses to trust people. Love prefers to believe others' best and ascribes good intentions to their actions instead of being suspicious. Love places confidence in the goodness of humanity.

Love Hopes All Things. Love expects the best in all situations and for all people. Love has a positive outlook on life. Love places its confidence on that which is true and faithful. Love does not lose heart quickly and will continue to hope even against all hope (Romans 4:18).

Love Endures All Things. Love is strong and courageous. Love is capable of enduring the most difficult of situations and circumstances. Love can withstand and overcome ill-treatments bravely and calmly. Love perseveres and remains faithful until the end.

Figure 2 – What Love Is Not and Does Not

Love Is Not	
Jealous – <i>zeloj</i> ¹⁴	“to burn with zeal, to be heated or to boil with envy, hatred, anger.”
Arrogant – <i>phusioutai</i> ¹⁵	“to be puffed up, to bear one’s self loftily, be proud.”
Provoked – <i>paroxunetai</i> ¹⁶	“to irritate, provoke, arouse to anger, scorn, despise, exasperate.”
Love Does Not	
Brag – <i>perpereuetai</i> ¹⁷	“to boast one’s self, a self-display, employing rhetorical embellishments in extolling one’s self excessively.”
Act unbecomingly – <i>aschemonei</i> ¹⁸	“to act unseemly, to prepare disgrace toward another.”
Seek its own – <i>zetei</i> ¹⁹ <i>ta heautes</i> ²⁰	“to seek in order to find, crave, require, demand for one’s own self.”
Consider a wrong suffered – <i>logizetai</i> ²¹ <i>to kakon</i> ²²	“to reckon, count up, make an account of, meditate on troublesome, injurious, destructive, evil things.”
Rejoice in unrighteousness – <i>hupomenei</i> ²³	“injustice, the unrighteousness of heart and life, a deed violating law and justice.”

Love Is Not Jealous. Love does not envy or covet what belongs to other people. Love does not lust after or resent any

advantage others may have achieved. Love is not possessive or angry when others succeed. Love wants the best for others.

Love Is Not Arrogant. Love does not allow pride to inflate its ego or to think more highly of itself than it should. Love is not vain. Instead, love remains humble with an accurate perception of itself and treats others with esteem and respect.

Love Is Not Provoked. Love does not become exasperated or allow anger to rule its thoughts or conduct. Love exercises self-control and restrains the emotions that would attempt to cause it to despise or scorn others.

Love Does Not Brag. Love does not flaunt its accomplishments or shine a light upon itself. Love does not allow any adverse kind of pride to cause it to parade itself. Love permits others to recognize its value and accomplishments instead of proclaiming them themselves.

Love Does Not Act Unbecomingly. Love does not behave rudely or offensively. Love does not do anything that goes against God's perception of decency and righteous behavior. Love understands what each situation calls for and acts accordingly.

Love Does Not Seek Its Own. Love is not self-centered or selfish and will not behave egotistically. Love cares for others and

looks out for their best interests. Love has a healthy love for itself and will not seek to fulfill its desires at the cost of harming others.

Love Does Not Consider a Wrong Suffered. Love does not meditate upon evil actions or hold a grudge against people. Love does not harbor ill feelings towards others or allow bitterness to grow by keeping a record of their misconduct. Love knows how to forgive.

Love Does Not Rejoice in Unrighteousness. Love does not take pleasure in being mean to people or harming anyone. Love does not enjoy seeing others treated unfairly, dishonestly, or in any other destructive fashion. Love does not rejoice when people partake in unrighteous conduct.

One of the most remarkable journeys I have taken is learning to love. There was a moment in my life when I understood I needed to learn how to love with a love that transcends my abilities. The kind of love I experienced most and naturally gave to others was conditional. As we have seen, God's love is different and available to everyone. When we allow His love to permeate our hearts, we will behave accordingly. I encourage us all to learn to love as God loves.

God with Us – The Incarnation

God's love is the reason Jesus came as the Son of Man "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10, NASB). The apostle John confirms God's motivation for sending His Son when writing, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NASB). God's love for humanity motivated Him to sacrifice His only begotten Son so that everyone could be reconciled with God.

We refer to Jesus' coming as the incarnation. John explains it this way, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, NASB). Jesus is the Word who became flesh, as Matthew recounts, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, God with us" (Matthew 1:23, NASB). Through the incarnation, God the Son became God with us, and the way He lived His life on earth in human form has become the role model for every servant-leader disciple.

John speaks of the deity and eternal existence of Jesus in his statement, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1, NASB). Paul adds that Christ Jesus “existed in the form of God” (Philippians 2:6a, NASB). What form did Jesus abandon and take on to dwell among humankind? Paul does not explain to the reader what he meant by the form of God or equality with God. However, Paul’s intent in this portion of his letter to the Philippians is to express how Christ Jesus “did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped” (Philippians 2:6b, NASB). Whatever the form and equality were, Jesus “emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:7, NASB). Also, “Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8, NASB).

Theologians refer to this self-emptying of Christ of His prerogatives of deity as the *kenosis*, exemplifying the ultimate leadership example.²⁴ Of His own free will, Christ Jesus emptied (*ekenosen*) Himself of the prerogatives of deity to become a human and decided to live among His creation in a bond-servant (*doulou*) form, voluntarily surrendering His rights and will to another.²⁵ (Vine et al., 1984). By becoming a bond-servant, Jesus

demonstrates a selfless act of love that Paul encourages his readers to imitate.

Paul urges his readers to “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5, NASB). Paul asked them to “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4, NASB). He encourages people to *agapē*, to love with God’s love.

This passage in Philippians demonstrates how the sovereign God is a loving God interested in others’ well-being. He was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, without compromising His character, to take care of humanity’s needs. His approach as a servant demonstrates His choice of leadership style. He could have lorded it over us, as “the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them,” imposing His power and control (Matthew 20:25, NASB). Instead, He chose to empty Himself and serve humanity. “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28, NASB). The kenosis

of Jesus demonstrates the character and conduct expected of all servant-leader disciples.

Notes

- ¹ Whitelam, K. W. (1992). King and Kingship. In Freedman, D. N. (Ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 43. Doubleday.
- ² Hartley, J. E. (2003). Holy and holiness, clean and unclean. In Alexander, T. D. & Baker, D. W. (Eds.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, 420-31. IVP.
- ³ Goldingay, J. (2003). *Old testament theology, vol. 1: Israel's Gospel*, 335-336. IVP.
- ⁴ Ibid., 334-335.
- ⁵ Wright, C. J. H. (2006). *The mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's grand narrative*, 95. IVP.
- ⁶ Henry, M. (1 Mar, 1996). Commentary on 1 Corinthians 13 by Matthew Henry. Retrieved from https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/1Cr/1Cr_013.cfm
- ⁷ G3114 - makrothymeō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G3114&t=NASB>
- ⁸ G5541 - chrēsteuomai - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G5541&t=NASB>
- ⁹ G225 - alētheia - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G225&t=NASB>
- ¹⁰ G4722 - stegō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G4722&t=NASB>
- ¹¹ G4100 - pisteuō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G4100&t=NASB>
- ¹² G1679 - elpizō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G1679&t=NASB>
- ¹³ G5278 - hypomenō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G5278&t=NASB>
- ¹⁴ G2206 - zēloō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G2206&t=NASB>

¹⁵ G5448 - physioō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G5448&t=NASB>

¹⁶ G3947 - paroxynō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G3947&t=NASB>

¹⁷ G4068 - perpereuomai - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4068&t=NASB>

¹⁸ G807 - aschēmoneō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G807&t=NASB>

¹⁹ G2212 - zēteō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G2212&t=NASB>

²⁰ G1438 - heautou - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G1438&t=NASB>

²¹ G3049 - logizomai - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G3049&t=NASB>

²² G2556 - kakos - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G2556&t=NASB>

²³ G93 - adikia - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G93&t=NASB>

²⁴ Spencer, J. L. (2011). *Theological reflections of God as servant*. [PDF file]. Retrieved from <http://moodle.lifepacific.edu/mod/folder/view.php?id=1178>

²⁵ Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1984). *An Expository Dictionary of biblical words*. Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Chapter 2:

The Great Commandment and The Great Commission

- Loving God
- Loving People
- Making Disciples

In the previous chapter, we learned about God's love and incarnation. His love-filled actions demonstrate His commitment to humanity. Through the incarnation, Jesus became the embodiment of love and the best role model to help us become and reproduce servant-leader disciples. Jesus' life and ministry illustrate how to live out God's love through committed obedience to His commandments about God and humanity. It is helpful to understand that Love and obedience have a symbiotic relationship. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15, NASB). When a person loves the

Lord, they should demonstrate that love and give evidence of it through a life of obedience committed to following the Lord.

One of my favorite quotes from Rick Warren is, “A great commitment to the great commandment and the great commission will produce a great life.” Servant-leader discipleship produces extraordinary lives because it teaches people to commit their lives to the great commandment and the great commission. Before discussing the great commandment and the great commission, I will use an example to illustrate what it means to have a great commitment.¹

One fine day a chicken and a pig were out for their morning stroll. Their journey took them in front of a diner with a large neon sign announcing the breakfast special of the day. The chicken spoke first, saying to the pig, “Did you see the sign? Today’s breakfast special highlights the importance of my life.” He continued, “Look. It says today’s breakfast special is eggs and ham. You see?” The chicken said, swelling up with pride. “They put the eggs before the ham because chickens are more important than pigs.” The pig shook its head and retorted, “Your pride has blinded you to the truth.” The chicken, with a look of confusion, asked, “What do you mean?” To which the pig answered, “Let me

explain, my friend. Chickens are important; that much is true, but they are only involved in this breakfast special. Pigs, on the other hand, are committed to it. This breakfast requires chickens to lay eggs, but pigs must lay down their lives.” The moral of the story is clear. There is a significant difference between simply being involved and being fully committed to something. Jesus said, “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24, NASB). The great commitment required of servant-leader disciples to the great commandment and the great commission is for them to be all in, willing to lay down their lives in more ways than one.

Jesus told His initial disciples to make disciples of all nations, “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matthew 28:20a). To which commandments was Jesus referring? Did He give them a specific list like the ten commandments, or was He simply referring to everything they learned from Him? Some believe the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-7:29) is the compendium of all of Jesus’ teachings, including the commandments they were to teach the future disciples. The early church could have used this portion of Scripture as a type of discipleship handbook, and so could contemporary churches.

Even so, we may not know what Jesus was referring to exactly, but we do know one thing for sure. When a Pharisee asked Jesus about the great commandment in the Law, His response revealed what He considered the two great commandments that could encapsulate all of His teachings.

People asked Jesus questions for various reasons and were usually astonished by His responses. Sometimes their motives were sincere, while other times, they were trying to test Jesus. Regardless of their motives, He took full advantage of those opportunities to teach them truths that could help them know God and reconcile with Him. During one of those question-answer sessions, an expert in the Mosaic Law, who belonged to the highly religious sect of the Jews known as the Pharisees, wanted to test Jesus and asked, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” (Matthew 22:36, NASB). Jesus answered,

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it; you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets”

(Matthew 22:37-40, NASB).

Jesus' answer went beyond the question's scope, which the Pharisee limited to the greatest commandment in the Law. Jesus presented two similar commandments that sum up all of the Old Testament teachings' moral obligations, referred to as the Law and the Prophets. Therefore, the Law and the Prophets depend on love (*agapaō*), which is the essence of these two commandments that focus on loving God and people.

Loving God

Jesus said that the great and foremost commandment is to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37, NASB). This reference is a quote from the Jewish *Shema*, a very familiar prayer the Jews would repeat twice daily.² The *Shema*, as written by Moses, reads, “Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5, NASB). Mark's version of what Jesus answered includes Moses' opening phrase, “Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one,” also has Matthew's addition of “with all your mind,” and adds the

final phrase, “and with all your strength,” which is similar to what Moses wrote (Mark 12:29-30, NASB). Although there are slight differences between these versions, the critical message is equal, “Love God with your entire being.”

Servant-leader disciples must learn to love God with their entire lives. The idea of *agapaō* love in this context speaks of “affectionate reverence and prompt obedience.”³ People demonstrate affectionate reverence to God in many ways, such as worship, respect, devotion, and service. Prompt obedience requires a willingness to lay aside those things that go against God’s character and His will, humbly accepting and quickly obeying His direction.

The command to love God, as Jesus declared, summarizes the first portion of the decalogue God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai approximately three months “after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt” (Exodus 19:1, NASB). John writes, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3, NASB). We demonstrate our love for God by keeping His commands. Therefore, the decalogue’s first four commandments serve as a valuable metric for knowing how to love God.

The Lord called out to Moses and told him to tell the people, “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagle’s wings, and brought you to Myself” (Exodus 19:4, NASB). The Lord God begins by reminding His people what He had done for them. He delivered them from bondage and brought them to Himself. Then the Lord asked His people to obey His voice. “If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine” (Exodus:19:5, NASB). Because of who He is and what he has done for them, they should obey His voice. This same expectation of obedience continues today for everyone who follows the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, in whom “all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9, NASB), also linked love to obedience when He said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (John 14:15, NASB). Therefore, contemporary servant-leader disciples can learn to love the Lord, which includes being obedient to His voice, by reviewing the first four commandments of the decalogue.

The Lord prefaced what is commonly referred to as the Ten Commandments by saying, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery”

(Exodus 20:2, NASB). The eternal one true God reminds His people that He set them free and, based on His manifest love for them, expects them to obey the following four commands that correlate directly to their relationship with Him. Matthew Henry explains how the first four of the ten commandments, commonly termed the first table, concern our duty to worship God.⁴

The 1st Commandment

“You shall have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20:3, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must not allow anything to get in the way of their love for God. There is only one real capital G God. Every other created being or thing that people put before Him can only amount to a lowercase g god. Regardless of today’s tolerance for the countless number of religious beliefs and practices that claim to follow other deities, the Lord God is the only creator, and nothing else should occupy His place in a person’s life. Isaiah quotes the Lord, saying, “I am the first and the last; Besides Me, there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6b, NASB). Every other being or thing is subject to Him. Even so, many people reject this truth and elevate created beings or things above the creator. This forbidden behavior indicates a lack of love for God.

Love for God must result in keeping Him as the sovereign Lord of your life. When servant-leader disciples love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, they fulfill this first commandment.

The 2nd Commandment

“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth” (Exodus 20:4, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must avoid idolatrous behavior at all costs. Idolatry is foolish and dangerous. It is foolish behavior because idols are worthless. They are made out of imperfect elements and are powerless. They have mouths that do not speak, eyes that do not see, ears that do not hear, noses that do not smell, hands that do not handle, and feet that do not walk (Psalm 115:5-7). It is dangerous behavior because it opens a person up to demonic influences. When referring to idolatrous behavior, Paul writes, “The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God” (1 Corinthians 10:20a, NASB). Paul recognized how useless idols were, but he also understood the demonic

influences surrounding such practices and encouraged God's people to flee from idolatry.

The Lord included in this commandment, **“You shall not worship them or serve them”** (Exodus 20:5a, NASB). Worship and service is an act of the will. People can choose whom they will worship and serve. Service in this context correlates with worshipping. To worship is to ascribe worth or value unto something or someone. When you value something or someone, you serve them. Joshua connects worship of God to serving Him when he addresses the people of God, saying, “Fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth” (Joshua 24:14a, NASB). Joshua commands the people of God to “put away the gods” which their fathers served previously and asks them to serve God alone (Joshua 24:14b-15, NASB). To worship God is to ascribe to Him supreme worth, for He alone is worthy. The Lord demands that humanity worship Him alone.

One reason to obey this command is that people become like the god they worship. People become like the god they worship because their worship determines values, priorities, and what they will become. They are determining values by deciding what they desire the most. They are determining priorities by establishing

who or what holds first place in their life. They are determining what they are going to become by choosing what image they worship.

Who people worship also affects to whom they bow. When a person bows to another, they are aligning their heart with them. Worship impacts whom they seek. The object of a person's worship will influence what they pursue and to what they submit. Worship affects what they discover. People will learn what that god provides. Ultimately, worship determines what flows from their life. How a person behaves is directly linked to whom they become.

The 3rd Commandment

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain” (Exodus 20:7, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must recognize that the Lord's name is Holy and should not misuse it. Initially, the people of God would not even speak the personal, covenantal name of God, YHWH (*Yahweh*), out of fear of breaking this commandment and reverence. In today's world, people often take the name of the Lord in vain by “hypocrisy, covenant-breaking, rash swearing, false swearing, and

using God’s name without any regard to its powerful significance.”⁵ God’s name is holy and worthy to be praised.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name” (Matthew 6:9, NASB). This opening line of the Lord’s prayer affirms His name is holy and worthy to be praised. Something that helps me grow in love with the Lord is praying through and meditating on the personal compound covenantal names of *Yahweh*. (See Figure 3). This spiritual practice helps me know Who He is, as God reveals His character in His names, and how He relates to me.

