

The Servant

Study Guide

<https://gracelead.co>

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This document contains a summary of key points from each chapter of "The Servant" by James C. Hunter as well as discussion questions. Additionally, there are exercises for some chapters.

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Chapter 1: The Definitions

Points to Consider

Leadership	The skill of influencing people to work enthusiastically toward goals identified as being for the common good
Power	The ability to force or coerce someone to do your will, even if they would choose not to, because of your position or your might.
Authority	The skill of getting people to willingly do your will because of your personal influence.

- It is important to treat other human beings exactly the way you would want them to treat you.
- All of us together are much wiser than any one of us alone.
- Listening is one of the most important skills a leader can choose to develop.
- Power erodes relationships.
- Behavior is a choice.
- All life is relational-with God, self, and others.
- Trust is the glue that holds relationships together.

Discussion Questions

- Describe the outcome of a leader who focuses entirely on “task” concerns and chooses to not address “people” concerns.
- Describe the outcome of a leader who focuses entirely on “people” concerns and chooses to not address “task” concerns.

For your own edification, consider the self-assessment tool on the following page. You do not need to share your personal results with anyone; however, it would be helpful if you participated in discussing the “Things to Ponder” following the assessment.

Exercise: Leader Behaviors Self-assessment

For each statement below, indicate a number from 1-10, where "1" means you strongly disagree and "10" means you strongly agree.

I check to see that our activities support the goals of our ministry and the mission of Grace Church.	disagree ————— agree 1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I listen thoughtfully to all members of our group.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I seek ways to make tasks simpler and more efficient.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I express appreciation to group members individually.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I check to see that our group results match expectations.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I learn each group member's preferred way to receive praise.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I strive to follow the procedures that are in place.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I look for opportunities to point out how individual efforts make a difference to the group and to me.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I set an example in the way that I serve with joy and humility.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I offer encouraging words to individuals who are struggling.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Things to Ponder:

- Can you easily tell which behaviors above are "task" focused and which are "people" focused?
- As you consider your responses overall, do you give yourself higher marks for "task" behaviors or for "people" behaviors?
- If you were to create your own list of helpful "task" and "people" behaviors for leaders, what would you add to the list?
- What behaviors (if any) on the list above seem strange to you?

Chapter 2: The Old Paradigm

Points to Consider

Paradigm	Psychological patterns, models, or maps we use to navigate our way through life
A want	A wish or desire without regard for consequences
A need	A legitimate physical or psychological requirement for well-being

- When you cut people off in mid-sentence, you send three bad messages:
 - ▶ You are not listening.
 - ▶ You don't value the other person's opinion.
 - ▶ You believe what you have to say is more important than what the other person has to say.
- Our paradigms are not always accurate. It is important to challenge them.

- A leader is someone who identifies and meets legitimate needs of their people and removes barriers so they can serve effectively.
- To lead, you must serve.
- Slaves do what others want. Servants do what others need.
- People need an environment with boundaries, standards, and accountability.

Discussion Questions

- As a leader, what is one of your needs and one of your wants?
- What is a physical need for those in your group? If you asked your group members this question, would they give a similar answer?
- What is a psychological need for those in your group? If you asked your group members this question, would they give a similar answer? How do you know?

Chapter 3: The Model

Mark 10:44-45 "And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (NKJV)

Points to Consider

- Leadership begins with the will (our unique human ability to align our intentions with our actions and choose our behavior).
- With the proper will, we can choose to **love** (identify and meet the legitimate needs of those we lead).
- We must **serve and sacrifice** to meet the needs of others.
- When we serve and sacrifice for others, we build influence or **authority**.
- With authority, we have earned the right for people to view us as a **leader**.

Discussion Questions

- What can you do to identify the legitimate needs of those in your group?
- In what ways can your "good intentions" undermine your authority with people?

Exercise: Brainstorming Legitimate Needs

Purpose

Gain greater awareness of potential group member needs.

Participant Instructions

step	action
1	Take 2-minutes to list legitimate physical needs that your group members might have. Your session leader will tell you when to stop.
2	Take 2-minutes to list legitimate psychological needs that your group members might have. Your session leader will tell you when to stop.
3	When the session leader asks, read one item from your Physical Needs list that no one else has mentioned. When you hear a physical need from another person's list that you think might apply to your group, add it to your list. When a person states a need on your list, place a check mark beside it. Continue until you have the items from the Physical Needs lists.
4	Repeat the process for the Psychological Needs list.
5	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What challenges do you face as a leader in addressing the unmet legitimate needs of your group members? ● How sure are you that you know the unmet legitimate needs of your group members?

Legitimate Physical Needs	Legitimate Psychological Needs

Chapter 4: The Verb

Exercise: Praise Roll

One way to meet the legitimate need people have for appreciation is to give them praise.

Purpose Practice giving praise and explore what constitutes effective praise.

