

this week's walk

A Five Day Devotional Journey

October 15-21, 2006



Why we do what we do

Ministry

Five Day Devotional

1 **Read:** *Freedom to serve one another*
Then they began to argue among themselves about who would be the greatest among them. Jesus told them, "In this world the kings and great men lord it over their people, yet they are called 'friends of the people.' But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant. Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves. **Luke 22:24-27**

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That's an act of true freedom. **Galatians 5:13ff**

Think:

- How naturally does it come for you to serve others? How easily do you allow others to serve you? Which presents the greatest challenge to you? Why?

Pray:

"Lord Jesus, thank you for being among us as one who serves. Give me your servant heart that I may be free to serve and to be served as you would lead."

Live:

All week long there is one simple challenge: Find a creative and quiet (no trumpets, please) way to serve someone at home, at work, at school, wherever, each day.

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45

God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits.
1 Corinthians 12:6ff

Shaped for Service

You were put on earth to make a contribution.

You weren't created just to consume resources — to eat, breathe, and take up space. God designed you to make a difference with your life. While many best-selling books offer advice on how to get the most out of life, that's not the reason God made you. You were created to add to life on earth, not just to take from it. God wants you to give something back.

You were shaped to serve.

God formed every creature on this planet with a special area of expertise. Some animals run, some hop, some swim, some burrow, and some fly. Each has a particular role to play, based on the way they were shaped by God. The same is true with humans. Each of us was uniquely designed or "shaped" to do certain things.

We are only fully alive when we're helping others. Jesus said, "If you insist on saving your life, you will lose it. Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will ever know what it means to really live." This truth is so important that it is repeated five times in the Gospels. If you aren't serving, you're just existing, because life is meant for ministry. God wants you to serve and love others unselfishly.

Rick Warren, **The Purpose Driven Life**

Four Daily Devotional Steps

Read

Meditatively read a verse/passage.

Think

Ponder its meaning.

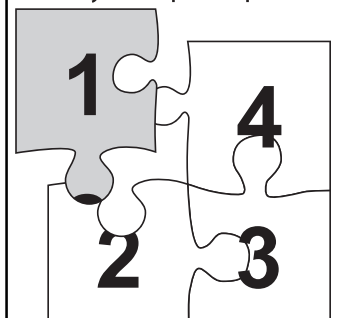
Pray

Talk it over with God.

Live

Pursue life response.

Weekly Discipleship Track



2 **Read:** *Wash each other's feet*
Jesus knew that the Father had put him in complete charge of everything, that he came from God and was on his way back to God. So he got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and put on an apron. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with his apron...After he had finished washing their feet, he took his robe, put it back on, and went back to his place at the table. Then he said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Master,' and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other's feet. I've laid down a pattern for you. What I've done, you do. I'm only pointing out the obvious. A servant is not ranked above his master; an employee doesn't give orders to the employer. If you understand what I'm telling you, act like it—and live a blessed life. **John 13:3-6, 12-17**

Think:

- Put yourself in the place of one of the 12 — what would you have found most challenging about Jesus washing your feet? How would he have you carry out his command to “wash feet” today?

Pray:

“Lord, help me not to recoil at “dirty feet” today. Equip me with a towel for the washing and the heart to use it.”

Live:

“Wash” someone’s “feet” today. Be creative. Be appropriate. Have fun.

4 **Read:** *Each is given something to give*
God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people!

The variety is wonderful:

wise counsel
clear understanding
simple trust
healing the sick
miraculous acts
proclamation
distinguishing between spirits
tongues
interpretation of tongues.

All these gifts have a common origin, but are handed out one by one by the one Spirit of God. He decides who gets what, and when. **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

Think:

- What gift(s) do you feel you are currently using? Which would you like to see more of in your life? Why?

Pray:

“Spirit of God, I yield myself to you. Shape me, mold me, fill me, use me to minister to others today as you see fit.”

Live: Watch for practical ways of using just one of these gifts today with the help of the Holy Spirit.

3 **Read:** *A people energetic in goodness*
God's readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation's available for everyone! We're being shown how to turn our backs on a godless, indulgent life, and how to take on a God-filled, God-honoring life. This new life is starting right now, and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, appears. He offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from a dark, rebellious life into this good, pure life, making us a people he can be proud of, energetic in goodness. **Titus 2:11-14**

As soon as I send either Artemas or Tychicus to you, come immediately and meet me in Nicopolis. I've decided to spend the winter there. Give Zenas the lawyer and Apollos a hearty send-off. Take good care of them. Our people have to learn to be diligent in their work so that all urgent necessities are met (especially among the needy) and they don't end up with nothing to show for their lives. **Titus 3:12-14**

Think:

- What “urgent necessities” would the Lord have you tend to today? Do you tend to be more of a Mary or a Martha (see Luke 10:38-42)? Why?

Pray:

“Father, give me a heart that discerns your call to serve others today and your call to be still before you.”

Live:

Selflessly minister to a total stranger in need today who can never repay you.

5 **Read:** *Accepting your part in the body*
The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance. You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this. Only as you accept your part of that body does your "part" mean anything. You're familiar with some of the parts that God has formed in his church, which is his "body":

apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle workers, healers, helpers, organizers, those who pray in tongues. But it's obvious by now, isn't it, that Christ's church is a complete Body and not a gigantic, unidimensional Part? It's not all Apostle, not all Prophet, not all Miracle Worker, not all Healer, not all Prayer in Tongues, not all Interpreter of Tongues. **1 Corinthians 12:25-31**

Think:

- How are you currently functioning in the body of Christ? How well would you say you are accepting your part in the body of Christ? Why?

Pray:

“Holy Spirit, free me from any and all ‘hang-ups’ about my place in the body. Give me greater freedom of movement in ministry to you and service for others.”

Live:

Take a risk — serve someone today in a way that stretches you and requires divine gifting and help!