Figure 3 – Personal, Compound Covenantal Names of *Yahweh*

Personal, Compound Covenantal Names of <i>Yahweh</i>	
<i>Yahweh Jireh</i> = The Lord will provide.	<i>Yahweh Raah</i> = The Lord is my shepherd.
<i>Yahweh Rapha</i> = The Lord is my healer.	<i>Yahweh Tsidkenu</i> = The Lord our righteousness
<i>Yahweh Nissi</i> = The Lord is my banner.	<i>Yahweh Sabaoth</i> = The Lord of hosts.
<i>Yahweh Shalom</i> = The Lord is my peace.	<i>Yahweh Shammah</i> = The Lord is there.

The 4th Commandment

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8, NASB). Servant-leader disciples express their love for the Lord uniquely by remembering to cease their daily activities once a week to honor God with their rest. Setting aside one day each week to rest and enjoy God is an act of love and humility. Although every day belongs to the Lord, and we are to pray without ceasing, remembering to sabbath is a way to nurture our relationship with God. For example, husbands and wives should love each other every day, but the relationship goes to a whole new level when they set aside a particular weekly time just to stop and be together.

Mary and Martha’s biblical story serves as another example of the importance of stopping work to spend time with the Lord (Luke 10:38-42). When Jesus visited these two sisters in their home, each took a different approach in welcoming Him. Mary recognized the importance of being in Jesus’ company and decided to stop whatever she was doing to sit at His feet and engage Him in conversation. Martha, on the other hand, was “worried and bothered about so many things” and too busy tending to “all her preparations” that she failed to acknowledge

that “only one thing is necessary” (Luke 10:40-42, NASB).

Martha allowed her work for the Lord to distract her from choosing the better option, stopping and resting in His presence. Both of these sisters were serving the Lord but in different ways. Martha, who welcomed Jesus into her home, was busy serving the Lord in the kitchen, while Mary was serving the Lord by enjoying His presence. Mary’s example represents the choice many servant-leader disciples must learn to prioritize. They must learn to acknowledge when it is best to stop serving the Lord by their “work” so they can serve the Lord in their “rest.”

These four commandments provide a foundational framework to love God. Our priority is to love God first and foremost. He is our only Lord and the only One worthy to sit on the throne of our lives. We are to worship Him alone. Nothing nor anyone should ever come between our relationship with God. He has given us His names as a revelation of who He is, and they should remind us of who we have in Him. We are never to misuse any of His names nor take them in vain. Also, setting aside time to sabbath with the Lord is a must. Doing so will endear us more to God and help us to become more like Him.

Loving People

Servant-leader discipleship equips people to grow in love by helping them to receive God's love, love God, and love others as themselves. When people receive God's love, they enter into a two-stage process of growing in love. The first stage is learning to love God. The outcomes of learning to love God better positions them to enter the second stage, learning to love others as themselves. The two phases of the process of growing in love are sequential and simultaneous. Loving God and people go together. John writes, "If someone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20, NASB). Saying you love God but do not love people is untruthful or, at minimum, a sign of immaturity. The point that needs to be understood here is that loving God is not the end of the story. If you have received God's love and love God, that is a great start, but you still need to learn how to love people, including yourself. John continues, "The one who loves God should love his brother also" (1 John 4:21, NASB). Loving God leads to and requires loving people.

The command, “to love your neighbor as yourself,” is just as imperative as the foremost commandment, “to love God.” However, some people find it harder to love others and themselves than to love God. Humanity tends to love based on conditions or worth. Since God is perfect and worthy to be loved, therefore it is easier to love Him. But what about imperfect humanity? Should we love them? If so, how? John speaks of this when he writes, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7, NASB). Yes, we are to love one another and can only do this because of God’s love. When we are born of God, He gives us the ability to love as He does. It is an unconditional form of love that transcends all other types.

Human forms of conditional love limit the capacity to love people, but God’s love is unconditional. For example, Paul writes, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8, NASB). We did not deserve for Christ to die for us, but He did because of His unconditional love for us. He did not wait until we deserved His love to love us. John continues, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11, NASB). Only God’s

love can surpass the limits of humanity's ability to love. People may not deserve or earn the right to love them, but we should love them anyway. Our motivation to love others comes from God's love for us. "We love, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Therefore, receiving God's love, and learning to love God, equips us to love people.

Servant-leader disciples can learn to love people and increase their understanding of God's intentions for healthy human relationships by reviewing the decalogue's last six commandments. These six commands constitute the second table which encompasses "our duty to ourselves and to one another."⁶ Jesus said the whole Law and the Prophets also depend on the command to love your neighbor as yourself. Paul understood this truth and communicated it to the Romans this way, "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8, NASB). Paul equated loving your neighbor as a fulfillment of the law. He went on to cite four commandments of the decalogue and a summary statement to explain his perspective. He wrote, "For this, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and if there is any other commandment,

it is summed up in the saying, you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Romans 13:9, NASB). The essence of his teaching is that “Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:10, NASB). Therefore, just like the decalogue’s first four commandments are helpful for learning to love God, the decalogue’s last six commandments serve as a valuable metric for knowing how to love people.

The 5th Commandment

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you” (Exodus 20:12, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must recognize the value God places on parent-child relationships. God gave us life through our biological parents. Therefore, He expects everyone to honor those individuals He allows to partner with Him in this process of procreation. I know there are many reasons why some people would have difficulty fulfilling this commandment, primarily if their parents do not fulfill their God-given responsibility to the level of God’s expectations. If they focus on their feelings and perspectives of how well their parents loved them, they might find it challenging to honor them. The

parents may have caused their children pain and suffering. Even so, God expects the children to honor them. This command does not mean the children have to approve of their parent's behavior, but they should hold them in high esteem because they are the people God used to bring them to life. Servant-leader disciples must learn to honor their parents with God's unconditional love, and He will bless them for obeying His command.

The 6th Commandment

“You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must protect the sanctity of human life, their own, and the lives of others. Some define murder as the “intentional, wanton taking of someone's life” and not the “accidental killing, wartime killing, or capital punishment.”⁷ Matthew Henry explains, “it does not forbid killing in lawful war, or in our own necessary defense, nor the magistrate's putting offenders to death, for those things tend to the preserving of life.”⁸ Others disagree regarding wartime killing and capital punishment. Regardless, I think all Christ's followers will agree that God is the giver of life and should be the one to decide when someone's life on earth must come to an end. Therefore, servant-

leader disciples should obey Him, protect life, and not commit murder.

The 7th Commandment

“You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14, NASB).

Servant-leader disciples must recognize the value God places on being faithful to covenantal relationships like marriage. Marriage is a covenantal relationship between a man and a woman that God instituted from Adam and Eve’s creation. When a man and a woman have chosen each other and have come to that moment when they sincerely and publicly join in this covenant for life, they lay down on the altar a holy sacrifice to God, to each other, and to humanity. That union is the closest and most tender into which human beings can come. It is a union founded upon mutual experience and affection, and to Christ’s followers, it is a union in the Lord. “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate” (Matthew 19:6, NASB). This covenantal relationship exists for the happiness and welfare of humankind. When someone commits adultery, they are unfaithful to the marriage covenant, harming themselves and others. Therefore,

servant-leader disciples should be faithful to their covenantal relationships.

The 8th Commandment

“You shall not steal” (Exodus 20:15, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must respect the right of ownership. Loving others means to refrain from taking through improper means anything that belongs to them. Stealing undermines trust, which is a necessary component to build healthy relationships. If people cannot trust others to respect their property or person, they will hinder their relationship. Servant-leader disciples must act justly in regards to those things which belong to others.

The 9th Commandment

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Exodus 20:16, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must not lie or defame another person’s name or reputation. Loving others means speaking the truth about them and not slandering or speaking unjustly. Jesus Christ said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6a, NASB). Those who follow Him should also represent the truth. If not, their behavior will be more in line

with the devil. Jesus said, “the devil is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44b, NASB). Servant-leader disciples will act according to their Lord and always speak the truth about their neighbor.

The 10th Commandment

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor” (Exodus 20:17, NASB). Servant-leader disciples must not lust after or wrongly desire that which belongs to another. This command goes beyond the external actions that would harm other people and deal with the heart’s matter, which harms the coveting one. People may believe it is acceptable to feel jealous or envious, so long as they do not act upon those feelings. But having those types of thoughts and allowing feelings of jealousy or envy to remain in one’s heart is unhealthy. Servant-leader disciples should not allow covetousness to govern their hearts to their detriment. Instead, they should allow God’s love to rule their heart and be content with what they have.

Returning to the law to learn how to love others should not cause you to become bound or entrapped by legalistic

expectations. On the contrary, it should lead you to greater freedom. The underlying principles found in the decalogue help to remind us how God wants us to treat each other. Paul wrote, “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13, NASB). Servant-leader disciples are called to freedom, but they should use that freedom to serve one another through love. He continues, “For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5:14, NASB). So, loving your neighbor as yourself is a vital characteristic of the Christian life empowered by God’s love.

Making Disciples

Jesus’ life and ministry exemplify a firm commitment to the great commandments and demonstrate how loving God and loving people are foundational to the mission of making disciples. Before Jesus’ ascension, He commissioned His disciples to continue His mission. We refer to it as the great commission. What is this great commission? According to Mark, Jesus commanded His disciples to “go into all the world and preach the

gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15, NASB). Mark highlights the mission of proclaiming the gospel to all humankind throughout the world, emphasizing preaching, believing, and baptism (Mark 16:15-16). According to Matthew, Jesus commissioned His disciples to “Go and make disciples of all the nations,” which introduces the mission of making disciples of all the different ethnicities or people groups (Matthew 28:19a, NASB). Matthew’s version also emphasizes baptizing and teaching the disciples to observe all of Jesus’ commands (Matthew 28:19-20). Therefore, the great commission involves going to preach the gospel throughout the world and making disciples of every nation under heaven by baptizing them and teaching them to obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was 1989, and I was on a mission trip with a group of college students to Bolivia’s South American nation. This trip’s objective was to find people who had never heard about Jesus Christ and evangelize them. So, we set out on a small boat to cruise down the *Mamoré* river in search of any signs of people who might be living in the jungles near the river. After an extended length of time, we found human footprints near the river’s edge that went up the hill and disappeared into the bush.

Excited about the possibility, we stopped the boat and began to investigate by following the footprints.

When we arrived at the top of the hill, several men met us carrying spears and machetes. We immediately greeted them with a smile and said, "God bless you!" One of them, who we found out later was the leader of the tribe, responded by saying, "Do you want to see our lagoon?" We were unsure what to make of that response and felt nervous because the situation looked dangerous, but we accepted his invitation. His fellow tribesmen led the way, cutting through the thick brush with their machetes. After a long silent march, we arrived at the lagoon. Then the chief asked a couple of our group to join him and one of his men on a rustic cutout canoe to tour the lagoon. While we navigated the waters, the chief explained how vital their lagoon was to their livelihood. Once we finished touring the lagoon, he invited us to follow them back to their village.

We did not know what to expect, but upon arrival to their village, we were shocked to see all the men, women, and children gathered as if they were waiting for us. Then the chief came up to me and said, "Talk to us about your God." I was surprised. He continued, "We have seen many people navigate down the river,

and they have yelled up to us, God bless you, but none of them have ever stopped. You stopped. You agreed to see our lagoon. Now we want to know who this God is that you mentioned.” He then turned around, signaled for everyone to be seated, and went to take his place next to them, sitting on the ground.

We started to put on some skits and then preached the gospel message. Once I finished preaching, I asked if they wanted to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. No one responded. I asked again and continued to encourage them to decide for Christ, yet no one answered. Then after what seemed like several minutes of awkward silence, a young boy raised his hand. When I saw the child, my heart leaped for joy, but I do not know what came over me. Instead of expressing my delight, I said, “Is this boy the only one brave enough to decide for Christ?” Immediately the chief rose to his feet and approached me. He looked me dead in the eyes and said, “I will accept your God.” Before I could say anything to him, he said something similar to, “You honored us by accepting to see our lagoon. We will follow your God.” The chief perceived our love for him and his people because we showed interest in them and what they valued. God’s love enabled this tribe to receive the preaching of the word of God and believe.

This fantastic story serves as an excellent example of how preaching the gospel is fruitful when God's love manifests by the ones doing the preaching. Making disciples requires the preaching of the gospel, but love must be the basis of that preaching. God's love for people is evident in and through His disciples when they take an interest in others and what they value. The love our group showed to this tribe by leaving our comfort zone to seek them out, stopping on the river, and taking an interest in what they valued (their lagoon) inspired them to follow the God we preached. The results might have been different if we had not chosen to see their lagoon and simply tried preaching at them. Sometimes we forget that preaching God's word is more than words. It involves aligning our actions with our words, blessing people with God's love, and not just yelling out, God bless you!

In making disciples, preaching's initial goal is for people to call on the name of the Lord and be saved, "for whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13, NASB). Every human being, regardless of who they are or where they live, is eligible for salvation by calling upon the name of the Lord. To call on the name of the Lord, people must first believe in Him, but, "How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?"

(Romans 10:14, NASB). Just like the tribe we visited in Bolivia had never heard about the Lord, there are many others in the same situation. They need to hear so that they can believe. One way these people can hear about the Lord is through a preacher. That is why Jesus commissioned His first disciples, and the future generations of disciples, to take the good news of salvation to the nations (Romans 10:15).

When you combine Mark and Matthew's accounts, you develop a simple threefold approach to disciple-making, consisting of preaching, baptizing, and teaching. This process for making disciples begins with the preaching of the gospel. Those who believe call on the name of the Lord, committing to follow Him. The disciple-maker should then baptize these new believers in water, "in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19, NASB). Water baptism is the first step new believers should take. By fulfilling this step, they are obeying Jesus Christ, identifying with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection, and confessing publicly to others that they have decided to follow Him as Lord. The third feature involves teaching them to observe all that Jesus commanded His disciples.

In Matthew 9:35-38, we gain further insight into Jesus' life and ministry and the great commission He gave to His disciples. Jesus was on a disciple-making mission that included teaching, preaching, and healing. "Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness" (Matthew 9:35, NASB). This passage informs us that He not only taught and preached, but He also brought healing to the sick and diseased everywhere He went.

Servant-leader disciples should follow their Master's example and go in search of those who are lost, helpless, and hurting. They need to be among the people serving them at their greatest need. Our souls' enemy uses ingenious strategies to isolate us from the people who need us the most. Servant-leader disciples must not fall into that trap. They need to take hope and healing to the people, inform them of God's grace, and love them into the kingdom.

What do we feel when we look at people? "Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36, NASB). Jesus felt compassion. He saw weary, harassed, scattered, and

helpless people living like sheep having no shepherd. He was moved in His innermost being with compassion. He understood them and identified with their need. He yearned to see them healed, living in community, full of hope and cared for by a faithful Pastor, the good shepherd, and his under-shepherds.

Servant-leader disciples must learn to have the eyes and heart of Jesus. It is all a matter of perspective. Many have been tainted by their negative experiences and unholy preconceived notions about people. We need to learn from the way the Lord views His creation. We must focus on their plight. Sin has trapped humanity, causing them to be bound, lost, blind, and needing rescue and guidance. Jesus mixed with sinners, and so should we. He left us here for that purpose. He wants to continue mixing with the sinners through us as He lives in us.

Jesus loves the world and recognizes how much work there is yet to accomplish to reach them with His love. He also acknowledges that those willing to take up their cross and follow Him in this mission are few and far between. Therefore, He entrusts His disciples with the task of “beseeching the Lord of the harvest to send workers into His harvest,” workers who will enter the harvest field, not wait around for people to come to them.

(Matthew 9:38, NASB). Workers need to be sent out into the fields, not kept away from the harvest. Some leaders complain about their churches being small, yet the Lord says, “The harvest is plentiful” (Matthew 9:37, NASB). Instead of adding more cutting-edge welcome banners, maybe we need to go into the highways and byways looking for shepherd-less people and love them like Jesus.

What moved Jesus into action was the love and compassion He has for people. We need to learn to love people like Jesus loves people. That kind of empathy will motivate us to reach out to them as He does. Also, Jesus knew where to find people. People still gather in cities and villages, but there are other places we can find them. Modern technology provides a tremendous opportunity to reach out to millions of people who are socially connected online. Instead of using our resources to criticize, condemn, and avoid the sinners in the world, we should be using our resources to find them, heal them, disciple them, and send them out to do the same for others. Jesus’ love and compassion are at the heart of servant-leader discipleship.

