



September

September Memory Verse

John 12:26

Whoever SERVES me must follow me; and where I am, my SERVANT also will be.

“My Father will honor the one who SERVES me”



September – Finding God in SERVICE

There are many scriptures that talk about SERVICE. It is mentioned 489 times in the Bible (KJV) so we know that God considers it a very important part of our faith walk. Each and every one of us has SERVED in so many ways, for so many reasons, for selfish gain and for complete surrender to God, to those we love and to those we have never even met. September's prayer journal will focus on SERVICE through God's eyes and how to apply that to our own lives.

This month's journal is dedicated to the memory of our dearly beloved Deacon Lana Farley. She lived among us and exemplified what it meant to SERVE with her whole heart, mind, soul and actions.

One of her favorite scriptures says it all: Luke 22:27 "For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who SERVES? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as the one who SERVES."

God called her, she listened, she served. Well done, good and faithful servant.

Tuesday, September 1

Luke 12: 35-36: Be dressed ready for SERVICE and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him.

Be prepared, not physically, but spiritually. Confess your sins and ask for God's forgiveness every day. Don't hold grudges and forgive those who have hurt you. Pray for those who do not yet know the Lord, especially family, friends and enemies.

Who do you know who needs your prayers for their salvation?

Who needs to be forgiven by you? Who needs to forgive you?

Pray for them all. This is service even if it doesn't require much physical action. Sometimes dropping to your knees is the service that is needed most.

Wednesday, September 2

Mark 10:39b-45: Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your SERVANT, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be SERVED, but to SERVE, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus was the ultimate example of service. His willingness to come down from the heavenly realms to show love and serve a sinful people. Even his disciples were squabbling in the passages above about who will get to sit at Jesus' right or left in heaven. They are more concerned about their own status in heaven than how best to serve Jesus sitting with them at the table. You have to wonder if he ever rolled his eyes and shook his head saying under his breath, "these people are so thick headed!". But as always he used the opportunity to teach and to re-focus them. You must be first and foremost, a servant to others. Worry more about what you can do than your status or place on earth and in heaven.

Have you ever served someone that you felt was lower in status than you? Have you ever served someone that you felt was a higher status than you? Have you ever served someone that you felt didn't deserve to be treated that way? How did it feel?

Thursday, September 3

1 Peter 4:9-11: Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to SERVE one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever SERVES, as one who SERVES by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever.

If we use our gifts for God's purpose and God's glory, great things will happen. It is a tool that when used in service of others, can be an effective way to bring lost souls to Christ.

What is your gift? How are you using it? What is your attitude?

Friday, September 4

John 12:26: If any of you wants to SERVE me, then follow me. Then you'll be where I am, ready to SERVE at a moment's notice. The Father will honor and reward anyone who SERVES me.

If you want to know when and who to serve, you must be in tune with the Lord. You must be walking with Him and be willing to drop whatever you are doing, even if it doesn't make sense. You must have a relationship with the Lord, so you will know when it is His voice speaking to you. Think of your loved one. If they call out to you and you can't see them, how do you know it is them? Because you have been with them, you have spoken with them, you know their voice. It is the same with God. When you spend time with Him in prayer and in the study of His word, you will know His voice when you hear it.

How much time have you spent with the Lord lately? Will you recognize His voice when you hear it? Will you respond to Him?

Saturday, September 5

1 Corinthians 12:4-6: There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of SERVICE, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

The Greek word for service is used to indicate service to the Christian community such as serving tables. Probably not exactly what you were expecting? Have you been asked to help clean up tables at church? Did you hurry up and find something else to do? Not exactly the most glamorous job huh? Have you ever waited tables as a job? Did you earn a lot doing it? Probably not. Did you get patted on the back and told great job? Did people often thank you for your hard work? Did you know that true service for the Lord isn't about how it looks or what you gain from it. It's about what you are giving of yourself and who you are giving it for. When you are serving for the Lord, He can and will work through you to reach those you serve.

What other kind of service isn't seen by others in the same light as how God sees it?

Sunday, September 6

Ephesians 2:10: For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

We were created to serve each other in the name of Christ, so that by serving, we show love and by example we are showing how God's love is unconditional. Isn't it awesome to think that even before we were born, God had already prepared things for us to do in our life time? Every opportunity that comes our way to serve that we ignore or dismiss is potentially something that God expected us to fulfill.

Who needs to be shown unconditional love by you? Is there someone you feel is hard to love? That is exactly who needs it most.

