

INTRODUCTION

Servant leaders care about others' needs as much or more than their own.

Before the session: *Read chapters 1, 2 & 3 of Inside Out by Rich and Robyn Wilkerson*

Introduction:

Begin by discussing the following questions together.

Today we'll look at becoming a servant leader. To begin, turn to page 13. Let's find out how many of those volunteering ideas have been done by one or more members of your group.

- Which of the volunteering ideas have you already participated in? (As someone reads the list on pages 13–14, raise your hand if you've volunteered in that way.)

SQUARE ONE

Authors Rich and Robyn Wilkerson suggest that being a servant leader differs from volunteering. A servant leader is someone who

1. Cares about the needs of others as much as, or more than, their own needs;
2. Focuses their attention on the goals that make the world a better place; and
3. Speaks out and acts on behalf of those who may not be able to speak for or fully represent themselves through their own actions.

As you read this definition of a servant leader, most likely people come to mind who represent one or more of these statements.

- Share an example of someone who is a servant leader in one of these ways.
- What quality or action did you hear in one of the examples shared that you would like to incorporate in your own life?

Video: Let's watch this session's video from Rich and Robyn Wilkerson.

- What is one thing that stood out to you in the video?

THE “WHO” OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The good news is that, according to Rich and Robyn Wilkerson, the one skill every servant leader has is *breathing*, so everyone can be a servant leader! But servant leaders are unique too. They can be any

Age

Gender

Race

Nationality

Religion or creed

Socio/economic standing

Educational background

Sometimes people may sideline themselves due to one or more of these characteristics, but the Bible is full examples of how God chose unlikely people to serve others in unexpected ways.

- Choose one of these characteristics. When can that characteristic be a benefit to being a servant leader?

Reflection: Circle any of these characteristics that you have used as an excuse to sideline yourself. Then describe one situation for each characteristic that you circled.

THE TRAITS OF A SERVANT LEADER

Rich and Robyn Wilkerson have identified fifteen traits that are vital for servants who want to lead others toward positive change.

Traits of a Servant Leader	D	A	T
Clear vision			
Absolute values			
Faithful			
Accepting			
Loyal			
Humble			
Integrity			
Compassionate			
Encouragers who support one another			
Generous			
Honor and respect one another, and value the contributions of others			
Mentor one another			
Flexible			

We'll look closely at each one of these traits in future sessions, so this is a good opportunity to self-check where you are now.

Reflection: Look at each trait and the columns to the right. If this trait is one you need to develop, place a check in the D column. If it is a trait you are average at, place a check in the A column. If the trait is generally true of you already, place a check in the T column.

- Choose one of the traits that is already true of you and one that you feel you need to develop. Share each with your group.

INSIDE GOD'S WORD

Jesus—the Servant Leader

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick (Matthew 14:13–14).

John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin and the man who announced His coming to the world, had just been beheaded by Herod. Jesus had been ministering day and night for months, and John's death was certainly a sign that Jesus' own ministry was entering a new, more dangerous phase. Understandably, Jesus intended to spend some time in solitary communion with the Father, to mourn John, and to prepare for the trials that lay ahead.

Instead, a crowd crashed His private party. Jesus could heal the sick, cast out demons, and even raise the dead. In a world of limited medical knowledge, Jesus was the one doctor everyone wanted to see. He would have been well within His rights to say, "I'm taking the day off. Come back tomorrow." Instead, He had *compassion* on the people, and took time for them, working late into the day.

What immediately follows this passage is a miracle so great that it's recorded in each of the four Gospels. Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed a crowd of well over five thousand people, with plentiful leftovers.

Jesus looked beyond His own need for solitude and refreshing, and focused on the needs of others. His compassion wasn't expressed in words. He was moved to action in the service of others. He met their physical needs of healing and sustenance, and this gave Him the opportunity to meet their spiritual needs as well.

- What can we learn about servant leadership from this example in Jesus' life?

RESPONSE

Reflection: Think back to situations when you had the opportunity to be a servant leader. Did you take that opportunity? If so, how has it changed your life? If not, what is holding you back? Have you made changes that will allow you to move forward as a servant leader?

Leading Inside Out: Choose one thing you can do to serve someone else, and share it with your group. Then make a point to do it before the group meets again.

PRAYER

Close in prayer. Record prayer requests here and continue to pray for these needs throughout the week.