



God calls us to serve HIM and to serve one another. Prayerfully, our hearts intention would be to serve others through HIM because of HIM and in HIS name. Sometimes it can be a slippery slope. Our human nature may pull at us for recognition, for our own praise, and to serve others with an expectation of something in return. And to add another layer; are we serving JOYFULLY? I am humbled by my honest struggle with this. I can serve often, but I don't often serve with a joyful heart. Taking it even deeper, it is easy to serve those we love, but how often are we sacrificing our time, energy and resources to serve those we do not love or even know?

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil: cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love: in honour preferring one another. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation: continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints: given to hospitality."
Romans 12:9-13 NKJV

As a mother and wife, sister and friend, active community member and local business owner, I could easily list the many ways I find myself serving others. I take great care to provide my husband and children with a clean, tidy home where the pantry is always full, the fridge is stocked and a home cooked meal prepared with love, awaits them at the end of every day. But I love my family. It's easy to serve them. Although, admittedly, I occasionally find myself seated atop a pile of dirty laundry, quietly crying because so much that I do goes unnoticed. I pray fervently for Jesus to shift my heart so that I feel joyful about serving my family.

I run a business where I spend hour after hour serving my clients who are riddled with chronic spine pathologies and often find myself both a mental health counselor as well as ambassador of Jesus, reminding both unbelievers and believers to surrender their burdens to the only one who can truly free them. But this is my career, and I am paid well to do this. Not much of a sacrifice on my part.

I serve in my church on our Missions committee and have offered thousands of hours of prayer, effort, energy and financial resources to serve globally. I serve locally with the Rescue Mission, and have begun building beautiful relationships with the families whom I have been working with.

There are so many opportunities to serve. Look around and you will see the immense needs of so many people all around you. We are called to serve. God commands us to serve one another. It's serving through my church and volunteer efforts where I feel that my serving has been aligned closer with what God expects of me.

There is no question that to serve others feels good. Every time I serve, I am blessed and often walk away wondering if I was blessed MORE than I blessed. I pray every day to serve those around me with a well-intentioned heart. That I use the gifts imbedded in me by The Lord, the way HE wants me to.

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." 1 Peter 4:10 NKJV

We all have been stewarded with gifts. Are we using them to JOYFULLY serve others in the name of GOD? This is a question I find myself asking almost daily.

As I grow into a more intimate relationship with Jesus, HE equips me with what I need to serve. To serve others with a GOD focused heart intention, to serve joyfully and to serve those I do not love because HE helps me get outside my comfort zone and seek to serve and fill needs in places I would not normally find myself in. When we serve, we have so many opportunities to plant eternal seeds that may leave a legacy behind much greater than filling immediate physical needs. We can help feed, clothe and educate others, but more importantly we can also be an example of the Gospel. To look into a child's eyes as they realize just how much their Heavenly Father loves them...that beaming light of hope and joy...well there really is nothing better in this world.

Before I seek to serve I ask myself these questions:

1. Have I prayed for the Lord to put me where HE needs me. If HE calls... I GO.
2. Is my heart intention aligned with The Lord? For HIM and HIM only.
3. Will serving in this way cost me something? Because it should cost me something.

Today is as great a day as any to prayerfully seek serving others joyfully and sacrificially.