There is a lot more we can and will say about the particulars of making disciples. However, this section serves as a basis of

understanding upon which the later sections of this book will build. The second part of this book will further develop the disciple-making process and include servant-leadership principles to explain servant-leader discipleship.

Notes

¹ The origin of this fable can be traced to Bennett Cerf who published “Try and Stop Me” in the Titusville, Pennsylvania Herald on June 13, 1950.

² Hayford, J. (Ed.) (2002). *New Spirit-filled life Bible*. Thomas Nelson, Inc.

³ G25 - αγαπαō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=G25&t=N>
ASB

⁴ Henry, M. (1 Mar, 1996). Commentary on Exodus 20 by Matthew Henry. Retrieved from https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Exd/Exd_020.cfm

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Hayford, J. (Ed.) (2002). *New Spirit-filled life Bible*. Thomas Nelson, Inc.

⁸ Henry, M. (1 Mar, 1996). Commentary on Exodus 20 by Matthew Henry. Retrieved from https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Exd/Exd_020.cfm

Chapter 3:

Being, Doing, and The Fruit of the Spirit

- The Ethical Being and Doing
- Christlike Behavior
- The Fruit of the Spirit
- Be Fruitful and Multiply

In the previous chapter, we learned that it is vital to have a great commitment to the great commandment and the great commission. Servant-leader disciples must learn to love God, love people, and make disciples. Fortunately, we have Jesus' life and ministry to show us the way. Jesus exemplified both the character and conduct required to fulfill the great commandment and the great commission. Peter G. Northouse, in his book *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, posits how exemplary leaders, such as Jesus, set a personal example for others by their behaviors, which flow from their character.¹ Through His life and ministry, Jesus' character and conduct modeled the way to love God, love people, and make disciples.

The Ethical Being and Doing

There are two questions people can ask about their ethical being and doing. Who am I? and What do I do? These questions refer to their character and conduct. The first question, regarding character, is undoubtedly the most significant issue people must address. Character is also the primary thing people should strive to develop. People judge others for who they are based on their actions. One of the reasons for this is because doing is an outflow of being. Who people are deep down inside will manifest in the decisions they make and the actions they take.

Jesus illustrates this point with the following correlation. “So, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit” (Matthew 7:17-18, NASB). The tree’s nature typically determines the kind of fruit it produces. Likewise, a person’s nature generally influences the fruit they produce, evidenced in their conduct. A godly character will produce godly behavior, and sinful nature will produce sinful behavior. Jesus said, “You will know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:20, NASB). Therefore, just like it is possible to identify a tree by its fruit, it is feasible to

know who people are by their actions because their conduct reveals their character.

People act according to who they are, especially when they relax and are comfortable in the situation. Even though some people try to fool others by putting on a façade, eventually, their true character comes through. Living as a hypocrite is unethical and more complicated than simply relaxing and being themselves. However, being themselves is daunting for some people because they are currently not who they would like to be. They need to be transformed. The good news is since character is based on virtue, values, and beliefs, people can develop virtuous character. If they are unhappy with their character's nature, they can change it by developing new habits that align to and reinforce their preferred virtue, values, and beliefs.

I like to say it this way; people must become to behave and behave to become. Character and conduct work together, and each influences the other. People's character determines or drives their behavior, but their behavior can also change their character. Their intentional actions can help them to transform their character by developing new habits. A person can start acting according to the kind of person they aspire to become. Eventually,

they will establish habitual behavior patterns that will transform them into the type of person they desire. For example, dishonest people tell lies, while honest people speak the truth. If dishonest people want to become truthful, they can start the change by making a conscious choice always to tell the truth. Continuously speaking the truth over a significant period will help them become a more truthful person. Their behavior will impact their character. Servant-leader disciples must strive to become the best possible version of themselves by adopting and implementing virtuous actions that will transform their being.

Christlike Behavior

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches His disciples whom they should become by exhorting them about their behavior. He begins with a series of sayings referred to as the beatitudes. I would like to call them the **be**-attitudes, as they exhort people to have certain attitudes that manifest in their **behaviors**. Jesus' teachings reveal universal character traits and behaviors that exemplify what is good and what is bad. Jesus teaches people to be humble, be meek, be righteous, be merciful, be pure in heart, be peacemakers, be influencers, be respectful, be

servants, be just, be honest, be concerned for others, be forgiving, be faithful, be reconcilers, be loving, be prayerful, be gracious, be giving, be examples, be fruitful, be good, be wise, and be glad. (See Figure 4). He also teaches them not to be judgmental, anxious, vindictive, false, hypocritical, foolish, or harmful.

Behaving to become sounds simple, but it requires the help of the Holy Spirit. Paul sheds light on the battle that rages within humanity that impedes them from doing what they want. Paul explains how this battle is between the flesh and the Spirit, “For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please” (Galatians 5:17, NASB). Due to the sinful nature that resides in people, they cannot achieve the desired results independently. They need the power and presence of the Spirit of God to help them overcome their sinful nature and become godly servant-leader disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus told Nicodemus, “You must be born again,” indicating that this new birth referred to being “born of the Spirit” (John 3:3-8, NASB). People must first be born of the Spirit to break free from the sinful nature and then learn to walk in this new way of life.

Figure 4 – The Be-Attitudes

The Be-Attitudes					
Humble	Meek	Righteous	Merciful	Pure in Heart	Peacemakers
Influencers	Respectful	Servants	Just	Honest	Concerned for Others
Forgiving	Faithful	Reconcilers	Loving	Prayerful	Gracious
Giving	Examples	Fruitful	Good	Wise	Glad

Paul encourages the Galatians to walk in the Spirit so that they will have the power to resist carrying out the flesh’s desire. The Spirit empowers people to overcome the deeds of the flesh, “which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these” (Galatians 5:19-20, NASB). Paul knows that those who belong to Christ can “lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit” and “put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Ephesians 4:22-24, NASB). Humankind needs to partner with the Holy Spirit. As if they were changing clothes, they must consciously and voluntarily act to lay

aside their previous undesired behaviors and put on the new way of living. The Spirit enables people to partner with Him in this transforming work by renewing the spirit of their mind and producing the corresponding fruit that reflects Christlike character.

With the Holy Spirit's help, it is possible to become the kind of people who live their lives according to Jesus' standards highlighted in the Sermon on the Mount and found throughout the rest of Scripture. Jesus offers the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to His followers. He told His disciples, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8a, NASB). The Holy Spirit partners with born-again believers empowering them to become more Christlike by producing the fruit of the Spirit. Because of the Holy Spirit's resident power and presence, sinful humanity can transform into godly people that will act according to the virtues Jesus promotes through His life and ministry. Their godly behavior will be a natural outflow of their Christlike character produced in partnership with the Holy Spirit.

The Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit refers to nine recognizable virtues in a servant-leader disciple's life resulting from the Holy Spirit's transformative power helping them "to become conformed" to Christ's image (Rom. 8:29). Paul lists these nine characteristics to define the fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23, NASB). These virtues speak of the fruit of a servant-leader disciple's character. In essence, the fruit of the Spirit is love expressed in various ways because love encompasses all of these virtues. Notice how Paul refers to them as the fruit (*karpos*), singular.² They are not nine distinctive fruits. The use of the singular form of the term suggests the unity of the Lord's character the Spirit produces in everyone born again and walking in the Spirit, all in contrast with the disorderly and often reciprocally antagonistic deeds of the flesh.³

These virtues grow and mature progressively as the servant-leader disciple abides in Christ. They are not the result of self-discipline but the natural result of growing into Christ-likeness. Although they grow from choosing to walk in the Spirit, they do not come solely due to human efforts. Instead, the Spirit of God

produces them in partnership with humanity. They grow out of surrender to Christ's lordship. When someone submits their life to Jesus Christ, surrendering control and walking in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will produce all of these graces in ever-increasing measure.⁴ Servant-leader discipleship relies on the Holy Spirit to produce these virtues in the people who submit to the process.

The fruit of the Spirit's nine virtues also describes Jesus' character and conduct. From an ontological perspective, these virtues are equivalent to the person of Jesus. Jesus not only manifests His person in His conduct but also in His leadership because a person's character forms the basis for how they lead.⁵ He is a loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, pleasant, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled person and servant-leader. Those who have the Spirit of God and abide in Christ will become like Him and lead like Him.

Servant-leader discipleship helps people become like Jesus and lead like Jesus by learning to walk in the Spirit, being filled with the Spirit to overflowing and displaying the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit's work in their lives causes them to grow in love for the work of service. It is not a matter of works-based righteousness; it is a matter of merely being a Spirit-filled disciple who is pouring

out what is overflowing from within. The ultimate fulfillment occurs when people can simply relax and be themselves and know that their actions will align with Christlike conduct. For example, God is love, and therefore, everything He does is loving.

Remember, a person's being will manifest in their doing. They resemble a sponge that releases whatever it has absorbed. No matter what situation in life squeezes them, whatever is inside of them will come out. If people are filled with the Spirit of God, then the fruit of the Spirit will flow from them.

The following defines the fruit of the Spirit's nine virtues as it pertains to a servant-leader disciple's attitude toward God, social relationships, and Christian principles of conduct.⁶

Love (*agapē*)⁷ – The term *agapē* refers to “an undefeatable benevolence and unconquerable goodwill that always seeks the highest good of the other person,” regardless of the other person's behavior.⁸ Those who have the fruit of *agapē*, express a “self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return, and does not consider the worth of its object.”⁹ The Holy Spirit produces *agapē* for God and people expressed via implicit obedience to His commandments. This type of love is not based on feelings; instead, it is grounded in conviction. It does not always flow from

humanity's natural inclinations, nor does it focus only upon those with whom it has some affinity; it seeks everyone's welfare.¹⁰

Agapē enables servant-leader disciples to care for and respect the individuals they serve, and their followers feel accepted and cared for by their love.¹¹

Joy (*chara*)¹² – The Holy Spirit produces a joy that goes beyond the fleeting happiness that is contingent upon circumstances. It is more than a simple emotion. Joy is constant undergirding contentment that sustains and strengthens the maturing disciple, “for the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10, NASB). This habitual sense of gladness comes from faith in Christ and the reassurance of belonging to God's family. Peter writes, “though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8, NASB). Faith in Christ leads people to rejoice and be glad even when things do not turn out favorably. Joy is a foundational component of living in God's kingdom. Paul held, “The kingdom of God is not eating or drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17, NASB). Holy Spirit joy enables servant-leader disciples to lead confidently and convey hope to those they serve.

Peace (*eirēnē*)¹³ – The term *eirēnē* refers to “a state of rest, quietness, and calmness; an absence of strife; tranquility, and it generally denotes a perfect well-being.”¹⁴ The Holy Spirit, who is the Helper the Father sent in Jesus’ name, cultivates this sustaining peace in the heart of servant-leader disciples (John 14:26). As they become more like Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of peace, they learn to live peacefully and become peacemakers. They remain calm in the midst of life’s storms, bring tranquility to others, and help to resolve conflicts.

Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful” (John 14:27, NASB). God gives peace that is permanent and trustworthy. By producing this Christlike peace in the servant-leader disciple’s heart, the Spirit helps them love God and love people by enabling them to live in harmony with God and humankind, regardless of the circumstances.

Patience (*makrothymia*)¹⁵ – The term *makrothymia* “denotes lenience, forbearance, fortitude, patient endurance, and longsuffering”¹⁶ It also refers to “the ability to endure persecution and ill-treatment, describing a person who has the power to

exercise revenge but instead exercises restraint.”¹⁷ Patience in this context refers to a steadfast love that endures in all situations, especially when hardships arise in relationships. Paul calls for unity in the Spirit through patience that shows tolerance for one another in love (Ephesians 4:2). The Holy Spirit enables servant-leader disciples with a positive steadfastness that courageously perseveres when others lose heart and give up.

Kindness (*chrēstotēs*)¹⁸ – The term *chrēstotēs* refers to “goodness in action, sweetness of disposition, gentleness in dealing with others, benevolence, kindness, and affability.”¹⁹ Christ’s followers must “be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32, NASB). Jesus said, “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men” (Luke 6:35, NASB). The Holy Spirit enables servant-leader disciples to act with godly graciousness towards others and for their wellbeing, even if they are wearing on their patience or behaving like enemies. The Holy Spirit does this by removing abrasive qualities and producing a gentle disposition and benevolent attitude towards humankind.

Goodness (*agathōsynē*)²⁰ – The term *agathōsynē* refers to “beneficence, kindness in actual manifestation, virtue equipped for action, a bountiful propensity both to will and to do what is good, and intrinsic goodness producing a generosity and a Godlike state or being.”²¹ Whereas kindness speaks to the heart’s disposition, goodness relates to the carrying out of that temperament. Goodness, which combines being good with doing good, helps the beloved imitate what is good because “the one who does good is of God” (3 John 1:11, NASB).²² The Holy Spirit produces goodness in servant-leader disciples, enabling them to have a kindly character and practice goodness.

Faithfulness (*pistis*)²³ – The term *pistis* denotes faith, and in this context, it refers to “confidence, trust, reliance, and trustworthiness.”²⁴ God’s faithfulness inspires people to have an “inward confidence, assurance, trust, and reliance in Him and His word.”²⁵ Likewise, those who demonstrate that they are steadfast, reliable, and trustworthy regardless of the circumstances inspire others to trust and have confidence in them. Jesus spoke of this faithfulness in word and deeds when He said, “let your statement be yes, yes or no, no; anything beyond this is evil” (Matthew 5:37, NASB). Those who are honest and reliable do not need to

say, I promise, as if that phrase is a guarantee. Their word is sufficient. The Holy Spirit develops this Christlike virtue in servant-leader disciples, helping them be faithful to God and humankind.

Gentleness (*prautēs*)²⁶ – The term *prautēs* refers to “a disposition that is even-tempered, tranquil, balanced in spirit, unpretentious, and that has the passions under control.”²⁷ Gentleness is not to be misunderstood as weakness. On the contrary, it is the ability to possess power and strength under control. “The person who possesses this quality pardons injuries, corrects faults, and rules his own spirit well.”²⁸ Jesus said, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29, NASB). The Holy Spirit produces gentleness in the heart of servant-leader disciples enabling them to be humble, equitable, evenhanded, and considerate toward others.

Self-control (*egkrateia*)²⁹ – The term *egkrateia* refers to self-control as “the virtue of those who master their desires and passions, especially their sensual appetites.”³⁰ This virtue helps servant-leader disciples to restrain themselves morally when tempted by evil. They can voluntarily abstain from anything that

hinders experiencing God's purposes in their lives or brings destructive harm to another through the "controlling power of the will under the operation of the Spirit of God."³¹ The Holy Spirit empowers servant-leader disciples with the willpower necessary to make moral decisions and avoid sinful behavior.

We have now defined Paul's list of nine virtues that the Spirit produces in the lives of Christ's followers. These virtues help servant-leader disciples transform their being and their doing, enabling them to love God, love people, and make disciples. Working harmoniously, they empower servant-leader disciples to love God more profoundly by transforming their attitude toward God, loving people by improving the quality of their social relationships, and multiplying disciples through observing Christian principles of conduct.

Be Fruitful and Multiply

I want to conclude this chapter with a call to fruitfulness and multiplication. When God created Adam and Eve, "God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply," commissioning them to "fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Genesis 1:28,

NASB). This desire for fruitfulness and multiplication is also evident in Jesus' instructions to His disciples. Jesus explained to them how He was the true vine, His Father the vinedresser, and they were the branches. Using this example, He emphasized how crucial it was for the branches to bear fruit. If they did not bear fruit, the Father would take them away. If they did, the Father would prune them to bear more fruit (John 15:2). After explaining how abiding in Him will produce much fruit, Jesus concludes, "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples" (John 15:8, NASB). Jesus chose His disciples and appointed them so they "would go and bear fruit" (John 15:16, NASB). This mission continues with contemporary disciples.

What kind of fruit are the disciples supposed to bear? I believe there are two types of fruit the Lord has in mind. The first fruit God desires of His followers is for them to become more Christlike.³² This fruit refers to the Holy Spirit's work of transforming the disciple's character by producing the virtuous fruit this chapter addresses. The second fruit refers to multiplying disciples. When Jesus told His disciples that He appointed them to bear fruit, He also referred to fruitfulness in disciple-making.

I hope that every Christ-follower will grow in their capacity to love and contribute to the multiplication of disciples, but not just any kind of disciples. I would love to see an exponential proliferation of servant-leader disciples. To better understand what I mean, let us move on to the next part of this book which addresses the art of making servant-leader disciples.