Participant Instructions	step action
	1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Assign one person to be a Praise Counter. (Counts the number of praise statements each person makes during the exercise)● Assign one person to be a Timer. (Gives each person 10 seconds and calls out “stop” at the 10-second mark.)
	2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Form two groups of equal size, group A and group B.● Have one person from each group come to the front of the room. Have them sit in chairs facing one another. Ask them to use their hands to make drum rolls on their laps.
	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Give person-A 10 seconds to hurl praise statements at person B. (The counter keeps track of how many praise statements.)● Timer calls out “stop” at 10 seconds.● Give person-B 10 seconds to hurl praise statements at person A.
	4 Call another set of two people to the front of the room and repeat step 3. Continue until all members of the groups have taken a turn.
	5 Ask the Counter to report the name of the person(s) who uttered the most praise statements.
	6 Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● In the list of Tips below, which will be most difficult for you to apply?● What are the challenges with giving praise to members of your group?

Tips for Effective Praise

Be sincere	Only say it if you mean it.
Be specific	State what the person did that deserves praise.
Be timely	Give praise as soon after the behavior as possible.
Indicate relevance	State how the behavior helped the group, helped you, or contributed to the group’s mission.

Points to Consider

Love in the context of leadership is agape love. This love is about how you behave toward others, not about how you feel.

1Cor13:4-7 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (NKJV)

Patience	Showing self control
Kindness	Giving attention, appreciation, and encouragement
Humility	Being authentic and without pretense or arrogance
Respectfulness	Treating others as important people
Selflessness	Meeting the needs of others
Forgiveness	Giving up resentment when wronged
Honesty	Being free from deception
Commitment	Sticking to your choices

Discussion Questions

- For you, which of the love behaviors in the table above require the most effort and why?
- What are some ways you can give team members the attention they need?

Chapter 5: The Environment

Points to Consider

- A healthy environment is very important for healthy growth to occur.
- When we identify and meet the needs of others, we make deposits into their relational bank accounts.
- The only person you can change is yourself.
- While we can't actually motivate others, we can create an environment that encourages them to make changes.

Discussion Questions

- What are some healthy things in your group environment?
- Give an example of something someone did or said that made a deposit into your relational bank account.

Exercise: Healthy Environment Puzzle

Purpose

Consider various ways to create and maintain a healthy environment.

Participant Instructions

step	action
1	Working in groups of 2 or 3, find the behaviors in the puzzle and list them at the bottom of this page.
2	Once you have all the behaviors on the puzzle, think of more behaviors that would help to create and maintain a healthy environment. Add them to your list.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After 3 minutes, Session Leader calls "time." ● Session Leader asks each person to say a behavior on his/her list that no one else has said. ● Session Leader then asks for any other behaviors from the list that no one has said.
4	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Which behaviors from the list do you believe would be most likely to create and maintain a healthy environment? ● How difficult would it be for you to regularly practice those behaviors?

- 1-
- 2-
- 3-
- 4-
- 5-
- 6-
- 7-
- 8-
- 9-
- 10-



Chapter 6: The Choice

Exercise: The Clasp Habit

Purpose Consider how difficult it is to form new habits.

step	action
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Clasp your hands in front of you as you normally do.● Look down and notice which thumb is on top.
2	Pull your hands apart, then re-clasp them in the opposite way with the other thumb on top.
3	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Was it awkward for you to clasp your hands in the opposite way than you normally do?● In what way do you think this sensation of awkwardness contributes to people's resistance to change?● If it was important to you, do you believe you could train yourself to regularly clasp your hands opposite of the way you do now?

Points to Consider

praxis	Positive feelings come from positive behaviors
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- If you make a commitment to identify and meet the needs of those in your group and align your behaviors to meet your commitment, you will eventually develop positive regard for those in your group.
- You can discipline yourself to do what is unnatural until it becomes natural and a habit.

Discussion Questions

- What is something that is natural for you now that at one time was awkward or unnatural for you?
- What advice would you give yourself to make it easier to develop a new healthy leadership habit?

Chapter 7: The Payoff

Points to Consider

Demonstrate your value	You demonstrate your value as a leader when you learn to build influence by serving and sacrificing for others.
Have a personal mission	A disciplined life of leading with authority becomes a personal mission.
Make a difference	In your role as leader, you have a unique opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of others.
Be a godly leader	If you are leading with authority, your life will align with God's plan.
Experience joy	Serving others breaks you free from the shackles of self-absorption. It allows you to experience joy.
Grow spiritually	When you deny your own needs and wants to extend yourself for others, you grow.

Discussion Questions

- From the list in the table, which payoffs for practicing servant leadership are most appealing to you?
- Where are your current opportunities for practicing servant leadership?

The Epilogue

James 1:23-25 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does, (NKJV)

Points to Consider

- It is of no profit to have **learned** well if you neglect to **do** well.
- You begin with a choice.

Discussion Questions

- If you had to pick just one thing to apply that you learned from the book, "The Servant" and this study guide, what would you pick?
- Where would you begin practicing that one thing?

Exercise: Personal Action Plan

Create a personal action plan to apply the lesson you selected.

My Lesson to Apply:
My Accountability Partner: (Person who will ask about my consistency, encourage me, urge me to continue, and praise me for progress)

Specific Behaviors I Commit to Demonstrate as I Apply My Lesson

Behavior	Where	When