Monday, September 7

1 Samuel 12:24: But be sure to fear the Lord and SERVE him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.

Have you wondered what it means when scripture says to “fear the Lord”? Well, I have. I looked it up and the Greek word for it is *hashem* which meant “being in awe of the Lord”. Are you in awe? Do you look at a sunrise or a sunset and find yourself smiling in wonder? Do you watch the birds in the air and find yourself amazed at how easily they fly through the air with no thought? Do you look up closely at a flower and see all the small little details that God thought about when he created them? Do you marvel at the thought of a new born baby and how they are formed in the womb and delivered into this world? When you find yourself in awe, you can say that you “fear the Lord”. If you are in awe of Him then it seems only natural that you would want to serve Him faithfully with all your heart, right? What does it really mean to serve Him faithfully and with all your heart? What does that look like? If something is easy is it still considered faithfully? Should it be a challenge? Or.....does it mean that you will do what you feel God calling you to do, without delay and with a good heart.

Take time to list a few things that you are in awe of that the Lord has created. Then answer some of the questions above about faithful service.

Tuesday, September 8

Romans 12:11: Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, SERVE the Lord.

When serving it is almost as much about attitude as it is about the action itself. If you have a negative attitude or if you dread it or wait to be told, then you aren't doing it for the right reason.

Check your actions. Check your heart. Do they need a tune up?

Wednesday, September 9

Matthew 6:24: No one can SERVE two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot SERVE God and money.

We all want nice things, house, car, clothes, vacations, etc.... We work hard for them and they are all blessings from above. But what do you think about in your free time? What do you make a priority? What is really important to you? If it is something that only money can buy, if it occupies all of your time or thoughts, then it is possible that you are serving money more than God. God makes it clear that He expects us to get our priorities straight and it is important enough that He doesn't suggest we serve one over the other, He says that you "cannot".

What occupies your thoughts most? What do you do in your free time? If you aren't happy with what you list, then ask for God's help to re-prioritize. He is more than willing.

Thursday, September 10

2 Chronicles 15:7: But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your WORK will be rewarded.

Are you tired? Do you find yourself always being the 20% doing 80% of the work at church, in your family, at your job? Your reward is not always meant to be experienced here on earth. Most of the work done for the Lord will be rewarded in heaven. So, know that what you are doing is not going unnoticed.

List some of the things you have done for the Lord, then offer them up to the Lord and give Him thanks for the reward yet to be received.

Friday, September 11

James 3:13: Who is wise and understanding among You? Let them show it by their good life, by DEEDS done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

How does humility come from wisdom? When you truly understand what Christ did for you, where you would be had he not, by His sacrifice, opened the gates of heaven for you, then you have wisdom. This wisdom makes you realize that you are so underserving of this kind of love and yet God loved you anyway. This is humility.

What deeds have you done lately that you can say you did in complete humility?

Saturday, September 12

Luke 9:57-62: On the road to Jerusalem, someone asked if he could go along. "I'll go with you wherever," he said. Jesus was curt: "Are you ready to rough it? We're not staying in the best of inns, you know." Jesus said to another, "Follow me." He said, "Certainly, but first excuse me for a couple of days, please. I have to make arrangements for my father's funeral." Jesus refused. "First things first. Your business is life, not death. And life is urgent: Announce God's kingdom!" Then another said, "I'm ready to follow you, Master, but first excuse me while I get things straightened out at home." Jesus said, "No procrastination. No backward looks. You can't put God's kingdom off till tomorrow. Seize the day." (The Message Bible)

Does Jesus sound a little harsh to you? Do you think He is being unreasonable? Would you follow Him or would you go back and tie up loose ends? Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and to his ultimate death. He knows that unless these men weren't completely committed and ready to give up all they have; they would not be good candidates for being disciples. Ultimately the most important act of service, is to do whatever God asks you to do, no matter how unreasonable it may seem. His plan is far greater than yours and he will take care of all the loose ends.

How would you feel if God asked this of you? What would you do? Pray for the desire and commitment to answer God's call no matter what.

Sunday, September 13

James 4:13-15: Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

When you talk about your future plans as if you are completely in control of them, you are forgetting that only God knows what tomorrow brings. If you truly want to live according to God's plans for your life, then you will ask, listen and obey what you receive from Him each day. When you go off on your own, you are sinning.

How do you begin your day? Do you plan your whole day without bringing God into the picture? This is so important that the Lord considers it sinning when you leave Him out. Begin tomorrow with a prayer of gratitude for the day, express your willingness to serve and then listen quietly for a message, a feeling or a thought about what God intends for you.

Monday, September 14

1 Peter 3:17: For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

When we are doing God's will, there is a fairly good chance that we will experience some kind of negative response, backlash, lack of cooperation, ridicule or worse from others or even from the recipient of what we are doing. It is always better to suffer in these things than anything we do out of God's will. Suffering for Christ is always going to reap rewards in heaven, even if they don't here on earth. Rewards in heaven last for eternity but rewards on earth are fleeting. Doing evil might reap a benefit now but can ruin your eternal reward.