NOTES

- ¹ Northouse, P. G., (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th Ed.), 174. SAGE.
- ² G2590 - karpos - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G2590&t=NASB95>
- ³ Vine, W. (24 Jun, 1996). Fruit (Bear), Fruitful, Unfruitful – Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/dictionary/viewtopic.cfm>
- ⁴ Hayford, J. (Ed.) (2002). *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1638. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ⁵ Bennis, W. (2004). Foreword: Why servant-leadership matters. In Spears, L., & Lawrence, M. *Practicing servant-leadership: Succeeding through trust, bravery, and forgiveness*, xi-xvi. Jossey-Bass.
- ⁶ Hayford, J. (Ed.) (2002). *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1638. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ⁷ G26 - agapē - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G26&t=NASB95>
- ⁸ Mills, D., (2002). Love. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1556. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1984). *An Expository Dictionary of biblical words*. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ¹¹ Mundt, D. K. (2020). *Empowering leadership: How to develop empowered leaders*, 156. Author.
- ¹² G5479 - chara - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G5479&t=NASB95>
- ¹³ G1515 - eirēnē - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G1515&t=NASB95>
- ¹⁴ Mills, D., (2002). Peace. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1388. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ¹⁵ G3115 - makrothymia - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G3115&t=NASB95>

- ¹⁶ Mills, D., (2002). Patience. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1736. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ G5544 - chrēstotēs - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G5544&t=NASB95>
- ¹⁹ Mills, D., (2002). Patience. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1638. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ²⁰ G19 - agathōsynē - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G19&t=NASB95>
- ²¹ Mills, D., (2002). Goodness. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1713. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ G4102 - pistis - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G4102&t=NASB95>
- ²⁴ Mills, D., (2002). Faith. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1372. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ G4240 - prautēs - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G4240&t=NASB95>
- ²⁷ Mills, D., (2002). Gentleness. In Hayford, J. (Ed.), *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1706. Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ G1466 - egkrateia - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G1466&t=NASB95>
- ³⁰ G1466 - egkrateia - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G1466&t=NASB95>
- ³¹ Vine, W. (24 Jun, 1996). Temperance, Temperate – Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/dictionary/viewtopic.cfm>
- ³² Hayford, J. (Ed.) (2002). *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1471. Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Part Two:

The Art of Making Servant-Leader Disciples

Chapter 4:

Servant-Leadership Theory

- Leadership
- Followership
- Greenleaf's Servant-Leadership Theory
- Spears' Ten Characteristics of Servant-Leaders
- Patterson's Model of Servant-Leadership

As a foundation for discussing servant-leadership theory, this chapter first addresses the multiple meanings of leadership and followership. Reflecting upon the several components of these complex concept's definitions will provide a more robust comprehension and better inform servant-leadership theory. Then it focuses on Greenleaf's servant-leadership theory, Spears' ten characteristics of servant-leaders, and Patterson's model of servant-leadership.

Leadership

What is leadership? There is no straightforward answer.

Although many have tried to define leadership and provide many diverse definitions for the term, there doesn't seem to be a consensus or a standard definition for leadership. For those who would like to reduce the definition to a simple statement, this might prove frustrating. However, having such a wealth of different elements and components within the multitude of meanings helps us gain much better and holistic comprehension.

For the last hundred years or so, many have researched and written about leadership. J. C. Rost provides a concise history of the evolution of leadership definitions in the 20th century.¹ In the early decades, those who defined leadership emphasized control and centralization of power. Peter Northouse explains how there are two significant kinds of power: position power and personal power. The first has to do with the title or position a person has within an organization, and the second has to do with the power ascribed to them by their followers.² In the thirties, the focus of defining leadership became traits, including the emerging perspective of leadership as influence, instead of dominion.³ This emphasis included the idea that leaders may possess unique

qualities that make them naturally effective leaders. From the forties to the sixties, the definitions focused more on group theories based on leadership behaviors and effectiveness. The seventies introduced the transactional side of leadership, where the leaders encourage their followers to perform for particular goals that represent their mutual values and motivations.⁴ The eighties saw leadership's nature rise to its apex in scholarly and popular consciousness. Many definitions surfaced, most of which continued to emphasize influence, traits, and transformation.⁵ Since then, many continue defining leadership but have yet to agree upon a standard definition.

Despite the multitude of ways in which scholars conceptualize leadership, be it group processes, personality perspectives, behaviors, and skills, there are four central components to leadership: 1) Leadership is a process, 2) Leadership involves influence, 3) Leadership occurs in groups, and 4) Leadership involves common goals.⁶ Northouse combines these four components to form the following definition: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."⁷ The second component of this definition is the crux of leadership. The ability to influence, which

can affect the character, development, and behavior of others, is a privilege and a great responsibility for which leaders are accountable.

Similarly, Yukl defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.”⁸ Leaders influence subordinates, those over whom they have formal authority, and followers, those who acknowledge the leader irrespective of the amount of formal authority the leader may have over them.⁹ According to this definition, it is a leader’s responsibility to help subordinates and followers understand and agree about necessary tasks and procedures.

Banks and Ledbetter believe leadership “involves a person, group, or organization who shows the way in an area of life and in doing so both influences and empowers enough people to bring about a change in that area.”¹⁰ Their definition highlights these four components: “1) The person of the leader, 2) The relationship between leader and follower, 3) The task a leader is attempting to accomplish, and 4) The influence of the context or setting in which a leader leads.”¹¹ Once again, influence is the

critical factor.

Bennis posits, “Our contemporary views of leadership are entwined with our notions of heroism, so much so that the distinction between “leaders” and “hero” (or “celebrity,” for that matter) often becomes blurred.”¹² According to the Charismatic theory, these heroic leaders possess “a special power to attract and inspire followers through a compelling vision and perceptions of extraordinary capabilities.”¹³

Bruce Winston and Kathleen Patterson provide an excellent integrative definition of leadership in terms of the leader. For our purpose, I will only quote the first sentence: “A leader is one or more people who selects, equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization’s mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted, coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives.”¹⁴ I highly recommend reading their entire description as it provides extensive insight into contemporary leadership.

Finally, J. Robert Clinton defines a leader as a person with God-given capacity and God-given responsibility who influences

a group of followers towards God's purposes for the group.¹⁵ His definition includes, what I like to call, the God factor. It presents God as the origin of empowerment. He is the person who gives people the ability to lead and the responsibility to lead. God empowers them with the authority to influence a group of followers to accomplish whatever task or assignment He purposes for them.

Followership

What is followership? Simply stated, followership is “the process of following or being guided by a leader.”¹⁶ Most definitions of leadership include the followership concept. Linking followership to leadership became popular in the late nineteen eighties with the business professor and management consultant Robert Kelley. He defines followership as “the active engagement in helping an organization or a cause succeed while exercising independent, critical judgment of goals, tasks, potential problems, and methods.”¹⁷ Followers are just as important as leaders to an organization's success.

When most people think of followers, what do they think? Do they have positive or negative thoughts? There is a common

negative stereotype that views followers as passive sheep needing a strong leader to motivate and direct them.¹⁸ That description is not an accurate representation of followers. The Old High German roots for the words follower and leader are very similar. The word follower meant “to assist, help, succor, or minister to,” and the word leader meant “to undergo, suffer, or endure.” Followers care for the leaders from a place of honor. Their relationship with their leaders is a symbiotic one between equals.¹⁹

Leadership and followership are a dialectic where each depends on the other, for there can be no leaders without followers and no followers without leaders.²⁰ Even though many may focus more on leadership and ascribe success to them, there would be no leadership without followers. How people within a group or organization follow their leaders and react to their leadership is critical to the organization’s success. Just like there are different leadership styles, there are different followership styles.²¹ (See Figure 5). Do they follow blindly, or can they interact with the leader by expressing their disagreements in constructive ways? Do they push back on leadership and undermine their authority? Can they think on their own, or do they always need to be told what to do?

Figure 5 – Robert Kelley’s Five Followership Styles

Followership Styles
Sheep or Passive Followers = they are rudderless and mindless; they rely on others to think for them, they require substantial motivation and direction from the leader.
Yes-People or Conformist Followers = they are aggressively dependent on leaders for direction, they will do whatever they are told but must be told, they know their place and don’t question the social order always yielding to the leader’s views or judgements.
Pragmatic Followers = they shun their independence for political expediency, they avoid taking a strong position that crosses powerful people, they are constantly monitoring the wind direction, and their motto is “better safe than sorry.”
Alienated Followers = they are very independent critical thinkers but they are passive or negative, cynical and skeptical, tearing down what the leader is building up.
Star Followers = they think for themselves and actively engage with the leader to achieve success, they don’t follow blindly, but when they disagree they do so constructively, they fulfill their tasks with energy, they are self-starters, creative problem solvers, and they use their gifts for the benefit of all.

(Adapted from Kelley, 2010, pp. 181-182)

Jesus Christ exemplified followership throughout His life on earth. The recorded Biblical accounts of His life and ministry illustrate how Jesus followed God the Father’s leadership.

Likewise, Servant-leader disciples must follow Jesus and His example, “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9, NASB). The outflow of humble followership will be godly leadership. However, if a servant-leader disciple’s leadership “is not well-grounded in followership, following Jesus, then it is dangerous to both the church and the world.”²² Therefore, the related concepts of leadership and followership are imperative and must be understood for ecclesial organizations to fulfill their mission effectively.

Greenleaf’s Servant-Leadership Theory

Servant-leadership is an approach to leadership Robert K. Greenleaf introduced over 50 years ago, and it “continues to create a quiet revolution in workplaces around the world.”²³ Since then, servant-leadership’s concept and practice have gained more significant influence across many fields, including for-profit and non-profit organizations. Greenleaf shares how “The servant-leader concept emerged after a deep involvement with colleges and universities during the period of campus turmoil in the late 1960s and early 1970s.”²⁴ In 1969, Greenleaf presented servant-leadership in the ground-breaking essay, *The Servant as Leader*.

His concern for the prevalent student attitudes of his time, “which seemed devoid of hope,” motivated him to write this essay.²⁵ His essay became a seminal work that continues to serve as the basis of understanding par excellence for servant-leadership.

We write servant-leadership with a hyphen to signify that it is a compound noun that describes a paradox of equals, where the person is simultaneously a servant and a leader. When written without the hyphen, the phrase represents one of many leadership types, emphasizing leadership, where ‘servant’ merely functions as an adjective modifying ‘leadership.’²⁶ Trompenaars and Voerman consider that the hyphen between servant and leadership represents the secret of the servant-leader, “the essence, integration, and core meaning of this compound noun.”²⁷ Therefore, the hyphenated phrase “servant-leadership” signifies the integration and synthesis between a person who is concurrently a servant and a leader.

The servant-leadership theory emphasizes servanthood, which in servant-leadership refers to serving others as the priority and leadership secondary.²⁸ It places service before leadership because it posits that the person must be a servant first and then a leader. Serving others as a priority is what distinguishes servant-

leadership from other leadership theories. Other theories, such as transformational leadership, also focus on serving the followers, but they serve them as a means to fulfill the organization's bottom line or mission. The followers are not the priority.

Servant-leadership involves servant-leaders who place the good of followers over their self-interests and emphasize follower development. It is customary for leaders to put their organization's bottom line as their priority. Even churches tend to prioritize the mission over the people. Servant-leadership introduces a new form of leadership that places serving others as the top priority.²⁹ People become more important than the bottom line or the mission. This approach requires leaders to put the good of the followers over their self-interests.³⁰ Servant-leaders have a deep desire to help others and ensure that they meet their highest priority needs.³¹ Servant-leaders want their followers to grow. That is why they emphasize follower development. They want to ensure that those they serve are “growing as persons, becoming healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely to become servants themselves.”³² For them, the welfare of those they lead must come first.

For example, when I was a teenager, I belonged to the California Cadet Corps. During the final interview in a competition for the overall outstanding cadet of California, the interviewers asked me the following question. “Sergeant Vallejo. What is more important, the welfare of the men or the accomplishment of the mission?” I understood they were seeking to know what I considered the ultimate priority. My response was, “Sir, the accomplishment of the mission while looking out for the welfare of the men, sir.” In my estimation, there was a vital connection between the two and not an either-or situation. My answer inferred that a leader must keep the troops safe for fulfilling the mission, but the mission was the priority. A servant-leadership approach to this situation would prioritize the troop’s welfare for their sake, not simply to get them to fulfill the mission. This approach considers people the priority, and serving them is the motivation. The mission is still essential, and servant-leaders do not lose sight of it, but they focus on caring for the people as they perform their work. People are not a means to an end; they are the end.

Servanthood from a Christian perspective can also refer to serving God. Santos posits, servanthood refers to “serving Jesus

and His community of faithful ones” and “to the discipleship motif of renouncing domineering power and exercising service on behalf of others.”³³ Therefore, in servant-leader discipleship, we help people learn to serve God before serving others. This sequence does not hinder servant-leadership’s focus because serving God results in serving others. Servant-leader disciples exemplify servanthood “characterized by mutual service, by humility in discipleship and by becoming free to give of oneself to others.”³⁴ They love and serve God above all else while concurrently learning to love and serve humanity.

Greenleaf drew from the historical connection between service and leadership to coin the compound noun servant-leadership and create the distinctive model it now represents.³⁵ Many of the servant-leadership principles existed for many years. For example, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ reveal many of the characteristics of contemporary servant-leadership. Jesus became a servant and strived to serve people first. He made sure to care for the people’s needs, helping those who came to Him, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Jesus showered them with love, compassion, empowerment, and healing, among many other things. The people recognized Him as a great man

who served them but may not have understood that He was the ruler of the universe, the God of creation, and the eternal Lord. Jesus was a servant-leader.

Greenleaf brought together many pre-existing servant-leadership principles to form a new leadership theory where the servant-leader is a servant first. His teachings about servant-leadership align with the divine attributes of Jesus' servant character, which prove to be effective and influential in leadership practice.³⁶ Sendjaya explains how the servant-leadership approach reflects an internal orientation of the heart to serve others.³⁷ Servant-leaders have an intrinsic desire to serve first and then exercise their leadership based on their servant nature. Therefore, servant-leadership is ontological because it flows from the person's being and not merely their performance.³⁸ This understanding encourages the person to become a servant and not only behave as such. From this being will flow certain behaviors.

Greenleaf discerned the idea of servant-leadership while reading Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East*. Hesse wrote about Leo, a servant who performed many menial duties throughout the journey to help everyone. Leo's service to the group ensured that everything went fine, but when Leo vanishes, the group loses its

bearings and forsakes the trip. The narrator finally realizes that Leo was not only the servant assigned to the group. He was also the sponsoring organization's leader. Greenleaf learned an important lesson from this story, that "the great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness."³⁹ Greenleaf's affirmation that the great leader is seen as servant first "evokes biblical imagery."⁴⁰ He explains that "The servant-leader is servant first – as Leo was portrayed. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead."⁴¹ That is why we use the compound noun of servant-leader, writing servant first. Servant-leaders are servants and leaders concurrently, just as Leo, but they are servants first. They are people whose leadership flows from who they are, namely a servant and a leader. They have the heart of a servant and the capacity to lead. Their servant's character manifests in ethical and caring conduct towards those they serve.

Spears suggests that "the words servant and leader are usually thought of as being opposites."⁴² However, servant-leadership theory brings them together in a creative way, forming a new paradox that is both logical and intuitive. The idea of "Servant-leadership presents a counterintuitive paradigm of power in

leadership in which the leader gives up control to empower others to reach their fullest potential for the good of the organization and society as a whole.”⁴³ Greenleaf’s paradoxical ideas of servants acting as leaders set the course for servant-leadership’s contemporary global acceptance across all organizations. His writings continue to serve as the foundational works upon which organizations build their servant-leadership approach.

