

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

# Helping People Become More Like Jesus - Episode 258

## *Rethinking Volunteer Engagement (Part 3)*

Healthy churches see volunteering as a key part of their spiritual formation strategy. They create easy on-ramps to help people connect with others, better understand their personal giftings, and fulfill their role in God's mission. However, many churches still struggle to engage their church in this key area.

In this episode, Tony and Amy unpack why serving is so important to helping people become more like Jesus, and they explain how churches can better incorporate serving into their spiritual formation process.

### *Helping people become more like Jesus through serving*

**Key #1: Serving should be a key step in the spiritual formation journey of every church.**

Helping people use their spiritual gifts and their wiring should be a core part of your church's discipleship path—just like Bible teaching and connecting people with other believers in groups or classes. If we're not helping people engage the mission as part of the body of Christ, we're not helping people become more like Jesus.

The goal is engagement, not attendance. Many churches promote multiple environments that they want people to attend: Sunday service, mid-week service, groups, classes, men's/women's gatherings, conferences, events, etc. And there's nothing wrong with any of these environments, but they tend to all involve teaching the Bible rather than helping someone engage the mission. It's not enough for us to teach people—we have to help mobilize people into ministry and join the rest of the Body of Christ in our mission to spread the Good News.

**Key #2: You don't need a formal spiritual gifts assessment to help people identify their spiritual gifts.**

For many, many years people learned about their spiritual gifts without a formal assessment. One way to do that is to help people become more sensitive to the needs of other people in their lives.

When you see a need, respond to the need. Don't wait for the church to organize a response. **You** respond.

Paul wrote: "A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other" (1 Corinthians 12:7, NLT). In other words, we should encourage people to be sensitive to the needs of others. When God prompts us to help someone in need, we naturally respond to that need based on the gifts God has given us.

**Key #3: Rather than taking a test, we need to be more cognizant of the people around us.**

Where do others need help? How am I compelled to respond? The Holy Spirit will prompt a response—We just need to act. We don't have to wait for the church to create a program or ministry to respond. We can respond immediately, because we *are* the church.

This approach to helping people discern their gifts removes the barriers so that people can be mobilized into ministry **today**. People don't have to sit around wondering, "*How will the church use my gift?*" Instead, they can watch for needs in the people God puts in their lives and jump in immediately to use their gifts and help the church fulfill its mission.

## *The importance of pruning*

Sometimes churches seem to be more concerned with keeping people busy rather than helping people become more like Jesus. And I'm convinced that helping people use their gifts and strengths to serve other people both inside and outside the walls of the church is essential to helping people become more like Jesus.

If you have a high percentage of people serving at your church (more than half of your students and adults) and you *still* have challenges filling volunteer roles for key ministry areas, then you may want to evaluate whether or not you are trying to do too many things.

We've worked with many churches who claim to have a volunteer problem when, in reality, they have a complexity problem. They have too many competing ministry programs and events searching for more volunteer help. That's not just a calendar or scheduling problem; that becomes a spiritual formation problem. Because **keeping people busy doesn't help them become more like Jesus**.

Listen to the full episode on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or at [theunstuckgroup.com/episode258](https://theunstuckgroup.com/episode258).

## *Free Training: How to Engage More Volunteers & Leaders This Fall*

Every staff person should share in the responsibility of equipping God's people to do the work of God. We invite you and your staff team to **join us on September 1** for a free one-hour training event, where we're equipping your team to attract and retain more high-level volunteers and volunteer leaders this fall. [Register now.](#)

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