Have you suffered for doing god's will? Have you done evil in God's eyes? How did each make you feel? Ask forgiveness for the evil done and seek God's will going forward.

Tuesday, September 15

James 2:18: But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

It is almost impossible to have faith and not desire to act on it. Everything Jesus did while on earth involved action – mostly through service to others. When we accept his Holy Spirit into our heart, we too will desire to show our love and our faith by our actions – often in the form of service to others.

What are some acts of service you can recall doing when you first gave yourself to Christ? How do you feel when you hold back where service is concerned? How do you feel when you show your love through your actions?

Wednesday, September 16

Romans 12:6-7: We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is SERVING, then SERVE; if it is teaching, then teach.

If you have received the gift of service, you have certain characteristics that will enable you to do this well.

1. You will notice others in need quicker than most.
2. You get great joy from serving others.
3. You will work tirelessly.
4. You are more aware of others than yourself.
5. You enjoy being with other people.
6. You desire affirmation and recognition but with humility.
7. You desire short range projects.
8. You like to meet needs quickly. *(taken from Intouch by Charles Stanley)*

Do any of these characteristics fit you? If you would like to know your spiritual gifts reach out to Fr. Moseley and he will be able to provide you with a spiritual gifts survey.

Thursday, September 17

Matthew 20:26-28: Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to SERVE, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

The mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Jesus and kneeling down, asked a favor of Him. She said “Grant that one of these two sons of mine (James & John) may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom. Don’t you wonder how she could be so bold? But then wouldn’t you want the absolute best for your own children? Have you ever asked for anything slightly unreasonable for someone you love dearly? Jesus answers by explaining that only God in heaven can decide who sits at His right or left hand. Jesus then called his disciples together to explain that to be great, they must become like servants with each other and do whatever they are asked to do for Christ’s sake. The last will be first and the first will be last.

Can you think of a time when you put yourself first? Can you think of a time when you put yourself last? Which one gave you more pleasure in the end? Which one do you think made Christ the happiest? It is our natural desire to go first, to be seen and heard, to receive the recognition and the focus but his is not what we are called to do. What are some ways you can serve instead of being served?

Friday, September 18

Colossians 3:23-24: Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are SERVING.

When was the last time you had to do something you really didn’t enjoy? Perhaps it was cleaning a dirty bathroom or mopping a sticky floor or mowing the yard when it is 102 outside. Have you had to work with someone you really didn’t care to be around or do something that was very boring and made the day just drag? Everything you do, if done in gratitude for what the Lord has given to you and done for God’s glory will be repaid with a wonderful inheritance in heaven.

God is so good. He is so faithful to us. All that you have, comes from him. Even the work that we do. Even the times we are doing things we don’t particularly enjoy. Take time to list the things for which you are grateful.

Saturday, September 19

Matthew 17:20: he replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there", and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

Faith can seem so hard to maintain at times, but perhaps we are too hard on ourselves. In this scripture passage God says that even the faith the size of a mustard seed can make a mountain move. Maybe what we need to focus on, is that even a small amount of faith can do a great deal when it is genuine and sincere.

What small act of faith could you do that might lead to something really big with God in control?

Sunday, September 20

Hebrews 10:24: And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds

We have all been through some very challenging times lately. We have been isolated from friends, family and even perfect strangers when we are out and about. What we should not be held back from doing is showing concern for one another. A phone call, a text, a note in the mail, a Facetime visit, are all acts of service that show love and concern for one another and perhaps encourage others to do the same.

What are some other ways you can reach out to love ones or even perfect strangers? And don't forget the elderly who are stuck in their homes, facilities and retirement centers.

Monday, September 21

Galatians 6:9-10: And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

This passage is a good one to read when you are worn down. When you have over extended yourself. When it seems like you are always doing for others and don't get any recognition. Sometimes it is those in your own church family. Remember that in due season, you shall reap a harvest.

Offer a prayer of thanksgiving that you are able to do for others and that God promises to reward you for your efforts.

Tuesday, September 22

John 12:14: Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

Think about your feet for a minute. In biblical times, no one wore boots or sneakers that covered up their feet. Everyone wore sandals because they were made easily and because the climate was often very hot. Sand was everywhere and feet were always filthy. Servants who were a part of many households were responsible for washing the feet of those who entered the house. When the Lord knelt down and washed the feet of the disciples, He was setting an important example. If our Lord and Savior was willing to do one of the most menial tasks in the household, we too must be willing to do the same.

What are some menial tasks that you have done in the past? What was your attitude? Were you setting an example for someone? What task should you be doing that might be avoiding?