Spears’ Ten Characteristics of Servant-Leaders

Among the several scholars that have contributed lists of servant-leadership dimensions is Larry C. Spears. He built upon Greenleaf’s foundational work to facilitate understanding of this new leadership concept for a broader spectrum of people. After several years of thoughtfully contemplating Greenleaf’s teachings, Spears recognized the following group of ten servant-leadership characteristics he believes are critically significant: “Listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.”⁴⁴ (See Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Spears’ Servant-Leadership Characteristics

Ten Servant-Leadership Characteristics	
<p>Listening Communicating by listening first, with receptivity for what others say.</p>	<p>Empathy Standing in other people’s shoes and seeing the world from their perspective.</p>
<p>Healing Caring about the personal well-being of followers, helping them to become whole.</p>	<p>Awareness Understanding oneself and the impact one has on others.</p>
<p>Persuasion Clear and persistent communication that convinces rather than coerces.</p>	<p>Conceptualization Seeing the big picture, providing a clear sense of goals and direction.</p>
<p>Foresight Foreseeing the future, based on the past and present trends.</p>	<p>Stewardship Taking responsibility for the trust received; the people, organization, and society.</p>
<p>Commitment to the growth of people: Helping followers grow personally and professionally.</p>	<p>Building Community Providing a place where people feel safe and connected with others while remaining able to express their uniqueness.</p>

(Adapted from Northouse, 2016, pp. 227-229)

These characteristics, which focus on the behavioral aspects of servant-leadership, speak “more directly to many other people as their initial introduction to servant-leadership.”⁴⁵ Steven Crowther opines, “These ten concepts have been researched and developed for use as components of servant-leadership with good progress of this model as an effective form of leadership.”⁴⁶ This list is not exhaustive, but it “serves to communicate the power and promise that this concept offers to those who are open to its invitation and challenge.”⁴⁷ Jesus’ life and ministry exemplify all of these ten characteristics “that are central to the development of servant-leaders.”⁴⁸ He serves as the ultimate leader and in Him “is found the example of a servant-leader who, though fully divine, took on humanity and the human experience.”⁴⁹

For some, practicing servant-leadership might come naturally, but others must learn to become a servant-leader. Jesus exhorted His disciples to become servants, which is the first goal of servant-leadership (Mark 10:43).⁵⁰ Therefore, it must be possible for anyone to become a servant. People’s past experiences, the mentors they follow, and servant-leader habits’ daily practice can serve to form a servant-leader.⁵¹ As I mentioned previously, they can behave to become. Bruce Winston agrees that it is possible “to

train those who desire to be servant-leaders.”⁵² Regardless of innate attributes, people can become servant-leaders.

I conclude this portion with a word of caution. We must not make the mistake of simply trying to add servant-leader behaviors to our leadership repertoire without experiencing genuine ontological transformation. Steven Crowther explains, “Leadership is ontological in that leadership proceeds from the being of the person and not just the behavior of the person.”⁵³ When the pressures of life squeeze us, who we are and what is inside us will come out. That is why we must become a servant, and not just add servant-leadership behaviors. The behavioral aspect of servant-leadership is helpful, but its ontological nature is indispensable.

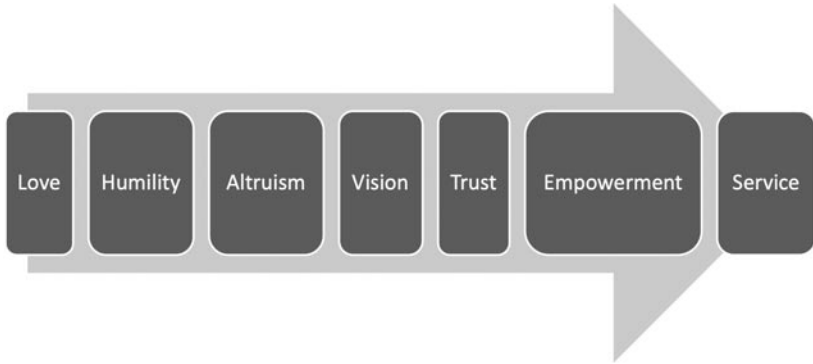
Patterson’s Model of Servant-Leadership

This section will address servant-leadership’s ontological nature as it examines Patterson’s model of servant-leadership. Dr. Kathleen A. Patterson is a servant-leadership specialist who enriched Greenleaf’s teachings on servant-leadership by introducing a missing piece to the concept’s puzzle. Her contributions define the theoretical basis for servant-leadership

and detail seven theoretical constructs that emerge to form a virtue-based model of servant-leadership. She affirms that servant-leadership is a virtuous theory because it speaks to the idea of doing the right things with a focus on moral character.⁵⁴ Before her input, most of the research and information on servant-leadership focused on the leader's behavioral aspects. Patterson used those conceptual foundations but launched in a different direction. She took an ontological approach to servant-leadership. Her method is ontological because it focuses on people's character, who they are, rather than on their behaviors, what they do.⁵⁵ Who people are is the most critical component because servant-leadership flows from their being, not their doing.

Patterson's approach to servant-leadership augments "the prevailing model of servant-leadership with Christian principles, such as *agapaō* love."⁵⁶ The seven virtuous constructs are *agapaō* love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service. These virtues work sequentially, starting with *agapaō* love, each additional virtue building upon the previous one and culminating in service.⁵⁷ (See Figure 7).

Figure 7 – Patterson’s Seven Virtuous Construct



According to this model, servant-leader disciples should serve from a motivation of love for humankind. This moral love inspires the person “to do the right thing at the right time for the right reasons.”⁵⁸ Servant-leader disciples must be humble and altruistic, “not overestimating their merits” and “helping others just for the sake of helping.”⁵⁹ They can envision the future, making decisions that benefit the people they serve and engendering trust by keeping their commitments. Through empowerment, servant-leader disciples should allow people to proceed toward their goals, helping them make their dreams a reality, culminating in service, the heart of servant-leadership.⁶⁰ The following paragraphs give a brief description of each virtue.

Agapaō Love is the first virtue from which all the other virtues flow. As we defined in the first part of this book, God’s

love serves as the “cornerstone of the servant-leadership / follower relationship.”⁶¹ It is what makes servant-leader discipleship possible and powerful. Van Dierendonck and Patterson posit, “there is something powerful about the components of love that compel both leader and follower.”⁶² Love is a powerful motivator that transcends all cultures and facilitates successful leadership, providing benefits to individuals, organizations, and society.

Humility refers to the non-overestimation of one’s merits.⁶³ Servant-leader discipleship requires humility. Ted Engstrom contends that humility is an essential quality a servant-leader must possess to serve effectively.⁶⁴ He links effectiveness in servant-leadership to a person’s lack of pride. Peter writes, “All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5b, NASB). Peter emphasizes the importance of showing humility in interpersonal relationships, including the relationship between leaders and their followers. The leader’s actions towards the follower must reflect humility.

When leaders achieve success or fame, they can succumb to pride easily. Being in the limelight, receiving accolades or applause can cause people to think more highly of themselves

than they should. Servant-leader disciples are not exempt from this temptation or natural human tendency. There is a way in which a servant-leader disciple can avoid becoming prideful. If they learn to redirect the praise to God and point people to Christ rather than themselves, they can overcome the temptation to be prideful.⁶⁵ It is acceptable for them to understand their value and capabilities and rejoice in their accomplishments, but they should remain humble.

Altruism is evident when servant-leader disciples help others just for the sake of helping, even at a cost to themselves.⁶⁶ This virtue speaks to the motivation behind the servant-leader disciple's actions. Servant-leader disciples should not help others with ulterior motives or self-serving agendas. Their desire should be to wholeheartedly serve others out of concern for the others' wellbeing, even when it might cause them to sacrifice their personal interests.

Vision in the context of Patterson's servant-leadership model refers to seeing people as viable and worthy and assisting them towards their future state.⁶⁷ This type of vision is a virtue because it is focused on the follower, not on the organization.⁶⁸ Whereas others believe a servant-leader's vision is leader-centric, Patterson

posits it is follower-centric.⁶⁹ Servant-leader disciples must take an interest in the future of those they serve and help them to become the best versions of themselves as they grow towards that preferred future. God has a plan and a purpose for everyone. Servant-leader disciples have the privilege of helping people to discover that plan and fulfill their purpose. Someone once said the definition of success is to find out what God created us for and do it. Servant-leader disciples can help people to achieve this type of success.

Trust is a fundamental component of every relationship, including the leader/follower relationship, that involves integrity, mutual respect, and goodwill towards others.⁷⁰ Some critical factors to building trust are honesty and faithfulness. Servant-leader disciples must consistently be honest and keep their word. This consistency will engender trust. For example, people can trust God because He always does what He says He will do. He is faithful and true to His word. When someone says they will do something and then fail to follow through on their word, it undermines trust, leading to relational problems. Servant-leader disciples should be trustworthy and inspire confidence in others to sustain healthy relationships.

Empowerment is a critical characteristic of servant-leadership that involves sharing or entrusting power and authority with others.⁷¹ Empowerment allows people the freedom to follow their aspirations and fulfill their purpose in life. It also consists of trusting them with the power and authority needed to carry out their tasks. Some people prefer to hoard power and authority instead of giving them away. This lack of empowerment manifests when those in authority do not grant power or authority to their followers with their responsibilities, which hinders their growth and limits their effectiveness. Empowerment occurs when leadership gives power and authority together with responsibility, helping people to learn and grow.

Jesus exemplifies empowerment in issuing the great commission. He said, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth, go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:18b-19a, NASB). God the Father gave Jesus all authority. In turn, He delegates this authority to His followers, empowering them to fulfill their mission. He also said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses” (Acts 1:8, NASB). Jesus did not want the disciples trying to do their task without having the

power and authority necessary to get it done. That is why He delegated His authority and sent the Father's promise as a baptism of power. Servant-leader disciples must recognize that all power and authority originate with God. They are stewards and not owners of what the Lord has given them. Therefore, they need to use them properly as an external gift rather than as a possession.⁷²

Service denotes the generous giving of oneself for the sake of others.⁷³ Patterson suggests, "servant-leaders exhibit service as they support the frontline, discover the uniqueness of each employee, unleash creativity in people, and contribute to the larger good knowing that this is bigger than themselves, and further, actually seek opportunities to serve others."⁷⁴ Serving people, as in providing what they need or want, is at the heart of servant-leadership. It requires generosity in giving of one's time, talent, and treasure. Servant-leader disciples do not serve out of a sense of obligation. Instead, they serve because of their love for God and people.

All of the seven virtues interact with each other and contribute towards helping a person become a loving servant who does the right things in the right way. The process begins with love and builds towards servanthood. Servanthood represents

Jesus Christ's example of becoming a servant and the outcome servant-leader disciples should seek to become. His character and conduct exemplify the seven virtuous constructs in Patterson's model of servant-leadership. Jesus occupied the role of a humble, obedient servant and "taught and exemplified humble servanthood, the role we are to occupy – the way of the towel."⁷⁵ Jesus fulfilled His mission and made disciples while being and behaving as a servant-leader.

Jesus was motivated by love and behaved lovingly. He was more interested in the lives of His followers than His own. Jesus valued and served humankind no matter the cost. Although he was God, He humbled himself, submitting to the will of the Father. His motives were pure and unselfish, helping others just for the sake of helping. Jesus gave His time, treasure, and talent along with His "energy, care, and compassion" all for the benefit of others (Patterson, 2003, p. 6).⁷⁶ But He did not do this alone. He recognized the importance of developing people to live and serve as He was doing. These men and women are called His disciples. To them, He gave the great commission of making disciples.

NOTES

- ¹ Rost, J. C. (1991). *Leadership for the twenty-first century*. Praeger.
- ² Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th ed.), 3. SAGE.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Burns, J. M. (2010). Leadership. In Hickman, G. R. (Ed.), *Leading organizations: Perspectives for a new era*, 66-75. Sage.
- ⁵ Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th ed.), 4. SAGE.
- ⁶ Ibid., 6.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Yukl, G. (2010). *Leadership in organizations*, 8. Prentice Hall.
- ⁹ Ibid., p. 9.
- ¹⁰ Banks, R., & Ledbetter, B. M. (2004). *Reviewing leadership: A Christian evaluation of current approaches*, 16-17. Baker Academic.
- ¹¹ Ibid., 54.
- ¹² Bennis, W. (1999). The end of leadership: Exemplary leadership is impossible without full inclusion, initiatives, and cooperation of followers. *Organizational Dynamics*, 28(1), 71-79.
- ¹³ Conger, J. A. (2010). Charismatic Theory. In Hickman, G. R. (Ed.), *Leading organizations: Perspective for a new era*, 96-100. Sage.
- ¹⁴ Winston, B. E., & Patterson, K. (2006). An integrative definition of leadership. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, 1(2), 7.
- ¹⁵ Clinton, J. R. (1988). *The making of a leader: Recognizing the lessons and stages of leadership development*, 127. Navpress.
- ¹⁶ Jeanes, E. (2019). Followership. In *A Dictionary of Organizational Behavior*. Oxford University Press.
- ¹⁷ Kelley, R. E. (2010). Followership. In Hickman, G. R. (Ed.), *Leading organizations: Perspectives for a new era*, 181-190. Sage.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 181.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 182.
- ²¹ Ibid., 182-183.
- ²² Banks, R., & Ledbetter, B. M. (2004). *Reviewing leadership: A Christian evaluation of current approaches*, 112. Baker Academic.

- ²³ Spears, L. C. (2015). Introduction to servant-leadership. In Ferch, S. R, Spears, L. C., McFarland, M., & Carey, M. R. (Eds.), *Conversations on servant-leadership: Insights on human courage in life and work*, 1-18. State University of New York Press.
- ²⁴ Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*, 17. Paulist Press.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Wallace, D. (2007, July). *The power of a hyphen: The primacy of servanthood in servant-leadership*. Servant-leadership Research Roundtable. School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship. Regent University. Retrieved from https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/sl_proceedings/2007/wallace.pdf
- ²⁷ Trompenaars, F., & Voerman, E. (2010). *Servant-leadership across cultures: Harnessing the strengths of the world's most powerful management philosophy*, xi-xii. McGraw-Hill.
- ²⁸ Wallace, D. (2007, July). *The power of a hyphen: The primacy of servanthood in servant-leadership*. Servant-leadership Research Roundtable. School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship, 2. Regent University. Retrieved from https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/sl_proceedings/2007/wallace.pdf
- ²⁹ Spears, L. C. (1998). Tracing the growing impact of Servant-Leadership. In L.C. Spears (Ed.), *Insights on leadership: Service, stewardship, spirit, and servant-leadership*, 1-12. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- ³⁰ Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th ed.), 226. SAGE.
- ³¹ Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. Paulist Press.
- ³² Spears, L. C. (1998). Tracing the growing impact of Servant-Leadership. In L.C. Spears (Ed.), *Insights on leadership: Service, stewardship, spirit, and servant-leadership*, 4-6. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- ³³ Santos, N. F. (2003). *Slave of all: The paradox of authority and servanthood in the gospel of Mark*, 19. Sheffield Academic Press.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 21.
- ³⁵ Cochrell, T. (2018). *Slaves of the Most High God: A biblical model of servant leadership in the slave imagery of Luke-acts*, 2. B&H Publishing Group.
- ³⁶ Ayers, M. (2006). Toward a theology of leadership. *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership*, 1(1), 3-37.
- ³⁷ Sendjaya, S. (2015). *Personal and organizational excellence through servant leadership: Learning to serve, serving to lead, leading to transform*. Springer International Publishing.

- ³⁸ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ³⁹ Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*, 21. Paulist Press.
- ⁴⁰ Agosto, E. (2005). *Servant leadership: Jesus and Paul*, 6. Chalice Press.
- ⁴¹ Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*, 27. Paulist Press.
- ⁴² Spears, L. C. (2015). Introduction to servant-leadership. In Ferch, S. R., Spears, L. C., McFarland, M., & Carey, M. R. (Eds.), *Conversations on servant-leadership: Insights on human courage in life and work*, 7. State University of New York Press.
- ⁴³ Cochrell, T. (2018). *Slaves of the Most High God: A biblical model of servant leadership in the slave imagery of Luke-acts*, 1. B&H Publishing Group.
- ⁴⁴ Spears, L. C. (1998). Tracing the growing impact of Servant-Leadership. In L.C. Spears (Ed.), *Insights on leadership: Service, stewardship, spirit, and servant-leadership*, 4-6. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- ⁴⁵ Spears, L. C. (2010). Servant leadership and Robert K. Greenleaf's legacy. In D. Van Dierendonck & K. Patterson (Eds.), *Servant leadership: Developments in theory and research*, 16. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁴⁶ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, 2. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁴⁷ Spears, L. C. (2010). Servant leadership and Robert K. Greenleaf's legacy. In D. Van Dierendonck & K. Patterson (Eds.), *Servant leadership: Developments in theory and research*, 11-24. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁴⁸ Spears, L. C. (2004). The understanding and practice of servant-leadership. In Spears, L. C., & Lawrence, M. (Eds.). *Practicing servant-leadership: Succeeding through trust, bravery, and forgiveness*, 13-16. Jossey-Bass.
- ⁴⁹ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, 75. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 33.
- ⁵¹ Claar, V.V., Jackson, L., & TenHaken, V. R. (2014). Are servant leaders born or made? *Servant leadership: Theory & practice*, 1(1), 46-52. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2749273>
- ⁵² Winston, B. E. (2003). *Extending Patterson's servant leadership model: Explaining how leaders and followers interact in a circular model*, 4. Regent University School of Leadership Studies Servant Leadership Research Roundtable. Retrieved from https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/sl_proceedings/winston_extending_patterson.pdf
- ⁵³ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, xv. Palgrave Macmillan.

