



We Will Serve the Lord!

By Shari Miller

Identify a recent time when you were privileged to serve another. What did that service look like? Why did you do it? Was it something you felt you *had* to do? Discuss with a partner or your small group.

As baptized and redeemed children of God, we take to heart the words of the Psalmist to *serve the Lord with gladness* (Psalm 100:2). As we study God’s Word, we will explore who, why, and how we can serve. As God’s Spirit-filled children, we are empowered to echo the words of Joshua in 24:15b: “*But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*” Our lives become lives of Christian service to the Lord.

Opening Prayer: Dear Awesome Creator, we praise You that we are wonderfully made. However, sin spoils Your perfect creation and separates us from You. You solved our sin problem by giving Your Son and our Savior Jesus to serve us by living a perfect life, suffering, and dying for the sins of the world. In His name, we ask forgiveness. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit. Thank You for Word and Sacraments through which the Spirit works in our lives to create and sustain our faith, emboldening us to serve those around us with Christ’s love. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we look forward to heaven’s glory, where we will serve our Lord eternally. Yes, You are awesome! In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Whom We Serve

We hear about Joshua, son of Nun, in Numbers 13 and 14. He was an Israelite and was part of their exodus from Egypt. When the Israelites reached the Promised Land of Canaan, Moses selected men to enter and spy out the land that the Lord was giving to them. Ten of the spies reported that the Canaanites were giants and would not easily be defeated. Two of the spies (Caleb and Joshua) believed that with the Lord on their side, they could conquer the land. The children of Israel listened to the ten hopeless spies, did not trust in the Lord, and were sent into exile and more wilderness wandering for a total of 40 years. Only Joshua and Caleb were subsequently allowed to live and enter the Promised Land. (See **Numbers 13:17–24, 32–33 and 14:6–10a, 26–30**).

What do we learn about Joshua in **Exodus 24:13**? _____

In **Joshua 1:1–9**? _____

At the end of Joshua’s life, after he had observed first-hand how the Lord had conquered and led the children of Israel into the Promised Land, he makes the Spirit-empowered statement of belief found in **Joshua 24:14–15**.

Describe the Lord that Joshua had come to know over his lifetime. _____

Was He worthy of Joshua’s trust and service? Why or why not? _____

In the Apostles’ Creed, we confess that we believe in the only true God, the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In **Deuteronomy 10:17a**, Moses reminded the children of Israel that: _____

If time permits: As a group, make a list of the characteristics of the true God. See the following passages for suggestions: **Genesis 17:1; Exodus 34:6–7; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 90:1–2; Psalm 118:1; Psalm 139:1–4; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 3:12; Jeremiah 23:24; Malachi 3:6; John 4:24; 2 Timothy 2:13;** and **1 John 4:8.** _____

Can you think of more? _____

Faith Talk: Share with a partner or the small group a description of *your* awesome God.

Faith Talk: Read **Hebrews 13:8**. In the fourth verse of the hymn “Abide with Me” (LSB #878), we sing: “Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me.” Why is it important that God, our Lord, never changes? _____

Why We Serve

We serve the awesome, the great, and the mighty Triune God. Why? Through God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, the Holy Spirit works and sustains faith in us along with the knowledge of what our God has done for us. Because of the saving work of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven and we are blessed to be a blessing to others.

Read **Luke 1:68–75**. As baptized children of God, how does this prophecy from John the Baptist’s father answer the question of why we serve? _____

According to **Zechariah** (verses **74–75**), how is this service characterized? _____

In **Matthew 4:10; 20:26–28;** and **John 12:26**, Jesus commands us to serve and describes that service. Identify the command and the description. _____

How does the Father look at service done in Jesus’ name? _____

Just before Jesus miraculously fed the four thousand, **Mark 8:2** records these words of Jesus: “*I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat.*” As faith-filled people of God, we are motivated by the Spirit to follow Jesus’ example — to take action and serve others who are in need. How does **James 2:14–17** illustrate this? _____

In **Joshua 22:5**, we hear once again from Joshua about service. According to this verse, what accompanies our service to the Lord? _____

How do we serve Him? _____

Faith Talk: Jesus says in **John 12:26** that to serve Him, we must follow Him. How would you describe following Jesus? _____

How We Serve

Romans 12:9–13 lists the marks of a Christian. Notice that the phrase *serve the Lord* is included in the list. What other actions and attitudes accompany service to the Lord? _____

In **1 Peter 4:10**, we read: *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.*

1 Corinthians 12:4–11, 27–28 reminds us to use our God-given gifts to serve in the family of God. What spiritual gifts and activities are listed that enable us to serve? _____

Faith Talk: Simon’s mother-in-law was healed by Jesus from a fever in **Mark 1:30–31**. In verse 31, how quickly does she begin to serve Jesus?

Is service always convenient? Why or why not? What kinds of sinful things might hinder our service to the Lord?

According to **1 Thessalonians 1:6–10**, what can our service to the living and true God accomplish, by the grace of God? _____

Faith Talk: Have you been on the receiving side of somebody’s service to you? Is it easier to serve or to be served?

Picture **Revelation 7:13–17**. What is our sainted life like in the glories of heaven? _____

How do you picture we will serve our Lord *day and night in His temple*? _____

Faith Walk

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit embolden you, help you identify areas of needed service, and give you opportunities to *serve the Lord with gladness*. Be prepared to serve!
2. As you serve, witness to the Good News about Jesus.
3. Do additional study about Joshua and all that the Lord accomplished in His life.
4. Praise the Lord for the Spirit-given gifts He has given to you, and ask that all service you do be done to His glory.

Closing Prayer: Speak or sing the words of “Take My Life and Let It Be” (LSB #783; LW #404; TLH #400).

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