Wednesday, September 23

Ephesians 5:21: Submit to one another, out of reverence for Christ.

When we serve other's, our thoughts become less self-centered. Our world promotes a "me,me,me" attitude. We deserve this or that. What's in it for me? When you help others in need your focus is suddenly turned away from self and you begin to notice the needs of others more. When you open yourself up in humility to serve others, God opens your own eyes to see more clearly.

Have you ever served someone in need and then gone home and thought to yourself "wow, I am so blessed" and that could very easily be me. You are seeing yourself and others very differently.

Don't forget your blessings and don't forget that you too could one day, be the one in need.

Thursday, September 24

Galatians 5:13-14: You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh, rather, SEVE one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

When Christ came, died and rose again, he set us free from the bondage of sin and death. When we became believers, we were set free. This freedom is not a license however, to indulge in sinful ways but it frees us to love and serve each other and forgive one another's sins in the same way God forgives us. We are called to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves.

What neighbor should you be loving?

Friday, September 25

James 1:22-25: Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

Serving is often thought of as doing something specific for someone who is in need or for someone who is less fortunate than yourself. But what if it is also about hearing God speak to you and then freely acting upon it. It might be for someone else or it might just mean being obedient to God's call. Both involve service.

When was the last time you heard from the Lord? Did you act upon it?

Saturday, September 26

Mark 10:51: What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

Bartimaeus was a poor, blind man who's only means of survival was to beg on the side of the road. When he heard that Jesus was passing by, he called out and asked Jesus to have mercy on him. Jesus instantly turned to him and listened. If you want to be a willing servant you must train your eyes and ears to recognize others in need and be willing to act on it.

Who has called out to you lately? Did you listen? Did you respond?

Sunday, September 27

Proverbs 19:17: Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done.

When you stop at the intersection with the man standing there holding a sign asking for money, or food, or work, what do you do? Do you look the other way? Do you pretend to dig in the console for something until the light changes? Or do you find coins in your console or bills in your wallet and roll down your window? Do you ask what they need the most and then try to get it for them? Do you pray with them at the intersection even if very quickly?

God says when you do anything for the poor, it is as if you are doing it for Him. What will you do?

Monday, September 28

Philippians 2:6-8: Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

If anyone deserved to be treated like royalty, it was Jesus, but that is not what happened. Jesus led a life of humble service. He never asked to be treated special. He was on earth for two reasons. To serve and to bring salvation to the world. What we learn from His example is the importance of putting the needs of others before our own. We are never more like Jesus than when we serve others.

How does this passage make you feel about this sacrifice?

Tuesday, September 29

Acts 20:35: In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said; "it is more blessed to give than to receive".

Do you feel blessed? Do you consider yourself very fortunate in your life? Or, do you think that you have had very few breaks and nothing seems to go right? Then I challenge you to go and serve someone else in need and see how you feel afterwards. I bet your perspective softens. It's always better to be the giver than the receiver, no matter your circumstances.

Pray with thanksgiving for what you have and that God will help you to see that no matter what might be going wrong in your life, there is always someone else who is worse off. Give thanks and praise.

Wednesday, September 30

Matthew 25:40: "The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sister of mine, you did for me."

In this passage, Jesus is the King. Matthew refers to Jesus' return and how he will separate the sheep and the goats. The sheep are those who have been faithful. The goats are those who have not. He explains that because the sheep (believers), fed the hungry, gave someone a drink when thirsty, invited a stranger into their home, helped to clothe those who had nothing, looked after the sick, or visited someone in jail, it was equivalent to doing these things for the King. They will be blessed by His Father in heaven and receive their inheritance.

So remember that when you make the choice to do for others or not, it is as if you are rejecting the King himself or serving him in person. Which do you wish to be? Sheep or Goats?

As you end this month's prayer journal focused on God in Service, I leave you with this scripture that is well known and perhaps takes on special meaning to you now.

Joshua 24:15 (NIV) But if SERVING the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will SERVE, whether the gods your ancestors SERVED beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will SERVE the Lord

Joshua 24:15 (ESV) And if it seem evil unto you to SERVE the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will SERVE; whether the gods which your fathers SERVED that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will SERVE the LORD.

Joshua 24:15 (MSG) If you decide that it's a bad thing to worship GOD, then choose a god you'd rather SERVE—and do it today. Choose one of the gods your ancestors worshiped from the country beyond The River, or one of the gods of the Amorites, on whose land you're now living. As for me and my family, we'll worship GOD.

No matter the translation the message is the same.

As for me and my house, we will SERVE the Lord.

Some information was taken from In-Touch Devotionals and 30 Life Principles Study, by Charles Stanley and Today Devotions written by various authors and Jesus Calling Devotions by Sarah Young.