- ⁵⁴ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University).
- ⁵⁵ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, 6. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁵⁶ Cochrell, T. (2018). *Slaves of the Most High God: A biblical model of servant leadership in the slave imagery of Luke-acts*, p. 3. B&H Publishing Group.
- ⁵⁷ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University), 2.
- ⁵⁸ Winston, B.E. (2002). *Be a Leader for God's Sake*. Virginia Beach, VA: Regent University-School of Leadership Studies.
- ⁵⁹ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University), 4.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 6.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., p. 3.
- ⁶² Van Dierendonck, D., & Patterson, K. A. (2010). *Servant leadership: Developments in theory and research*, 121. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁶³ Hare, S. (1996). The paradox of moral humility. *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 33, 235.
- ⁶⁴ Engstrom, T. (1976). *The making of a Christian leader: How to develop management and human relations skills*, 50. Zondervan.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., 100.
- ⁶⁶ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University), 4.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, 6. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁶⁹ Sendjaya, S. (2015). *Personal and organizational excellence through servant leadership: Learning to serve, serving to lead, leading to transform*, 106. Springer International Publishing.
- ⁷⁰ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University), 5.
- ⁷¹ Ibid., 6.
- ⁷² Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, 82. Palgrave Macmillan.
- ⁷³ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University), 6.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid., 7.
- ⁷⁵ Elmer, D. (2006). *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*, 26. IVP Books.

⁷⁶ Patterson, K. A. (2003). *Servant leadership: A theoretical model* (Doctoral dissertation, Regent University), 6.

Chapter 5:

Servant-Leader Discipleship

- Christian
- Disciple
- Discipleship
- Servant-Leader Approach to Discipleship
- Implementing Servant-Leader Discipleship

The idea of servant-leader discipleship surfaced while I was studying servant-leadership theory and Jesus' life and ministry. I noticed meaningful similarities between Jesus' disciple-making style and contemporary servant-leadership theories. Jesus' approach to disciple-making, which I have coined servant-leader discipleship, teaches people to love God, love people, and make servant-leader disciples. This system consists of making disciples of Jesus Christ who become servant-leaders who replicate the same practice with others. In other words, it is an infinitely

reproducible process that equips people to grow in love for the work of service.

Christian

The use of the word Christian is widespread in the twenty-first century, even though that was not always the case. Different people use it in many contexts for various reasons. For example, it is customary for people to introduce themselves as Christians. It is just as common to hear people speak of Christian and non-Christian nations. What do people mean when they say they are Christian or refer to a Christian nation? The reality is that there are many varying definitions for the contemporary use of the word Christian. Still, we can find the original meaning in the Biblical context where people first used the term.

The word Christian appears three times in the New Testament. Luke used it twice (Acts 11:26; 26:28), and Peter used it once (1 Peter 4:16). The transliteration of the Greek word they wrote is *Christianos*, from where we get Christian. Based on Scripture, people used the term Christian for the first time in Antioch after Jesus Christ's resurrection. Some Gentiles, who did not follow Jesus, used it to identify Jesus Christ's followers. They

coined this nickname and used it in a derogatory fashion to ridicule them. For that reason, those who followed Jesus Christ during that period did not like to use that word, preferring to refer to themselves as brothers or disciples. It was not until the second century that Christ's disciples accepted the term Christian as something worthy of honor and not an offense. Since then, they continue to use Christian interchangeably with disciple.

For some people, Christian and disciple are synonymous, while others make a huge difference between the two. The latter believe you can be a Christian without being a disciple. They separate the two based on the degree of faithfulness, whether or not a person is truly following Christ or simply a nominal Christian, meaning, in name only. To avoid any confusion, I have chosen to use the term disciple in reference to servant-leader discipleship.

Disciple

The great commission consists of making disciples of all nations, but how do we know when we have made a disciple? I recall attempting to evaluate an organization's disciple-making effectiveness and discovering they had no official definition for

what constituted a disciple. It made my job very difficult. They gave me data on weekly church attendance, decisions made for Christ, and water baptisms, but how do these numbers correlate with disciple-making? My task became simpler once they explained the correlation and determined what definition they would use for a disciple.

Just like with leadership, there are many ways to define the term disciple. A good starting point is to look at Matthew's original term in his writing of the great commission. He wrote the Greek word *mathēteuō* for our English word disciple, which means "intransitively, to become a pupil; transitively, to disciple."¹ In one sense, we can use this term when referring to someone who becomes another's disciple, student, apprentice, or follower. We can also use it when commissioning disciples to go and make other disciples who will do likewise.

The original meaning for the word disciple was someone who is learning from a teacher, which implied intellectual development.² Secular and religious environments used it. For the most part, it did not involve spiritual development or adherence to a set of beliefs. Over time, the term disciple took on another dimension to mean someone who believes, which implies an act

of conversion. In this sense, the disciple makes an emotional commitment to the leader, including identifying with, obeying, and representing the leader. Disciples learn to identify with their leaders, want to bond with and emulate them, and represent them to others.³

Jim Putman and Bobby Harrington, in their book *DiscipleShift*, explain that a disciple is “a person who is following Christ, being changed by Christ, and committed to the mission of Christ.”⁴ They derive their threefold definition of a disciple from the scriptural account of Peter and Andrew’s call to follow Jesus. Jesus called them, saying, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19, NASB). They divide this verse into three phrases. The first phrase, “Follow Me,” represents a call to *personal conversion*. Jesus used these words several times to call people to become His disciples. Matthew was sitting doing his job as a tax collector when Jesus saw him and said, “Follow Me!” (Matthew 9:9, NASB). When Jesus found Philip, he also said to him, “Follow Me” (John 1:43, NASB). In each case, they got up, left behind what they were doing, and followed Jesus. Jesus’ disciples are those who consciously decide to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him (Matthew 16:24).

When someone chooses to follow Jesus, something miraculous happens in their life. Jesus refers to it as being born again or from above. The Scripture speaks of an influential, reputable, sincere, religious leader named Nicodemus. During a conversation with Jesus, he heard something that confused him. Jesus said, “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3, NASB). Nicodemus did not understand, so Jesus tried to clarify his confusion by explaining the need for spiritual birth. People need to be born of the Spirit.

People are not born as children of God. According to Scripture, people are born as sinners separated from God. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” and the wages of that sin is death (Romans 3:23; 6:23a, NASB). However, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16, NASB). God made a way to reconcile humanity through Jesus Christ, for “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23b, NASB). Jesus paid the price to redeem humanity. Spiritual birth occurs when people accept the call to follow Jesus, signifying they have received Him

and believe in His name. Therefore, Jesus has given them the right to become children of God (John 1:12, NASB).

The second phrase, “I will make you,” informs Jesus’ followers of His intention to change them. He accepts them as they are but promises to transform them into His image. Their decision to follow Him puts them in a position to experience *transformational development* at the deepest levels of their understanding, affection, and will.⁵ Jesus partners with the Holy Spirit, His written Word, and other disciples to transform His followers’ selfish hearts into a godly heart full of *agapaō* love for others. Abiding in Christ will “mold their hearts to become more like His.”⁶ Only God can generate this kind of change, which produces the fruit of the Spirit.

The final phrase, “fishers of men,” indicates the new vocation to which He is calling them to become committed. Peter and Andrew were fishermen, but Jesus told them He would make them fishers of men. He used a little play on words to inform them of their new missional assignment, should they choose to join Him. Disciples find new purpose in following Christ and commit themselves to be on mission with Him. They learn to love and serve a hurting world living under the devastation of sin

and death. This *missional commitment* includes preaching the gospel and making other servant-leader disciples in all spheres of society globally.

Discipleship

What is discipleship? Simply stated, discipleship is the process used to make disciples. In the New Testament, we see Jesus leading as a servant-leader who surrounded “himself with disciples, whom He empowers to carry on the ministry.”⁷ Early on in His public ministry, Jesus appointed twelve persons to join Him as “followers who would become movement leaders after His departure.”⁸ This initial small group of people grew to much larger numbers by the end of His earthly ministry through discipleship. To these disciples, Jesus entrusted the mission of preaching the gospel and making disciples of all nations.

There are many ways to make disciples. Here are three examples. Crowther believes disciples make disciples “by going to them, then baptizing them, bringing them into a new way of life, and teaching them.”⁹ His four-step approach includes four specific actions: going, baptizing, bringing, and teaching. I appreciate the mention of water baptism because this practice has

diminished considerably in contemporary discipleship. When organizations report salvations and water baptisms, the number they report of people deciding for Christ is disproportionately higher than the number they report of people they baptize in water. This disparity needs to change. Servant-leader discipleship must include water baptism whenever possible. Every servant-leader disciple that is physically able to be submerged in water should participate in this ordinance of the church as an act of obedience to Christ. By getting baptized in water, they identify with Christ in His death and resurrection and make a public confession of their faith in Him.

Spader explains disciple-making as a four-fold process that involves “winning the lost, growing the believers, equipping the workers, and sending out proven multipliers to repeat the process.”¹⁰ His four-step approach refers to four types of people and stages of development in the discipleship process: lost, believer, worker, and multiplier. When a disciple-maker wins the lost, they become a believer. The process continues by helping new believers to grow. Maturing believers become workers equipped to serve. Once the worker proves they can reproduce themselves, they are sent out to repeat the process.

John Amstutz, the author of the *Disciples of all Nations* series, describes disciple-making as a “birthing and bonding process that consists of finding the lost, winning the lost, incorporating the believers, and discipling the believers.”¹¹ His two-process four-step approach refers to three types of people and stages of development: lost, believer, and disciple. The birthing process consists of going to find and win those who are lost. When they are won, they become believers. These believers enter a bonding process that incorporates them into the church. He goes on to explain the discipling aspect as teaching them to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, love their neighbor as themselves, and love their enemies.”¹²

Servant-Leader Approach to Discipleship

There are three key persons involved in the servant-leader approach to discipleship: The Holy Spirit, the servant-leader disciple-maker, and the potential servant-leader disciple. Jesus commanded His first disciples “not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised” (Acts 1:4, NASB). The Holy Spirit was the promise of the Father. Jesus told them they would “receive power when the Holy Spirit” had come upon them, and

they would be His “witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NASB). The presence and power of the Holy Spirit are instrumental to the fulfillment of the great commission, from convicting people concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment to producing His fruit in servant-leader disciples (John 16:8). The servant-leader disciple-makers’ approach and the heart of the people they disciple are also critical factors in the servant-leader approach to discipleship. Jesus and His early disciples will serve as the perfect example of how a disciple-maker transforms people who are lost into servant-leader disciples that love God, people and reproduce servant-leader disciples.

Jesus’ life and ministry prove the servant-leader approach to discipleship is an excellent way to fulfill the great commandment and the great commission. His motivation is love, and His practice is servant-leadership. He did not make disciples because He wanted to make a name for himself or grow His earthly ministry. His approach stands in stark contrast with those who make disciples with the wrong motivations. Contemporary disciple-making should not be to fill up churches or improve the organization’s bottom line. Erroneous motivations such as these

reduce people's value. People simply become a means to an end. If disciple-makers become consumed with growing their ministries instead of focusing on loving and building people, they need a paradigm shift. They must realign their heart and practice with Jesus' way of discipleship.

Jesus used a servant-leader discipleship approach that focused on others' needs, not on His wants or desires, and helped them continuously.¹³ Here is "the connection to servant-leadership, the focus on others," where disciple-makers seek people out to serve them and provide them with "an ongoing process of longitudinal service."¹⁴ We must pursue the mission of making disciples, but it must be with the heart to serve the followers, not use them. Jesus called His disciples to become fishers of people, but that does not mean they will catch, kill, and eat the people they fish. Instead, they are to catch, clean, and release them to a fruitful life of love in Jesus.

Jesus took several ragtag individuals with little if any spiritual leadership experience and transformed them into a powerful team of world changers. How did Jesus bring about such a dramatic transformation and develop these unseemly candidates? I suggest Jesus developed them through a servant-leader discipleship

system. Jesus grew these individuals into mature servant-leader disciples through servant-leader discipleship, a relational developmental process that is learner-centric and experience-based. Jesus used this approach to develop the type of servant-leader disciples His church requires to accomplish His mission.

Leadership Development Systems, Models, and Design

Servant-leader discipleship can serve as an organization's leadership development system. Leadership development systems must align with leadership models (the kind of leaders the organization requires) and organizational design (the climate in which they will be working). Jesus exhibited this understanding in His approach to developing His initial disciples. He developed His committed followers into servant-leader disciples by creating a familial environment conducive for learning and exemplifying the kind of servant-leader disciple He wanted them to become. Jesus is a servant-leader who was always interested in seeing His followers reach their fullest potential and incorporated that leadership style into His servant-leader discipleship system.

The servant-leader discipleship system is integral to the overall design of Jesus' global Church and facilitates the accomplishment

of the Church's goal, which includes reconciling humankind with the Father. Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10, NASB). As we discussed previously, a disciple is a person who is following Christ, being changed by Christ and is committed to the mission of Christ. When Jesus called people to follow Him, He accepted them as they were but devoted Himself to developing them into the persons He meant them to become to accomplish their mission better. He developed them into servant-leader disciples who would follow His example, going into all the world to preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19-20). Since Jesus is the Lord and ultimately in charge of the Church, the Church should follow His lead and implement His servant-leader discipleship system.

Highly Relational

Jesus' servant-leader discipleship system was highly relational. He invested a significant portion of time with those He was developing. His presence in their lives, listening, and interacting with them were vital to their growth as servant-leaders. The relational process He used included theory and praxis, both

teaching and experiential learning opportunities. Jesus taught His disciples by word and deed. He spoke into their lives and modeled the appropriate behavior. Jesus understood that character is modeled more than it is taught. Therefore, He allowed His disciples to see Him in everyday circumstances and actually became their friend.

When I was trained for ministry, I recall being told not to expect to make friends from among the people I would serve in the ministry. They told me that I should learn to keep a safe distance from the membership. They reasoned if the people got too close and saw our humanity, they would not receive the divinity that flowed through us. Some people think they can make disciples from a distance, but they can only impress from a distance. However, if they draw near to people, they can make an impact, and if they draw very close, they can transform their lives.

It may be difficult for those of us who are accustomed to a western mindset to fully comprehend the highly relational way in which Jesus disciplined people. We must remember that Jesus was a Jew living according to Hebrew culture in a Middle-Eastern society. For Jesus, discipleship was not just a moment in time

with His followers. It was an ongoing process that required a significant investment of time, talent, and treasure.

Jesus called His disciples to be with Him. Mark wrote, “He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that he could send them out to preach” (Mark 3:14, NASB). Before being released to ministry, they shared many life experiences as they lived, traveled, and served together. His Hebraic and Middle-Eastern mindset, which addresses the heart first and mind second, viewed discipleship as taking place via an ongoing continuous relationship between teacher and disciple. The Greek culture, which has greatly influenced the western mindset, addresses the mind first and the heart second. Therefore, discipleship in the west tends to occur in classroom-type settings where the student sits down and listens to the teacher present a copious amount of information. This approach may hinder personal and spiritual transformation if not combined with a more relational component. Figure 8 compares and contrasts the differences between a Western and Middle-Eastern approach to discipleship. (See Figure 8).

Figure 8 – Western versus Middle-Eastern Discipleship Perspective

Western	Middle-Eastern
Sit down and listen	Let's walk together
A moment	A relationship
Date and time	Progress of the disciple
Let's meet	Let's spend time together
Books	Experience

Mentor and Coach

Jesus developed His followers by serving as a mentor who poured His life into them and a coach who brought out the best in them. Mentors pour into others from their wealth of expertise, providing plenty of advice and instruction. Jesus offered plenty of information and obedience-based teaching. People can teach in various ways. It is not limited to lectures but can also involve “learning by doing” opportunities to put their learning into practice.

Coaches draw out from others by asking powerful questions to help them make their discoveries. In a coaching relationship,

the person receiving coaching must engage in critical thinking guided by the coach's questions with little if any advice. Keith Webb, a renowned coach, and author of *Coaching in Ministry*, believes coaching enhances servant-leader development. He posits that a paradigm shift to coaching relationships “empowers leaders, values authenticity, refreshes people spiritually, and gets results.”¹⁵ The final chapter addresses coaching in more depth.

