

Devotions for Those Who Serve

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Serving With Faith

Tom Lemler



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From the Author

There are few things, if any, that are as emotionally exhilarating, and draining, as the task of serving others. Having worked in a variety of ministry settings, including various roles within Christian camp ministry, I understand the excitement that often comes with the beginning of a new ministry or ministry season. I also understand the weariness that can develop when our focus begins to drift away from the ministry of serving and onto ourselves.

This devotional guide is part of a series that came about through some conversations at a Christian Camp Leaders' Conference about the need for camp summer staff devotional material that would be useful without being a burden in an already busy schedule. On my way home from the conference, I began to pray about what would be a useful format and about potential topics for devotions developed specifically for those who serve. Out of that prayer time, this series began to form in my mind and then on paper.

It is my prayer that every Christian recognizes the importance of serving others. With this guide, I pray that your faith in God grows as you serve others. As you go through this devotional guide, each day will focus on a different aspect of living with a godly faith. As you pray, ask God to increase your faith as you serve in ways that require you to trust Him. Pray that the people around you would see faith in action as you serve them. Use the note section at the bottom of each page to jot down thoughts, ideas, or action steps that God will bring to your mind.

In prayer,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom".

Tom Lemler

Day 1

Faith that Pleases God

(Hebrews 11:6)

Are there things that you believe just because the right person says so? Are there people who believe things just because you say they are true? How does that make you feel? How do you feel when you are not trusted? How do you think others feel when you don't trust them? How about God, how much do you trust Him? Do you ever give much thought to your faith in Him actually pleasing Him? Does that motivate you to a greater faith?

Trust, or faith in a person, is something most of us want but we have a difficult time giving it. Many people go to great lengths in their efforts to please God yet fail to realize the key ingredient in doing so is faith. When we seek to serve in a way that pleases God, faith must be at the core of our service. We serve well when our faith believes God will work through our acts of service to benefit those we serve. It is our knowledge that God has changed us that allows us to believe He can change others.

As you pray, ask God to increase your faith in Him and in His ability to use your works of service. Pray that He would surround you with people who help you to grow in faith.

Notes: _____

Day 2
Grow in Faith
(Luke 17:5)

Are you the same size that you were when you were 2 years old? Would you seek help for a child that didn't grow? Why? Have you ever tried to become physically stronger? Were you successful? Why? Do you want your faith at the end of the year to be the same size as at the beginning? What will it take for it to grow? How will serving help it grow? How will its growth help you serve more effectively?

Praying that God would increase your faith is about as popular as praying for patience — the typical way of getting more of either of them is through situations that put them to the test. It is said that no living thing remains the same. It is either growing or declining. The same is true when we have a living faith, we are either doing things that help it to grow or we find it slipping from our life. When we ask God to help our faith grow, we should expect opportunities to serve in ways that require a greater trust in Him.

As you pray, ask God to increase your desire for a growing faith. Pray that you would not become complacent in your walk with God. Pray that the way you serve would be marked by great faith.

Notes: _____

Day 3
Faith that Saves
(Ephesians 2:8)

Have you ever avoided trouble or harm because you believed something you were told? Have you ever had to watch someone walk a difficult, even harmful, path because they refused to believe your warnings? How difficult is it to serve someone who doesn't believe you? How about serving someone that you don't believe in? How does the faith that saved you help you serve others more effectively?

I tend to be a big picture observer. While that can be a helpful trait, it doesn't win me many friends if I try to point out how a small decision now has long-lasting consequences that many would rather not consider. There are a few people though, who have learned to believe what I can see and appreciate the perspective that I bring. The sadder part is that many ignore God's "big-picture" perspective because they lack a faith that could save them from many hard consequences as well as save their soul eternally. To serve well, we need a faith that sees beyond today and into the desire God has for those we serve.

As you pray, ask God to help you examine how your faith in Him has saved you. Pray that your faith in God would lead you to share about a saving faith with those you serve.

Notes: _____

Day 4
Powerful Faith
(Hebrews 11:33-34)

In what ways has God rescued you? Have you ever accomplished something that you felt you were the only one who believed you could do it? Have you ever done something that at one time you thought was impossible? Do you often doubt God's ability to do what He says? Does your doubt ever keep you from serving in ways you know you should? How would you serve differently today if you believed God could use you to accomplish great things?

