

Step Up

Heart to Serve

September 27, 2026

Dave Faust | Senior Associate Minister

Week 3

Philippians 2:1-11

We're in the third week of a series called "Step Up," and we're talking about getting your hands dirty. We're asking, "Where is God's grace leading us to step up?"

This Saturday we're hosting a celebration called **BRANDED: Marked by Purpose (Saturday, October 3, 5:00-7:00 p.m.)**. It's a way to thank everyone who's already serving, and bring someone else so they can explore where they might fit in.

Register for: [BRANDED](#)

1. **When it comes to the idea of "serving," what are some things that come to your mind? What is your attitude towards serving? How do you respond to the call to serve?**

Here are some different ways we respond to the idea of serving. Some of us are . . .

- Willing, but Tired. A message about serving makes you feel exhausted. You've already been serving for long time, and you feel burned out. You don't need to get up and go. You need to sit down and rest. We understand. If this describes you, we're not trying to make you feel guilty and overwhelmed.
Jesus said, "Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
- Willing, but Timid. You feel like you don't have much to offer. Or maybe you're a new Christian, inexperienced and unsure of yourself. When you light a candle, how long do you have to wait before it shines its light? Paul told Timothy: "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but of power, of love, and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).
- Loving, but Limited. You might be in this category if you really love the Lord, but your body doesn't work like it used to. Or you're working long hours to support your family, and you truly don't have time to volunteer.

- Unwilling, Because You're Uninformed. You haven't been taught that following Jesus includes serving.

Paul wrote that Christ sets us free so we can **"Serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13, NIV)**. Maybe you've been in a church where the religious professionals and the paid staff do everything, and you didn't get a chance to use your gifts.

- Unwilling, Because You're Unmotivated. You are content to be a spectator and stay on the sidelines.

Paul wrote, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" **(1 Corinthians 12:27, NIV)**. Did your hand or leg ever fall asleep and get numb? Your body doesn't work right if even one little part neglects its job.

We all want to be part of a caring community. But are we willing to do what it takes to *be* a caring community?

2. **Which category describes you? Is this how you have always responded to serving or has that changed over time?**

What should be our attitude about serving? Philippians chapter 2 explains WHY we are motivated to serve.

"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose" **(Philippians 2:1-2, NIV)**.

We serve out of gratitude for the Lord! We serve because we're thankful, not because someone twists our arms. We appreciate what the Lord has done for us. Has God given you encouragement and comfort? Has he been tender and compassionate with you?

We serve because we value others. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" **(Philippians 2:3-4, NIV)**. The goal isn't to show off and say, "Look at me." We shouldn't have a holier-than-thou attitude, as if we're better than anyone else. The Holy Spirit humbles us and helps us truly care about others. We don't just ask, "What's in it for me?"

We serve to imitate Jesus. “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” **(Philippians 2:5-7, NIV)**.

3. **What does it look like to have the same attitude or mindset of Jesus?**

When someone is arrogant, we say, “He thinks he’s really something.” But Jesus was willing to make himself “nothing.” The Lord of the universe took the role of a nobody. One translation says Christ “emptied himself.” When someone is prideful, we say he’s “full of himself.” But Christ “emptied himself.”

We worry about popularity. But another version says Christ “made himself of no reputation.” Second Corinthians 8:9 says, “Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you, through his poverty, might become rich” **(2 Corinthians 8:9, NIV)**. Christ laid aside his divine privileges and came to earth. He got his hands dirty. He dealt with the same hurts and temptations we face.

“And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!” **(Philippians 2:8, NIV)**.

Crucifixion was not only brutal and painful, but it was also humiliating. At the cross, soldiers stripped Jesus naked, spat on him, mocked him, and nailed him to a cross between two thieves. Do we comprehend the sacrifice of Christ? He went from the heights to the depths, from the palaces of heaven to the gutter of Golgotha. That’s the ugly name of the spot where he was crucified—“the place of the skull.”

No matter how far down you have been, Christ has been there himself.

4. **When you think about how far Jesus was willing to go for you, from the glory of heaven to the humiliation of the cross, how does that shape the way you think about serving others?**

We serve because the way to “up” is “down.” Jesus said, if you want to be great, be a servant. If you want to wear a crown, pick up a cross. To find your life, lose it for the Lord’s sake—deny yourself and die to sin. The Bible says, “Humble yourself before the Lord, and he will lift you up” **(James 4:10)**.

In God’s eyes, to “Step Up,” you have to STEP DOWN! Going “low” is the way to go “high.” Jesus stepped down from heaven and went so low that he died on the cross. But look what happened next . . .

“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (**Philippians 2:9-11, NIV**).

Christ occupies the highest place. No one holds a higher rank or office. He owns the greatest name. He towers above any of history’s greatest names. At the burning bush, God told Moses that the name “Lord” would be his memorial name forever. In Hebrew it’s *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*, from the verb that means “to be” or “I am.” He is the great “I am.” And now that name above all names, “Lord,” is applied to Jesus Christ.

Every knee should bow before him. Proud people bow before no one, but one day every knee will bow before Jesus. Every tongue will confess him. Someday will recognize that Jesus Christ is Lord.

5. The way to “up” is “down.” So what is the upside for you if you decide to serve?

What do you get out of serving others?

- You experience new growth. There are lessons we can only learn in the “discomfort zone.”
- You find new joy. It’s a joy to use the gifts God has given you. In the movie, “Chariots of Fire,” the Olympian and missionary Eric Liddell said, “God made me for China, but he also made me fast. When I run, I feel his pleasure.”
- You make new friends. Go on a mission trip or serve with students and kids or mow and mulch the church lawn with some other volunteers. You could visit a shut-in or work with others in VBS.

If you are willing to serve . . .

- Start close to home (Don’t neglect your own family.)
- Care for “the flock on your block” (Care for your neighbors who live around you.)
- Look for “the sheep in the shadows” (People others might overlook)
- Keep going till the Lord says you’re done



6. **Where is God calling you in the next season? Is He leading you to serve with the Northside Campus? Is he calling you to stay with the Castleton campus and step up to serve where others are called out? Or is there something else God is calling you into?**

Wherever God is calling you, go with the mindset of Jesus--humbly, willingly, and ready to serve!