

Service

Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' Matthew 25:40

*Though one of the love languages is called "Acts of Service", we would like to go much farther. Service is a way of living, out of which acts arise. For example, the husband who says, "How can I help you?" on the surface may be thoughtful, but the work being addressed is usually communal responsibility. To offer "help" implies that the work belongs to the wife and the willingness to participate in the task is not seen as taking responsibility for the common good but doing a "favor" for a spouse. The difference between "helping" and "serving" are significant:

Are You a Helper of a Servant?

Helpers	Servants
ego—the emphasis is on my goodness	equality—the emphasis is on common good
task—completing the job at hand is the priority	person—the ability to meet people's needs & develop their abilities to meet their own needs is the priority
excuses—the other's challenges dismiss them from responsibility— victim mentality	Expectations—despite challenges the other can achieve— victor mentality
Flattery—generalized praise not based on merit and often results in quantity not quality	Affirmation—acknowledging observed accomplishments and skills—results in quality over quantity
Visitor—short term view	Companion—long term view
Enables—dependent on help	Empowers—self reliant

The phrase, used by those who work in social justice, "preferential option for the poor" means that those who are poor, receive priority. Poverty can be economic, spirit, emotional, social, those who are marginalized for any reason.

- **Works of Mercy**

The Corporal & Spiritual Works of Mercy are actions we can perform that extend God's compassion & mercy to those in need. The Corporal Works of Mercy are kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs. The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

Corporal Works of Mercy	Did I or will I... (neglect, abuse, or respond)	Spiritual Works of Mercy	Did I or will I... (neglect, abuse, or respond)
feed the hungry		instruct	
shelter the homeless		advise	
clothe the naked		console	
visit the sick and imprisoned		comfort	
bury the dead		forgive	
give alms to the poor		bear wrongs patiently	

- **Make a Choice:** Once we are aware of the needs of another we can choose to: **neglect**, ignore, fail to respond

abuse use a "language": words, touch, gifts to exploit and demean or
meet them, respond with concern and action.