When the Bible talks about people of great faith accomplishing great things, we often read it with at least a mental disclaimer that that was them and not us. Somehow we miss, or don't believe, the scripture that says Elijah was a man just like us. Turning the rain off and then on was not Elijah's plan but rather God's plan. Even in the midst of great adversity and hard times, God not only rescued Elijah but used him to serve the people of Israel. Our faith has power not because it causes God to do what we want, but because it puts us in a position to do what God wants.

As you pray, ask God to fill you with a faith that seeks to serve according to His power.

Notes: _____

Day 5
Faith that Unites
(Ephesians 4:13)

Who is your best friend? Do you agree on everything? What keeps your friendship intact even when you have differing opinions? How does having a common set of beliefs help unite a group of unique individuals? What are your core beliefs that you would never consider giving up? How does identifying those core beliefs help create greater unity with people who may differ in a lot of “non-core” areas?

As I travel the country and visit a variety of churches, I see a lot of church splits. Some have parted ways and set up their own “house of worship” across the street or down the block. There are even more that meet in the same building; the split is between groups that simply won’t talk with each other. God’s desire is that our faith in Him, the foundation of our relationship with Jesus, would unite us as brothers and sisters in Christ. It is this faith that unites which allows us to serve when the non-essentials of our faith may not align with all the practices of those we serve.

As you pray, ask God to bring you into greater unity with other believers through your shared faith. Pray that your faith in Christ would be a bridge to those you serve rather than a wall.

Notes: _____

Day 6
Faith that is Communicated
(Romans 10:17)

What do you believe in? What would your friends say you believe in? Would those answers be different? Why? Have you ever found out that a long-time friend or co-worker, that you never would have guessed was a believer, was a Christian? Why did you never think so? Who is the last person you told about your faith in Christ? How long did it take you to come up with an answer to that question? How will you be sure your faith is both seen and heard as you serve?

Perhaps you have read stories, or even known someone, that has died after living in apparent poverty only to have it revealed afterwards that they were actually quite wealthy. We hear that and most people think, “how sad”. Yet even more sad is when a person enters a relationship with Christ and no one around them is aware of their faith. The Bible says that faith come by hearing, but not just any hearing, it is the hearing of the Word of God. As we serve, it is important that we communicate our faith in both words and actions.

As you pray, ask God to help you be intentional about making your faith known. Pray that you would clearly communicate your faith as you serve today.

Notes: _____

Day 7
Active Faith
(James 2:17)

Do you know people who claim to believe a particular thing but live completely different from what they say? Which are you more likely to believe, their words or their actions? Are you a person whose words and actions match when it comes to your faith in God? How would your life answer the question posed by James, “What good is your faith if it is not accompanied by action?” What would active faith look like today in the area you serve?

One of my mentors used to challenge me to never pray about something that I wasn’t willing for God to use me to be part of His answer to the prayer. It is easy to pray for people and situations, believing that God will provide, when we can do so from a distance. I love a song I heard recently with a story-line of a man praying (complaining) to God about how bad everything is and asking why God doesn’t do something. In the song, the response from God is, “I did! I created you!”

As you pray, ask God to help you see your active part in His working in the lives of people. Pray that you would be more intentional in serving as you see yourself being the hands and feet of Jesus to the people you serve.

Notes: _____

Devotions for Those Who Serve: Serving With Faith is a part of a series of devotionals written specifically with those serving in Christian camp ministry in mind. I pray that these devotionals are useful tools in a wide variety of ministry and service settings. While the development of these devotional guides is an ongoing project of Impact Prayer Ministry, the following is a list of the initial topics to be addressed:

Called to Serve

Serving with Contentment

Serving with Strength

Serving with Courage

Serving with Excellence

Serving by Faith

Serving through Friendship

Guard Your Heart in Serving

Serving with Integrity

Serving by Listening


Serving with Patience

Serving in Purity

Serving as you Go!

Please contact Impact Prayer Ministry for information about using these devotionals in your ministry. If you have ideas for other topics related to serving, please feel free to pass them along also.

www.impactprayerministry.com

A photograph of a person in a blue shirt and dark pants using a black rake to clear fallen leaves from a green lawn. To the left is a red building with a brown roof and a window. In the background, there are trees and a blue barrel. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

About the author:

Tom Lemler is the director of Impact Prayer Ministry where his preaching, teaching, and resource development is designed to help individuals have a greater connection to God through prayer.

For more information about Tom's ministry of teaching, preaching, and writing, visit the "Tom's Treasure" blog at impactprayer.com or the Impact Prayer Ministry website at impactprayerministry.com.