Jesus' Five-Step Servant-Leader Discipleship System

Jesus was a masterful disciple-maker who reproduced Himself in others and commissioned them to go and do likewise. The apostle Paul understood this principle of reproduction. He wrote to Timothy, his beloved son in the faith, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2, NASB). This verse indicates four generations of disciples. Paul represents the first-generation disciple-maker. Timothy is his servant-leader disciple, and disciple-maker of the faithful men. The faithful men represent the third-generation servant-leader disciples and disciple-makers of the others who are the fourth generation. If this mindset and practice prevail, there

will be an infinite number of servant-leader disciples for generations to come. Using this Scripture as the basis, I gathered a group of men to begin the discipleship process. I told them if they wanted to be a part of this group, they had to commit to having a disciple that would also commit to discipling others. This approach was my way of illustrating the discipleship principle of infinite reproduction to them, hoping to spark a disciple-making movement in that particular local church context.

Jesus' servant-leader discipleship system involves five distinct steps. Each step consists of the disciple-maker equipping the servant-leader disciple through instruction and modeling, creating "learning by doing" opportunities with a follow-up time of debriefing between them. This process incrementally advances the servant-leader disciple from observer only to practitioner.

1. The disciple-maker performs the task while the servant-leader disciple observes. Afterward, they meet to debrief on the experience and answer questions.
2. The disciple-maker invites the servant-leader disciple to join by helping them on the task. Afterward, they meet to debrief on the experience and answer questions.

3. The disciple-maker invites the servant-leader disciple to take the lead as they help them on the task. Afterward, they meet to debrief on the experience and answer questions.
4. The disciple-maker invites the servant-leader disciple to perform the task while they observe. Afterward, they meet to debrief on the experience and answer questions.
5. The disciple-maker empowers the servant-leader disciple to reproduce the system with other servant-leader disciples. In other words, each servant-leader disciple becomes a disciple-maker who invites others into the infinitely reproducible process.

Jesus' servant-leader discipleship is a holistic approach to disciple-making that helps people develop their hearts, heads, and hands. The heart represents their character. It is the starting place for all personal and spiritual transformation. Servant-leader disciples must learn to "watch over their heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life" (Proverbs 4:23, NASB). The head represents their cognitive abilities, which include acquired knowledge, bank of information, and understanding. Personal and spiritual transformation takes place "by the renewing of their mind, so that they may prove what the will of God is, that which

is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2, NASB). The hands represent their competencies, which include their skills, experiences, and actions. Learning by doing is the best way to grow and become a servant-leader disciple capable of serving with heart integrity and leading with skillful hands (Psalm 78:72). In summary, servant-leader discipleship engages their beliefs, thoughts, feelings, motivations, comprehension, information, habits, and actions to help their being and behaviors become more Christ-like.

Jesus’ present-day servant-leader disciples should follow His infinitely reproducible servant-leader discipleship system. Contemporary servant-leader disciples can equip followers to become servant-leader disciples who perform acts of service and reproduce themselves. Servant-leader disciples must build people, grow people, and help people develop according to their giftings and calling. Everyone is unique, special, and capable. Just like Paul helped Timothy to fan into flame the gifts he received, servant-leader disciples should help the emerging generations of servant-leader disciples to do the same. Are you ready to go and do likewise?

Implementing Servant-Leader Discipleship

This book has presented plenty of content that can be implemented within the framework of servant-leader discipleship, including the nine aspects of the fruit of the Spirit, Patterson's seven virtuous constructs, and Spears' ten servant-leader characteristics. Each servant-leader disciple-maker, or disciple-making organization can integrate them as they see fit. The servant-leader discipleship system offers great flexibility to customize the content according to each servant-leader disciple's context. I recommend using the three following three steps, based on what constitutes a disciple, as a guideline for implementation.

Personal Conversion

The first step requires the disciple-maker to become a faithful follower of Jesus Christ. A servant-leader disciple-maker must first accept Jesus' authority and His truth and come to understand that He is their Lord. They must know Him and follow Him. The rule of thumb is, people reproduce according to their kind. We learn this reproduction principle from creation. God created "vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them" and "saw that it

was good” (Genesis 1:11-12, NASB). Servant-leader disciples reproduce after their kind. Paul serves as an example. He wrote, “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1, NASB). Paul made disciples as an imitator of Christ worthy of being followed. He followed Jesus and emulated His conduct. By doing so, Paul could invite others into the process of discipleship by modeling the way himself. This principle seems basic, but some people still try to reproduce what they are not themselves.

Transformational Development

The second step involves transformation. As previously stated, servant-leader discipleship will transform people at the deepest level of their being as they abide in Christ, engage the Holy Spirit, study the Word of God, and interact in community with other servant-leader disciples. Jesus said, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me” (John 15:4, NASB). Jesus is still interested in hanging out with His servant-leader disciples. He continues to call them to be with Him before sending them out. He also sent them the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).

The gift of the Holy Spirit is for all servant-leader disciples, “as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself” (Acts 2:39, NASB). Therefore, every servant-leader disciple must seek to “be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18, NASB). The Spirit’s power and presence will make all the difference in the world.

Servant-leader disciples should spend significant time meditating on the word of God as diligent laborers who accurately handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, NASB). Spending time in the word of God will help to transform their mind, feelings, and actions.

Servant-leader disciples should encourage one another to love and good deeds and not neglect to assemble together (Hebrews 10:25). Being in fellowship with other servant-leader disciples is an excellent way to learn to love and live like Christ, a life of a bond-servant willing to give His life for the will of God. Doing so will yield the godly virtues to enable doing the right things the right way with the right motivations.

Missional Commitment

The third step is to ensure that the servant-leader disciple-makers' commitment to God's mission does not become distorted or diluted into a personal mission that hurts people rather than helps them. It is possible to lose sight of the purpose of making servant-leader disciples. People are living under the devastation of sin and death. Servant-leader disciple-makers must recognize they are joining Jesus on a search and rescue mission. Those who are lost need to be found, rescued, and reconciled to God. Servant-leader disciple-makers will help these new servant-leader disciples become all that God intends them to be with the servant-leader discipleship system. Once the people are found and saved, they must be developed and deployed to join in the ongoing search and rescue mission until Jesus's return.

Vallejo Ministries illustrates this three-step implementation guideline. (See Figure 9).

Figure 9 – Vallejo Ministries Missional Strategy¹⁶

<p>Discover: <i>“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).</i></p>	<p>Personal Conversion: Join Jesus on His search and rescue mission, partnering with the Holy Spirit to find, rescue, and reconcile the lost to God.</p>	<p>Outcome: People become servants committed to following Jesus.</p>
<p>Develop: <i>“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me” (John 15:4).</i></p>	<p>Transformational Development: Partner with the Holy Spirit to transform people at their deepest level, helping them become, behave, and bear fruit as God intends.</p>	<p>Outcome: People grow in love becoming and behaving more like Jesus.</p>
<p>Deploy: <i>“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).</i></p>	<p>Missional Commitment: Partner with the Holy Spirit to empower people to become servant-leader disciple-makers and deploy them to serve God in the church, the workplace, and the world according to their gifting and calling.</p>	<p>Outcome: People perform works of service leading like Jesus.</p>

NOTES

¹ G3100 - mathēteuō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (NASB95). Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org//lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G3100&t=NASB95>

² Kelley, R. E. (2010). Followership. In Hickman, G. R. (Ed.), *Leading organizations: Perspectives for a new era*, 186-187. Sage.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Putman, J., & Harrington, B. (2013). *Discipleshift: Five steps that help your church to make disciples who make disciples*, 51. Zondervan.

⁵ Ibid., 49.

⁶ Ibid., 47.

⁷ Agosto, E. (2005). *Servant leadership: Jesus and Paul*, 27. Chalice Press.

⁸ Ibid., 35.

⁹ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*, 83. Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁰ Spader, D. (2020). *Disciple-making metrics: How to measure your effectiveness at developing disciple-makers*. Discipleship.org.

¹¹ Amstutz, J. L. (2013). *Making & multiplying disciples: The master's plan of discipleship*. The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

¹² Ibid., 25.

¹³ Crowther, S. (2018). *Biblical servant leadership: An exploration of leadership for the contemporary context*. Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁴ Ibid., 83.

¹⁵ Webb, K. (2015). *Coaching in ministry: How busy church leaders can multiply their ministry impact*. Active Results LLC.

¹⁶ Vallejo, J. M. (2021). Vallejo Ministries. www.juanmvallejo.com

**“Love for God and People, Motivates Us
to Discover, Develop, and Deploy
Servant-Leader Disciples of Jesus Christ.”**

Chapter 6:

Ecclesial Leader Development

- Discipleship Coaching is Leader Development
- Paul's Directive for Coaching
- Teaching
- Coaching
- Cross-Cultural Servant-Leader Discipleship

One of the most significant challenges facing churches today is in the area of leader development. Many churches lack a leadership development system that provides an ongoing supply of effective servant-leaders. It could be that their discipleship approach falls short of producing servant-leader disciples who reproduce themselves. These churches must learn how to equip people “for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12, NASB).

I have spoken with many pastors who believe they do not have enough qualified leaders to help them tend to the flock and serve on mission with Jesus in the world. Some of them may find

comfort in the words of Jesus, who said, “the workers are few,” and believe it will always be that way. Even so, they continue praying for “the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:37, NASB). What if the Lord is already answering their prayer? What if the people spectating from the seats are the workers Jesus wants them to develop into servant-leader disciples and then send them out into His harvest? This chapter discusses how to incorporate servant-leader discipleship with an emphasis on coaching as a vital way to transform people, possibly those currently spectating from the seats, into servant-leader disciples who can change the world.

Discipleship Coaching is Leader Development

Jesus Christ is the “head over all things to the church” (Ephesians 1:22, NASB). The life He lived as the Word who “became flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14, NASB), and the way He made servant-leader disciples serve as examples for contemporary ecclesial leadership in their ongoing quest for qualified leaders to help fulfill their church’s mission. As the Son of Man, Jesus “did not come to be served, but to serve” (Mark 10:45, NASB). Jesus’ style of leadership is servanthood. After

washing the disciple's feet, Jesus said, "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you" (John 13:15, NASB). He demonstrated to His disciples that leadership in His kingdom requires servanthood. If He as their Lord and Teacher served them, then they must do the same for others.

Jesus builds His church through a process this book describes as servant-leader discipleship and empowers His servant-leader disciples to continue the church's mission in partnership with Him. The church must follow Jesus' example of servant-leader discipleship that develops followers into leaders, disciple-making servant-leaders.

Jesus' servant-leader discipleship method can reproduce many servant-leader disciple-makers, the type of leaders the church needs. His discipleship form does not merely produce followers, but an infinitely reproducible number of followers who lead other followers who lead other followers, and so forth. In other words, Jesus' discipleship system reproduces disciple-making servants who lead. Therefore, servant-leader discipleship is a strategic form of leadership development because it strategically grows the person's ability to be successful in leadership functions and practices.

Unfortunately, many churches are not following Jesus' servant-leader discipleship style, and therefore, many of the people who attend their churches are not growing in their leadership abilities. Ecclesial leadership is unintentionally teaching congregants to spectate, just as sports fans observe from the sidelines, instead of equipping them to play in the game. Jesus did not create spectators. He discovered, developed, and deployed ordinary individuals into His service as members of His body and servant-leaders of His church. These regular people became committed followers whom Jesus transformed, and the Holy Spirit empowered them to become disciple-making servant-leaders.

Jesus used several techniques within His servant-leader discipleship system. One of them was coaching. Among the many aspects of coaching that Jesus modeled, two stand out. Jesus was an expert listener and asked powerful questions. Jesus not only listened to what people said; He listened to what they did not say. Jesus gave everyone His full attention, listening with His mind, His body, His words, His intuition, and with the Holy Spirit. Every time He asked a question, He caused people to think critically. What if present-day church leaders learned to follow

Jesus' example, develop those they discover, and deploy them as disciple-making leaders to serve God in the church, the workplace, and the world? Herein lies an excellent opportunity for discipleship coaching to become the preferred system for ecclesial leader development.

Paul's Directive for Coaching

Some believe Ephesians 4:11-16 contains Paul's directive for coaching. In this pericope, Paul writes about Jesus giving "some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers" to ensure that His church would grow to become all that He intended (Ephesians 4:11, NASB). During the time of Jesus, the apostles referred to a select group of people who Jesus chose and sent to carry out particular functions, including the writing of portions of the New Testament. Today, this gift refers to those who are sent to extend the church's work, open new territories, and oversee more significant movements of His church. The prophet's role refers to those who are uniquely gifted with insight to speak for the Lord to the church and the world. The evangelist's role refers primarily to those gifted with proclaiming the gospel, winning souls to Christ, and encouraging

the church to witness. The pastor/teacher refers to those who nurture, teach, and care for the spiritual needs of the body of Christ.¹

These unique ministry gifts represent people with a distinctive calling and gifting to serve as leaders in the church. The order of the list does not constitute a hierarchy from most to least important. The pastor/teacher is just as crucial as the apostle and vice versa. These leaders function according to their ministry gifts as a team of equals who work in harmony for the church's benefit. Jesus gave these leaders "for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12, NASB). Together, they are responsible for developing the rest of the church members to do works of service so that the whole church grows. Paul specifies how they are to equip the individual saints to serve and edify the entire body of Christ.

The Greek word for equipping is *katartismos*, a term the New Testament uses to represent the principle of interpersonal empowerment or coaching. The idea behind the name for equipping is that of setting a broken bone. The meaning implies preparing, training, and perfecting people so that they are fully qualified for service. Paul elucidates how every member of the

body of Christ should be made whole and discover their leadership capacity to serve God wherever and however He chooses. The works of service are not limited to being Sunday school teachers, deacons, or elders in the church. Sometimes ecclesial leaders believe and act as if the only place where people are to lead is in the local church, but the Lord calls His people to serve in all spheres of influence in society. Jesus strategically places His servant-leader disciples worldwide to interact and engage all communities, large and small. He intends for them to become servant-leader disciples that influence arts and entertainment, business, education, family, government, media, and religion. We do a disservice to our constituents if we have them believe the only place they can be servant-leader disciples is within the church's four walls.

The final verses in this portion of Scripture inform how Jesus wants everyone working together to become mature like Him (Ephesians 4:13) and unmovable by those who bring deception (Ephesians 4:14). The church should be integral, speaking the truth in love, growing in all aspects into Christ (Ephesians 4:15), and contributing their part so that His church increases and strengthens itself in love (Ephesians 4:16). What means does the

church use today to accomplish these goals? What are the better ways for ecclesial leaders to prepare, train, and perfect those who the Lord wants equipped to grow in love for the work of service?

Teaching

Teaching is one of the most popular approaches present-day churches use for discipleship and leadership development. For instance, churches encourage people to attend discipleship and leadership development classes, go to Sunday school classes, attend Bible studies, or participate in other forms of Christian education. The sermons during the main services also focus heavily on teaching. Here are some understandable reasons for this emphasis. The Scriptures indicate that frequently people referred to Jesus as Rabbi, which means teacher (John 3:2; 13:13). Jesus often taught small and large groups of people and with authority like no other (Matthew 7:29). As we just read, one of the gifts Jesus gave to the church is the pastor-teacher's role. Teaching is also an essential feature in Jesus' commission to His disciples. The call to go and "make disciples of all the nations" consists of "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). This fundamental portion of Scripture

on discipleship seems to indicate that teaching is how disciples make disciples.

Teaching allows for the transmission or impartation of knowledge from the teacher to the student. In most teaching environments, the instructor or professor spends most of the time communicating to the students what they need to know. For the teaching process to be successful, the teacher must be knowledgeable or experienced in the area or subject matter. Students make withdrawals from the bank of knowledge the teachers possess.

Teaching is similar to mentoring. The mentor enters into a relational process with someone else to transfer knowledge or experience to that person. They make deposits or pour into those they mentor. The burden is on the teacher and mentor to have the required knowledge or expertise to help another. This rule applies to any subject these teacher or mentor relationships address. This requirement poses a severe issue for churches that want to develop leaders to serve beyond the local church.

Most discipleship processes focus on training people to function in the church. However, ecclesial leader development should help people build other skill-sets to serve beyond the

church's four walls. How can church leaders teach their congregants to perform the work of service in the workplace and the world when their knowledge or expertise is limited to ecclesial functions? What happens if they do not have teachers to cover all the subject matters of interest to their members? Is there a solution? Yes.

There is someone available to help ecclesial leaders equip those under their care, and He is capable of teaching on any subject. Jesus said, "the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26, NASB). The Holy Spirit is already here in our midst and available to teach anyone anything they may need to learn. He can help people grow in love for the work of service in any of the spheres of influence, and ecclesial leaders can partner with Him through coaching.

