Practical Christianity

In our last teaching, [*It Begins With You*](https://www.celllifechurch.org/resources/sermon-notes/it-begins-with-you/), we talked about who is responsible to meet the needs of our world. Today we are talking about practical things we can do as Christians to help our world be a better place.

## It Begins With You

If you have not watched our [previous webcast](https://www.celllifechurch.org/resources/sermon-notes/it-begins-with-you/) or read the notes for it we encourage you to do that. It lays the foundation for this teaching. In our last teaching, we talked about the problems of the world and we shared that it is our responsibility to meet the needs of this world, not any government’s. We talked about our permission and commission to do the right thing regardless of what governments tell us to do or not to do. Today we are sharing some practical things you can do as a Christian to have a positive effect on your community, region, and this world.

In these modern times, we seem to be turning to government more and more to solve our issues and problems. I believe this stems from two things. First, we are not sure what to do or how to do it and second, we don’t have the resources or influence to do it. Because of these two things, people often leave it up to governments to make decisions, create programs, and pay for the solution. Friends, this is not what Jesus has called us to.

## Leaders Must Equip the Saints

Friends, Cell Life Church is founded on two simple principles. These are principles codified in scripture and get to the heart of the matter. The first is found in Ephesians 4:11-12 and is directed toward leaders.

## Ephesians 4:11-12

(11)  So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,  (12)  to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

Leaders, this passage of scripture points directly at you. As leaders of the Church it is our responsibility to equip the people we are leading so they can fulfill the mission and function God created them for. Every person has been created by God with a purpose to fulfill. Every purpose God has given will point people to Christ. It is our responsibility to mentor people, train people, provide whatever people need so they can serve in the capacity that God created them for.

These purposes and callings may be in the Church itself or they may be out in the world. God equips people to serve in many ways. Some are gifted teachers, others are gifted farmers. Some are gifted musicians or entertainers while others are gifted in the trades like carpenters and plumbers. A few are gifted leaders who can inspire others and some are laborers like fishermen or factory workers who provide a product for others. We need these all.

For too long we have equated serving God with serving inside the walls of a church building when Matthew 25:34-40 clearly shows we are to be equipping the people we are leading to serve others outside our own groups and by doing so, point them to Jesus. Let’s read Matthew 25:34-40.

## Jesus Teaches What We Need To Do

## Matthew 25:34-40

(34)  "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.  (35)  For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,  (36)  I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'  (37)  "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?  (38)  When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?  (39)  When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'  (40)  "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

In this, we read many practical things that we should be doing. These are not suggestions from the Lord. These are things we need to be doing. We are not all called to each one of these, but the Church, that is the Body of Christ as a whole, should be doing all these things and doing them to the best of our abilities.

Jesus tells us the Church should be feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, providing shelter to those who need it, clothing the naked, nursing the sick, and visiting the captive. These are all broad subjects, but all we should be doing are encompassed by these things.

An excellent example of this is found in Luke 10:30-37

## Luke 10:30-37

(30)  In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.  (31)  A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.  (32)  So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.  (33)  But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.  (34)  He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.  (35)  The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'  (36)  "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"  (37)  The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

In this parable, we see three people; two of them religious leaders and one an everyday person. The religious people did not want to get involved. They weren’t sure of the circumstances or who this poor man was so they crossed over and passed him by as if they did not see him. However, the Samaritan went to the injured man’s aid. He cared for him and paid for his further care as it was needed. None of us are exempt from serving others and helping those in need.

## Everyone Has A Purpose and Mission

God has given each of us talents. These are often referred to as natural abilities. We believe there is nothing natural about natural abilities. If it was natural, everyone would have the ability. We believe the things that come easy or simple to each one of us are supernatural abilities. These are abilities that have been designed in us as God created us and stitched us together in our mother’s womb.

You have these talents to ultimately serve the Lord by serving others. In the passage we just read from in the gospel of Luke we see a man serving someone else by nursing wounds. This could just as easily been shown by feeding someone or giving them a job. However God has gifted you, it was to be used to point people to Christ.

Maybe you are a shrewd businessman who is good at getting a good return on an investment. You may be able to teach others how to do this and you can create jobs for people to earn money to feed and house their family and serve others, too.

Maybe you are skilled as a doctor or nurse. You can help people heal and cure sickness. These people can then share the goodness of God with others as they share their testimony.

Skilled farmers and fishermen feed the world and scientists and engineers discover new and better ways to provide clean water for people to drink.

## Practical Things You Can Do In Your Community

These are just examples. For as many people there are in the world, there are ways to serve others. There are some common things we all can do. We can all check on our neighbors and make sure they are okay. It is everyone’s responsibility to be sure they do not cause harm to others and reflect the love of Jesus to others. That means borrowing something from the scouts and doing a good deed each day.

We all have gifts. Some are hospitable, some are encouraging, and others are caring. In all, whatever the gifting God has given you, it is to be shared with others. The common thing in all of this is to do it in the name of Jesus Christ and give Him all the glory. Don’t just look out for the people you like or the people that are like you. Don’t hold your gift back to be used just for those that are part of your own church group. Serve your neighborhood and community. Serve the people that don’t’ like you and don’t like Jesus. Treat everyone as your neighbor and do it with the love, grace, and humility of Jesus Christ.

## Common Traits

The common things that we should have in all we do are found in the character of Christ. The character of Christ is humble and easy. Jesus loves, forgives, shows grace, and has mercy for everyone, and wants all to be reunited with God. He gave up his life on the cross so everyone could be reconciled back to God.

If we are to fulfill the mission God has gifted each one of us to do, we must do it with the love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, otherwise, we do it in vain.