

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – January 29, 2023

Theme: Servant Leadership Topic: Servant Leadership and Missions

Main Texts: Acts 11: 19-26: 1 Corinthians 9: 1-19

Key verse: 1 Corinthians 9:19 – *‘For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more’* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: We have said that servant leadership can be summarized as a leadership by one who is a servant first and a leader second. We have also noted that *‘servant leadership starts with me’*, and that as a servant leader, I am *a steward of my Master’s trust, serving to promote my Master’s interest*. As we investigate today’s topic, one attribute that comes out strongly in our texts is that servant leadership involves deep **personal commitment** to the cause. Acts 11:19-26 relates how the disciples, driven by persecution fled from Jerusalem, and even into neighboring countries. As they went, they carried the gospel of the kingdom with them. Though fleeing from physical harm, but because they were already committed to the gospel of the kingdom, they could not help but preach. And interestingly, the Church in Jerusalem, though facing persecution, did not lose sight of their responsibility to those who had fled and were influencing others with the gospel. Apostle Paul said, *‘... necessity is laid on me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.’* (1 Corinthians 9:16b).

1. **Read Acts 11:19-20; 1 Corinthians 9:16. (a) Let participants discuss the attributes that made the disciples continue to preach the gospel in the places they fled to even though they were running away from persecution because of the gospel (b) When a person says ‘woe is me if I do not preach the gospel’ what is s/he saying? (c) Is it possible to have these attitudes towards the gospel today? If so, how can you apply the same attributes to your life in your current situation?**

The disciples were launched into missions unexpectedly and seemingly unprepared. Yet they did not flee from their core mandate of preaching the gospel. No wonder *‘... the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord* (Acts 11:21). Here lies a secret in missions – commitment, availability and ‘the hand of the Lord.’ The significance of this is that as carriers of God (who lives in us) and of the gospel of the kingdom, we can’t help but share Him wherever we go (Acts 1:8); that is if we have committed to Him. A similar commitment would lead, Barnabas, a Levite, to go to Antioch, and mingle with gentiles for the sake of the gospel.

2. **Read Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 11:22-26. (a) Consider the response of the Jerusalem Church, and that of Barnabas in the light of the spread of the gospel to other places. What can we learn from them that is applicable to us today? (b) Teaching is an integral part of the great commission. What can we learn from the example of Barnabas and Saul in teaching people the gospel of the kingdom like Jesus instructed? (c) As a church that is actively involved in missions, what can we do (more) to encourage this kind of leadership in missions?**

Every believer has been called into missions, to *‘... go and make disciples of all the nations, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you* (Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV). This means turning our spheres of influence into a mission field. Jesus told His disciples that *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few* (Matthew 9:37). Because, as Jesus noted, the laborers are few amid a plentiful harvest, everyone called by the name of Christ is called to be a laborer. Just like in the Acts 11:19-26 account, both those who ‘fled’ and those who remained in Jerusalem had something in common – missions. As people of the kingdom, irrespective of our various professions, our only vocation is to do the Master’s will. There were diverse professions represented in the church in Jerusalem: Barnabas was a Levite, and Saul, a scholar- all doing everything possible for the gospel.

3. **Read Acts 11:22-23; 1 Corinthians 9:15-19. (a) Let participants identify the categories of persons involved in missions in these passages. What is the advantage of having such diversity in missions and what can we do to see more of this? (b) Paul said “... ‘For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more’” (1 Corinthians 9:19). Discuss the implications of this statement and give practical examples of how we can do the same. (c) Despite the growing number of churches and new converts to Christianity, laborers are still few. What steps are necessary for a believer to become a laborer? What would you do personally to become a laborer if you’re not one already?**

Prayer: *Our dear heavenly Father, we thank You for all the opportunities we have to serve and lead people to You everywhere we are. May we, like these disciples, be committed and ready to make sacrifices necessary for spreading the gospel. Amen.*