Coaching

Coaching is an excellent approach to ecclesial leader development, especially when the church leader desires to see the servant-leader disciples develop their full leadership potential

according to their gift and calling. When someone becomes a servant-leader disciple of Jesus Christ, they have dreams and aspirations which align to their God-given purpose. It is the church leader's responsibility to help the person follow the Holy Spirit's leading, become the kind of person the Lord desires, and serve according to their gifting and calling.

In the best-case scenarios, the church leader who is discipling the person understands their assignment and directs them accordingly. However, in the worst-case scenarios, the disciple-maker may be under pressure to fill a vacancy in the church and lead the servant-leader disciple to fill that void regardless of the person's gift and calling. This method dishonors the person's uniqueness. In both cases, the disciple-maker is in charge, telling the person what to do or directing them. They are not developing the leader's ability to hear the Holy Spirit and think critically before making decisions.

Coaching takes a different approach. The coach comes alongside the person they are coaching to help them in their decision-making process as they pursue God's call on their lives. In coaching, the focus is on people's learning, not on the coach's teaching. Coaches do not need to know or be experts in the

subject matters the person they are coaching addresses. The person receiving the coaching is the one who sets the agenda for each intentional conversation in the coaching relationship. This methodology stands in stark contrast to teaching. The coach is not a bank of knowledge from which people make withdrawals. Instead, the coach helps to draw out from the person they are coaching all the information necessary to advance their personal and professional development. Therefore, coaching is a process by which a coach enters into an intentional conversation that helps people fulfill God's calling on their lives.

Ecclesial leaders can partner with the Holy Spirit to develop other leaders by serving as coaches. The Holy Spirit knows all things and desires people to discover and fulfill their calling in life. Every person committed to following Christ needs to develop their character, cognitive abilities, and competencies. In other words, they need to improve their heart, head, and hands.

Coaching allows the Holy Spirit to be the teacher.

Simultaneously, the coach facilitates adult learning by asking powerful questions and allowing the person they are coaching to do most of the talking. While the person they are coaching talks, they will be able to discover truths independently while

developing critical thinking skills. A good coach helps draw counsel out from the depth of a person's heart (Proverbs 20:5). This method is a better approach to leader development than having adults sit down and listen to a lecture.

Coaching relationships enhance the person's leadership development experience because it incorporates assessment, challenge, and support. Through powerful questions, coaches can help those they are coaching to get a better grasp of their current state of development, expand their thinking, and receive support. Here are some sample questions. ¿How are you doing regarding the goals that you have set for yourself? ¿What has God been doing in your life since we last talked? ¿What are you doing well? ¿What could you do better next time? ¿What would you do differently? These types of questions help people to self-assess, feel challenged, and receive support through affirmation.

Coaching also helps people learn to lead themselves because they are in charge of setting the objectives and determining the practical steps to follow. New servant-leader disciples will often draw near to their leaders and ask what they should do in certain situations. Mentors or teachers tend to tell them what to do. Coaches, on the other hand, ask, what is God saying to you?

What does His word say about the situation? The coaching approach helps the person to learn how to find the answers for themselves. It equips them to grow in love for the work of service by allowing them to find solutions from the Holy Spirit and God's word. It helps them to think critically, process options, and improve decision-making.

Ecclesial leaders should not usurp the Holy Spirit's role, nor impede leader development by not allowing people to grow in their ability to manage their thoughts, feelings, and actions as they learn to lead themselves. Therefore, coaching is preferable for developing ecclesial leaders because it helps people to reach their full potential.

In summary, the church has an excellent opportunity to overcome the challenge of developing leaders, equipped to serve God in the church, the workplace, and the world by establishing a leadership development system that incorporates coaching into the servant-leader discipleship system. Jesus used this strategic form of leadership development, which strategically grows a person's ability to succeed in leadership functions and practices. Paul's explanation of how the ministry gifts serve to equip the saints for the work of service also reinforces the concept of

coaching. Incorporating coaching in servant-leader discipleship will help to transform people into disciple-making servant-leaders. It will also provide an ongoing supply of influential leaders. Besides, coaching relationships will enhance the leadership development experience, help people learn to lead themselves, and allow them to reach their full potential. Therefore, ecclesial leaders should partner with the Holy Spirit to develop leaders by serving as coaches who come alongside people to help them pursue God's call on their lives.

Cross-Cultural Servant-Leader Discipleship

Before his ascension, Jesus Christ told his first followers to go and make disciples of all the nations. This original group struggled to fulfill the commandment to its full extent, remaining in Jerusalem longer than they should have and reaching out only to a specific demographic. Was it due to their ethnocentrism? Were they so prejudiced that they could not move out beyond their own people? Every person tends to see the world through their own cultural lens. Anything outside of what a person is accustomed to is deemed wrong and unusual. People can become judgmental towards others and think more highly of themselves

than they ought. This tendency can also cause them to miss out on many wonderful opportunities and limit their evangelistic and disciple-making effectiveness.

Most of the definitions for leadership include the idea of influence. Leaders influence people. To accomplish the task of global servant-leader discipleship, Jesus' disciples must influence culturally and linguistically different people than themselves. Besides, servant-leader disciples need to understand the differences between their own culture and the culture of those they are trying to disciple. Thus, a servant-leader disciple-maker must learn how to navigate cultural and linguistic differences, understanding how others think or act may not be necessarily right or wrong, simply different.

This ability does not come easy. Nevertheless, Jesus is counting on his servant-leader disciples to learn how to engage people from every nation, regardless of cultural and language preferences, and lead them to become Jesus' servant-leader disciples. It is the responsibility and privilege of every servant-leader disciple to obey this command. Moreover, disciples must learn to be followers and leaders simultaneously, just as Jesus

demonstrated throughout his life. Servant-leader disciples follow Jesus and lead others to do the same.

My cross-cultural journey began from birth. My parents came to the United States as Cuban refugees. They intended to return to Cuba once the reasons for their exile were resolved. Therefore, I was raised as a Cuban, taught to speak Spanish, and lived according to Cuban traditions to be ready for our repatriation. This Cuban filter is the lens I learned to see through for all that I perceived. Because of this, going to school with English speakers was an early childhood challenge. In kindergarten, I did not understand what the teachers were saying. I could not comprehend why they did things differently from what I was used to at home. With time, I realized that these people were also a significant part of my life. By first grade, I was speaking English and enjoying all things American.

When you are born in the U.S. and grow up saluting the U.S. flag, singing the U.S. national anthem, and eating typical American meals, you believe you are an American. That is what I thought, even though plenty of people made me feel like I was not an American because my parents came from Cuba and spoke Spanish. Their actions made me feel unwelcome in the land of my

birth. Growing up in the U.S. feeling like a second-class citizen was very difficult. Also, yearning for Cuba, a country that I had not visited, was part of my search for belonging and identity. Was I Cuban, American, neither, or a mixture of both? I finally came to understand that I was an American-Cuban. The hyphen in American-Cuban makes it a compound noun similar to servant-leader, where you are both simultaneously.

Through these experiences, the Lord was developing me for cross-cultural ministry. Even though I had to deal with my unique type of ethnocentrism and prejudices, I was predisposed to be more open to other cultures because I already blended two into one. As an adult, the Lord led me to serve overseas as a missionary. For the first time, someone referred to me as an American. It was said by a Bolivian national who was pointing me out as a foreigner, calling me a “gringo;” a term used to belittle Americans. Although they may have said it in a derogatory manner, it made me feel good.

I learned a lot about cultural characteristics or dimensions throughout my years of service in South and Central America. The lessons learned overseas in cross-cultural ministry not only helped me to understand and lead within those contexts, but they

also gave me a better understanding of myself. Even though each of the nations I lived and served in spoke Spanish, there were many differences in speech and customs. To better grasp what this entails, I would like to summarize some of the GLOBE researcher's cultural dimensions.² Understanding these differences will improve a servant-leader disciple's ability to make servant-leader disciples of all nations.

One dimension is uncertainty avoidance. Simply stated, this has to do with how well a culture handles uncertainty. Does the culture structure itself in a way that promotes taking risks or not? In America, we handle uncertainty much better than in Latin America. I believe that is why I saw many more people taking chances in business dealings at home than abroad. When we were planting a church in Bolivia, at first, people did not trust us because they were not sure if we would be there for the long haul. A lot of the questions we had to answer had to do with assurance and stability.

Another dimension is power distance. This dimension has to do with how a culture's power structure is set up. Who has the power? Where does one belong in society? Are we equal, or is there a great divide between the classes? For example, when I was

teaching in Paraguay, I would ask my students if they had any questions. No one ever raised their hand or challenged what I was saying. When I taught in the United States, students freely questioned what I was saying, even “pushing back” on some of my ideas.

A third dimension is gender egalitarianism. What roles do women and men play in society? Are they equals? I thought this would be the same throughout all of Latin America, but I learned that some countries are matriarchal and others patriarchal. In the matriarchal societies I lived in, women had more opportunities and would lead more often. This mindset impacted the way we planted churches. In the male-dominant societies, it was necessary to reach the men first, and the women would follow. However, in the female-dominate society, we had to reach the women first, and men would follow.

A fourth dimension is a future orientation. Do you make plans for the future? Do you postpone some of today’s pleasures for a better tomorrow, or do you enjoy today with no concern for what tomorrow may bring? Knowing what a culture believes about the future will impact how one addresses issues in servant-leader discipleship. It was challenging to get people in Latin

America to make a 5 to 10-year plan. It seemed like they were more interested in preserving the past and keeping traditions than planning for their future.

In the book of Acts, chapter six, we find the early church's story where cultural differences affected the servant-leader discipleship process and created problems within the church. This story illustrates some leadership and followership principles that are necessary for effective cross-cultural servant-leader discipleship. Luke writes, "Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food" Acts 6:1, NASB). The first servant-leader disciples were obeying Christ's command to make servant-leader disciples of all nations. In this story, Luke mentions two culturally and linguistically different people groups increasing in the early church. The Hellenist were Jews that came from the Greco-Roman world and spoke Greek. The Hebrews were Jews that came from Israel and spoke Hebrew or Aramaic. Although each group shared some things in common and formed part of the same organization, the early Church, these two groups had different customs and spoke other languages.

It was not long before there was a point of tension between these two groups. The Hellenists complained to the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. The early church had the custom to care for the widows by providing sustenance for them daily. Luke does not tell us who was in charge of this distribution, but it is clear that the Hellenists held the Hebrews responsible. This multicultural church was facing a severe issue between two culturally and linguistically distinct groups. The text does not inform why but simply affirms that one group was being overlooked.

Up to this point, it seems that the Hellenist disciples were not in a leadership position. They were simply followers. As such, they had to decide how they were going to respond under these circumstances. In this leader/follower relationship between the original twelve and the new servant-leader disciples, both sides seem to have acted righteously. There appears to have been a healthy enough environment where the Hellenists felt confident enough to speak up and communicate their dissatisfaction with what was happening. Their actions demonstrate they were courageous followers. When leadership is not aware of a situation that is causing harm, a good follower must have the courage to

confront the leader. This confrontation needs to be done in love. Fortunately, the Hellenist understood that if their need was going to be addressed, they needed to go to the leaders and explain what they perceived was wrong.

Luke goes on to say, “So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables’” (Acts 6:2, NASB). The twelve Hebrew disciples considered the complaint and made an executive decision to resolve the problem. This action demonstrates how top management teams need to be open to criticism. The lines of communication must be available to allow for better resolution of conflicts. Their choice to gather the entire organization also demonstrates how to seek resolution among all the stakeholders in a collaborative manner. They chose to communicate openly and honestly to everyone involved in the situation, explaining their own roles and responsibilities. The twelve wanted the rest of the servant-leader disciples to understand their assignment. Effective leaders relieve the tension in organizations by communicating what each member’s roles and responsibilities are within the organization.

The twelve continued saying, “Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task” (Acts 6:3, NASB). In this portion of Scripture, we see how the twelve delegated the responsibility back to the group of people most affected in the situation. A good leader must know how to trust. As God’s appointed leaders, they were willing to share the power entrusted to them. This empowerment also is an essential aspect of servant-leadership, especially when dealing with a group that could see themselves as a minority in the organization. By giving the Hellenist the job of selecting the people to fix this problem, the twelve increased their self-worth. This decision was a decisive vote of confidence. The twelve empowered the Hellenist followers to become servant-leaders and decision-makers. As the potential minority culture, if the Hellenist felt inferior or less than the Hebrews, the decision to allow them to take charge of the situation counteracted those feelings. The apostles’ declaration pleased the whole multitude and led to greater fruitfulness and expansive church growth. If the apostles had not used wisdom in understanding the cultural and linguistic differences between the

Hebrews and the Hellenists, they would not have empowered them to serve.

In today's society, it is imperative to understand that we are more interconnected than ever before. It is essential to understand oneself better and the leadership principles that will help to interact with the nations. May the Lord give us wisdom and the ability to know when cultural differences come into play so that we can make the appropriate adjustments and lead our churches and organizations efficiently. Effective cross-cultural servant-leader discipleship will facilitate the fulfillment of the great commission.

NOTES

¹ Hayford, J. (Ed.) (2002). *New Spirit-filled life Bible*, 1857-1858. Thomas Nelson, Inc.

² Northouse, P. G., (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th Ed.). SAGE.

Conclusion

This book examined Jesus Christ's life and ministry as revealed in scripture, with particular attention to references about God's love, the incarnation, the great commandment, the great commission, and the fruit of the Spirit. The biblical analysis findings demonstrated significant similarities between Jesus' leadership style for making disciples and servant-leadership. Through the kenosis, Jesus humbled Himself and took on the form of a servant. He lived His life on earth as a servant-leader, exemplifying the fruit of the Spirit, Patterson's seven virtuous constructs of servant-leadership, and Spears' ten servant-leader characteristics found in Greenleaf's writings. He also reproduced Himself through an infinitely reproducible system of disciple-making, which this book coins servant-leader discipleship.

Jesus' servant-leader discipleship style partners with the Holy Spirit to help the servant-leader disciples learn to love God with their entire being and above all else. Learning to love God enables them to love others, which includes a healthy love for themselves. The Holy Spirit transforms them into the kind of person who will

behave as a servant-leader disciple by producing the corresponding fruit. While growing all nine aspects of love, these servant-leader disciples go into all the world to preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations.

The book upholds that Jesus' servant-leader discipleship style is an excellent way to make servant-leader disciples, equipping them to grow in love for the work of service. Through this process, anyone can learn to follow Jesus and become a servant-leader who loves, serves, and leads others to become servant-leaders. His discipleship approach also applies to ecclesial leadership development and can equip leaders cross-culturally to serve in the church, the marketplace, and the world.

There are three easy steps to implement this system. The first step requires people to become faithful followers of Jesus Christ through personal conversion. During the second step, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, God's word, and the community of servant-leader disciples partner to transform people into the best version of themselves. The third step requires a missional commitment to join Jesus on His search and rescue mission.

By incorporating servant-leader discipleship, people will fulfill God's purposes for their lives by loving God, loving people, and

making servant-leader disciples in whatever arena of life the Lord leads them to invest themselves. I pray this book encourages you to connect servant-leadership principles to your discipleship process and enhance your effectiveness in equipping people in your context to grow in love for the work of service. May the Lord bless your efforts to implement servant-leader discipleship and produce an ongoing talent pool of servant-leader disciplinators to change the world for His glory.

The world is ripe with opportunities for us to serve one another — the call and need are there, but we often just do not step or leap!, into the moments before us. This book gives a different charge than you may have heard before. Dr. Juan M. Vallejo unpacks servant-leadership by showing us both necessity and applicability.

And before you think this book is limited to the ministry context, it is not!

This book is for any and every leader —
the path to serve is the path we all need to be on,
but oh so often, two things happen.

First, we think we are Christian and, therefore, on the servant path, which is not always the case. The pursuit of Christ requires a more determined path to serve, to build His Kingdom and not our own.

Second, we just do not know where to begin — the “how” of serving others. Dr. Vallejo brings us to these imperative conversations and not just conceptually but with the purpose of actually getting on this path towards servanthood. He does so in a scholarly and practical format, all underpinned with a Biblical approach — what more could a reader ask for!

Kathleen Patterson, Ph.D.

Director, Doctorate of Strategic Leadership Program
School of Business & Leadership, Regent University



DR. JUAN M. VALLEJO is a servant-leader disciple committed to the Lord Jesus Christ’s great commandment and commission with more than 37 years of ministry leadership experience multiplying disciples, leaders, and churches in the USA and abroad. His mission includes partnering with the Holy Spirit to discover, develop, and deploy servant-leader disciples of Jesus Christ from every nation, tribe, people, and language. Dr. Vallejo earned his Doctor of Strategic Leadership from Regent University. He and Graciela, his lovely wife of over 30 years, have three beloved children and a granddaughter.



FMP
Foursquare Missions Press

