

Monday:

Deuteronomy 10:12 - “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul...”

Joshua 22:5 - “Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep His commandments and to cling to Him and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

List three steps God reminds the Israelites to follow in Deuteronomy 10:12 and in Joshua 22:5.

This past weekend, Paul shared the message through Psalm 126. This Psalm is written as a song of thanksgiving for the Israelites as they returned from captivity. If the Israelites would have listened to what God asked of them in Deuteronomy 10:12 and Joshua 22:5, what might have been different for them?

Slowly **READ Psalm 126**

Pray and then ask God these questions:

What step can I take to grow to love You more?

What step can I take to serve You with all my heart and soul?

What step can I take to better walk in Your ways?

Thursday:

Galatians 5:13 - “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

1 Peter 4:10 - “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace...”

To serve another means to put their needs before your own. This can be incredibly difficult to do. Think about a time you truly thought of someone else’s needs before your own. What was the situation?

How did you feel in the above situation? Was it easy or was it difficult? Why?

One of the best ways to put someone else’s needs first is to spend time with them. Giving your time to listen, empathize, love and care can be one of the greatest ways to serve one another.

For this week, take time out of your busy schedule to put someone else’s needs first.

Here are some ideas:

- ♦ Engage in conversation, listening to the other person’s response without interrupting or thinking of your next point.
- ♦ Spend time with your spouse or with one of your children doing something of their choice.
- ♦ Write an encouraging letter to a family member or friend who lives out of town.
- ♦ Take someone out to lunch.
- ♦ Bake someone cookies.
- ♦ Send someone a card.
- ♦ Give someone a phone call.
- ♦ Serve someone a meal.
- ♦ Visit a neighbor.
- ♦ Visit a nursing home or Alzheimer’s unit.

Spend time in prayer. Ask God what He would like to do in you this week to put someone else first. Ask Him to help you take steps to live a life of service, with Jesus as your example.

Friday:

At Jacob's Well, we are all about next steps.

For those of you who haven't yet taken a step into Serve at Jacob's Well, please ask for a Serve Booklet at the Connections Center. Take time to look through all the opportunities that are available. Choose a place of service where you feel God might be leading you to get involved. Contact the ministry leader whose contact information is listed next to the serving opportunity. If you aren't sure where to start, sign up for a Serve Tour—a behind the scenes, in-person view of all the volunteer opportunities available at Jacob's Well on the weekends and/or Wednesday nights.

If you would love to discover more about how God has uniquely gifted you to serve, plan to attend the next *Discover You* classes this fall. You can also talk to Laura Garry for more information about Spiritual Gifts and StrengthsFinder. Give Laura a call at the church office, (715) 833-2050, or email her at laura@jacobswellec.org.

For those of you who have already taken a step into Serve, recognize that it is important for you to also help other people take this step. Invite a family member, friend or acquaintance to serve with you (*make sure to tell your ministry leader ahead of time, as background checks are required to serve in children and youth ministries*). If your family member, friend or acquaintance believes their gifts are best-suited for a ministry area different from where you serve, bring them to the Connections Center on the weekend. You can also have them call Laura Garry at the church office, (715) 833-2050, or email her at laura@jacobswellec.org so that she can help them get connected in Serve and take their next steps.

As our church moves toward Builders for Christ next spring and summer to raise the new building, it will take the Holy Spirit working in us as individuals and as a church body to not only build the building, but to sustain the ministry God will do through this amazing tool.

READ 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. As we end this week of devotions, pray and ask God what He wants you to learn. Ask Him to help you see your next step of stewardship in Serve.



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Tuesday:

Ephesians 6:7 - "...rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man..."
Colossians 3:23 - "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men..."

Ultimately, when we serve we are serving God.

If it truly is God we are serving, how does this change our perspective? *(For example, if we are serving God first, then perhaps we need to let go of our own expectations. Instead of looking at what we hope to gain, we look to God, knowing that our service is pleasing to Him.)*

Reflect on a time when you found yourself frustrated in serving. What were the circumstances?

As you look back on this time, how might things have been different if, in the moment, you sought to remember that you were serving God rather than people?

This past spring, we learned that to Live It Well means we realize we are stewards, not owners. It is only with the perspective of a steward that we more fully experience what God has for us.

READ Matthew 25:14-30.

Just as the master in the parable gives each servant bags of gold, God entrusts us with everything we have. If we try to live as an owner, our life can lose its intended meaning and will become disconnected from God’s purposes. If we live as a steward, we can more readily remember that we are serving Him and that we follow Him in faith. This perspective allows Him to work in our relationships and lead us in how we use our time, talents, finances and influence. As God’s servants, we put ourselves to work for good knowing that serving Him means we are called to love people and persist and persevere for God’s plans no matter how much it may cost. Trusting that this pursuit of service will be the place where we can more deeply experience Him at work in us and through us.

READ Ephesians 2:10, praying it in your own words:
“For I am God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for me to do.” As you pray, ask God to help you remember that you are His handiwork and that you have been created in Christ Jesus for good works, for loving service as a representative of Jesus. Ask God to help you remember that He is preparing you in advance for the places where He will call you to serve. Ask Him to help you remember that when you are serving, you are serving Him and there is great joy and fulfillment to be found in it. Ask Him to give you the willing and surrendered heart of a steward—one who each day looks for ways to invest in God’s plan to make things better through love and service in real time.

Wednesday:

READ Philippians 2:3-8. Also, **READ Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45.**

What do these verses teach us about Jesus?

At Jacob’s Well our vision statement is, “Wherever we are on our journey we will take steps together to know and become like Jesus.” As we contemplate what it means to know and become like Jesus, it is important for us to understand that one major part of it is the fact that Jesus came to serve. Jesus had every right to have the perspective of an owner, but instead He came as a steward and provides us with the very best example of how to live as a steward; Jesus calls us to follow His teachings and His examples in life. For this reason, we want to embrace the perspective of stewardship—following Jesus’ example and allowing His perspective to change the ways we serve in our homes, schools, workplaces, church, local community and the world in general.

Name some examples of different ways you already serve, even if they seem relatively minor to you: *(For example, maybe in your home you do the dishes without being asked, or perhaps you fold the laundry and put it away before being prompted to do so. Remember, even the smallest act of loving service—when done in Jesus’ name for the benefit of others—makes a big difference, even if you never see it.)*

Circle how well you feel you currently serve (remember, this is about stewardship and love, following the example of Jesus) in each of these areas of your life, with 1 being “not at all” and 10 being “in every way”:

At Home/Family- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Friends- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

At School/Work- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Neighbors - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Church -1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Chippewa Valley/Community-1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

World-1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What is one step you could take to better integrate the Serve commitment into your life?

Where do you believe God may be calling you to step in and serve?

Take time to pray, asking God to help you take this step by the power of His Holy Spirit at work in you.