

A Community of Servants



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

Surveying the Source

Heb. 10:23, 24

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Consider the gifts/talents that God has given us and how we can put them to use to minister to others.
- ▶ Explore the different ways that we can accomplish God's work by working together as a class and as an entire church body.

▶ Understand that the motive of genuine love for Christ and His people must be at the forefront when ministering to others.

Preparing to Lead

"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one." For a lot of people this quote rings true. Because of misunderstandings, misrepresentations, and being blinded by the enemy, some may not be willing to enter a church to hear the Word of God. Thankfully, that is where you come in—God's

very own epistle to a fallen world. As followers of Christ, we are to reveal His true character of love, mercy, goodness, and forgiveness in every way that we can. We may successfully accomplish this with our words and our deeds. Be the sermon!

Materials

Reproducible Activity, Bibles, paper, pens

Getting Started

A. Begin with prayer, then read 2 Cor. 3:3. *Ask:* "What does this verse mean to you?" Read the following definition and synonyms for the word epistle. Definition: a letter. Synonyms: letter, communication, missive. *Ask:* "How would you explain what being an epistle of Christ means? Why do you think the Holy Spirit makes the followers of God an epistle to the world? Should people be able to learn the character of God through His Word, His people, or both?"

B. Ellen White writes that "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people... He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'" (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 51).

Ask: "Although Jesus has displayed how we are to reveal God's love, why do you think we sometimes leave acts of service for last when engaging in evangelism? What is the church of God? What does it look like? How does it operate? How would one be able to differentiate the true church of God?"

Delving Into the Word

A. Read 1 Corinthians 13:3 and 1 John 3:16-19. *Say:* “As church members we often encourage each other to participate in some form of evangelism, preferably involving community service. But we learn through 1 Corinthians 13 that though we may do ‘good works,’ if we do not perform these acts out of genuine love then we are not doing the right thing for the right reason.” *Ask:* “Do you think we need to pray for genuine love for God and His people to fully commit to His work?”

Hand out the Reproducible Activity and then ask each member to create a list of all the ministries they can think of in your church. After a minute, ask them to make a list of interests, talents, or gifts that they have and challenge them to think about how they can use them to help some of the ministries that they are not currently involved in. Invite them to pray that God would give them opportunities to minister in genuine love.

B. Read Exodus 20:7 and 1 John 3:16, 17. Focus on the third commandment. *Say:* “We often think that taking the Lord’s name in vain refers to misusing His name but it is more than just that. What about when we do things that are out of the character of God and yet claim to be His followers? We must always be careful, in both word and deed, to represent Christ faithfully as His ambassadors. Our aim is to lead others to Christ’s unwavering love. We ought to live as Jesus, our ultimate model, did—in service to others.”

On a piece of paper, ask class members to make a list of as many miracles and acts of service as you can remember from Jesus and His disciple’s ministry. After a minute, compare lists then brainstorm on some practical ways those who are homeless, sick, in prison, financially struggling, etc. can be ministered unto.

Discussing the Ideas

1. What is the church of God’s mission or high calling?
2. How can you faithfully and effectively reflect God’s love to others?
3. How can we balance maintaining day to day church functions while remembering to make service to the community our top priority?
4. Do you think church service and community service should be equal priorities for the Christian?

5. What does working as “one body” mean to you?

6. How does seeing the church as a functioning “body” help to illustrate the way we are to operate?

7. What causes a disciple to happily preach, teach, and share God’s love? Once we have an encounter with Jesus, will it be a natural reaction to reach out to others or will there still be a struggle?

Closing the Activity

We are often more inclined to heed advice from someone that we trust or that we have built some sort of relationship with. We have this trust in them because of what we know about them. Jesus said that the world would know we are His disciples by our love. There must be

some action to go along with the message of love and salvation that we preach. Only when we have expressed genuine love towards all of God’s people will we begin not only to understand our mission, but execute it as efficiently as the Lord intends us to.

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