



Series: A Better Investment (Part 5)

Speaker: Rhordan Wicks

## **INTRODUCTION**

*“Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:8)*

In our fleshly, fallen state, we are all plagued with a tendency toward selfishness. The bible is clear that being self-centred or only thinking of oneself is a sin. When we think only of ourselves, we tend to forget the needs of others. The slave language of the New Testament likewise underscores this truth. Christians are not only members of a body, subject to one another and called to the fellowship of sacrifice. We are also slaves of Christ, purchased by His blood, owned by Him, and therefore accountable to His lordship. Jesus Himself taught this principle clearly. His invitation to His disciples was a call to total self-denial: *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me”* (Luke 9:23).

The final part of the series looks at the importance of Give Time. There are five characteristics of a servant of Christ that we can draw from in Acts 9:15-16. A servant of Christ recognises that he/she,

- Is Chosen
- Is a Conduit
- Is a Carrier of God’s Name
- Is called to serve a Community
- Understands there is a Cost to giving

## DISCUSSION

1. How does a self-centered attitude develop and what can we do to prevent it?
2. Without being specific, can you describe people you work/interact with who are self-centred? How do these people affect you and others they relate with?
3. Read Acts 9:1-17. In Acts 9:15-16, the preacher raised 5 characteristics of being a servant of God.
  - a. "Go, for he is a **chosen** instrument of mine..." - Acts 9:15 ESV. Read also Ephesians 2:10. A servant recognises he/she is chosen. God often chooses the unqualified and then qualifies the chosen. *What 'excuses' (e.g. label you have put on thinking you are not good enough) have you given God when He gave you an assignment?*
  - b. "Go, for he is a chosen **instrument** of mine..." - Acts 9:15 ESV. Read also 2 Timothy 2:20-21. We are conduits in the hands of our Almighty God and we are made different. A trumpet sounds very different from a clarinet. Each one of us is made unique and the uniqueness consists of our personality, abilities, experiences and a set of spiritual gifts. When we try to pursue roles that other people are designed for, it may be as awkward as a trumpet playing the clarinet part. To be an instrument in God's hands requires us to abide daily in His presence and know His Heart for us. *Would you become His conduit for the work of His kingdom? If your answer is "Yes", what does the Holy Spirit require of you?*

In FGA, we have a class called "Know Your Shape" to help you discover your SHAPE for your ministry/kingdom assignment. This class will look at five areas of your life: Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experience. Our next class is scheduled for 23 and 30 April 2022. You can check out the link below for more information.

<https://fgasingapore.org/classes/>

- c. "...to **carry** my name..." - Acts 9:15 ESV. Read also Colossians 3:17. *What does it mean for you to carry God's name? As a servant of God, how can we best represent Him?*
- d. "...to carry my name **before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.**" - Acts 9:15 ESV. Read also 1 Peter 4:10-11. God has assigned Paul to serve a specific community. We are all called to serve others but perhaps some of us may have discovered a passion for a particular group of people (e.g. the elderly, children, youth, vulnerable, young marrieds or young parents etc.)? *Speak to your*

*LifeGroup leader or spiritual mentor to get their inputs if you sense that God is leading you to serve a particular community.*

- e. *“For I will show him how much he must **suffer** for the sake of my name” (Acts 9:16 ESV). Read Philippians 3:7-11. It will cost you something to serve God and the cost may be steep. No one promised our new life in Christ would be a rose garden. In serving others, we train our hearts to give selflessly; to pay the cost.*

*What is God challenging you in this area? Do you serve only when it's convenient for you? How do we exhibit genuine sacrificial love?*

## **WHAT WILL YOU DO**

If we tithe our finances, do we also consider giving our time to serve God's Kingdom? Do we give the first fruit of our time or our leftovers? We are inclined to look after self-first. However, Jesus is asking us to deny self and to have self-control over our desires and seek to do God's will rather than our own. Hence, we need to train our hearts to put others first.

We started this series with the aim of developing good time management habits that will bear good fruit in our lives. The first habit we need to cultivate is God Time. Think about it, it is when we encounter God personally and His love that can melt our self-centredness away and result in a generosity towards others that honours Him. We serve out of love, not obligation or recognition. God honours love as a motive for our service, but He does not honour empty, unloving duty. This is what He meant when He said, *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, Oh God, you will not despise” (Psalm 51:17).*

In FGA, there are many avenues for you to serve. Check out the link below and click “BE A BLESSING” if you are keen to get involved.

<https://fgasingapore.org/serve/>

## **MEMORY VERSE**

“One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed”. - Proverbs 11:24-25 NIV