



STM DEVOTIONAL

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, **but with God all things are possible.**”

Matthew 19:26

Short Term Missionaries (STMs) are people just like you—serve as the hands and feet of Jesus, offering practical help and assistance to each family.

Thank you for joining us! Be prepared to help families experience all the excitement of being at camp: the recreation, the crafts, the games, and the outdoors. Together with other STMs you'll set an example of having fun and being still enough to hear the voice of God. (Joni and Friends)

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Matthew 19:26

Body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12 14-26

Unity and Diversity in One Body

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many. 15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? 18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty, 24 but our representable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, 25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Day 1

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible."
Matthew 19:26

"Everything is possible for one who believes." (Mark 9:23 NIV)

This is the faith factor of living: You see the possibilities in life because you have faith. The Bible says, "The just shall live by faith," "Without faith it is impossible to please God," "Whatever is not of faith is sin," "According to your faith it will be done unto you." Mark 9:23 says, "Everything is possible for one who believes" (NIV).

I believe that followers of Jesus should be the most innovative and creative people on the planet because we serve a God who says all things are possible. The most narrow-minded people I know are people who don't believe in God. Why? Because their possibilities are limited by their unbelief. When you put your faith in God, it expands your horizon. You can be much more creative and innovative. (Rick Warren)

We are the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:4 says "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them."

Devotion by Rick Warren

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10 NIV)

God has given you unique abilities, talents, and gifts.

At Saddleback Church, we say they represent a person's SHAPE —
Spiritual gifts, **H**earth, **A**bilities, **P**ersonality, and **E**xperiences.

This bundle of talents is the thing God has given you that makes you who you are and sets you apart from other people.

If you think your talents are simply for you to make a lot of money, retire, and die, you've missed the point of your life. God gave you talents to benefit others, not yourself. And God gave other people talents that benefit you.

We're all a part of the body of Christ, and each part matters. There are no insignificant people in the family of God. You are shaped to serve God, and he is testing you to see how you are going to use the talents he gave you.

Whether you are a musician or an accountant, a teacher or a cook, God gave you those abilities to serve others. Today's verse says, *"Each of you should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms"* (1 Peter 4:10 NIV).

You are a manager of the gifts God has given to you. They may be great or small in your eyes, but they matter to God. *"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful"* (1 Corinthians 4:2 NIV). When God made you, he made an investment in you, and he expects a return on that investment.

Are you using what He's given you for the benefit of others to make the world a better place? Or are you just using those talents to benefit yourself?

When God gives you a talent, he expects you to use it. It's like a muscle. If you use it, it will grow. If you don't, you'll lose it. If you have a talent but are afraid to use it, or if you get lazy and don't use it to benefit others, you're going to lose it. Like the parable of the ten talents in Luke 19, if you don't use what God has given you, he will take it away and give it to someone else who will.

But if you use your talents wisely, God will give you more. If you use your time wisely, God will give you more time. If you use your energy wisely, God will give you more energy. If you use your influence wisely, God will increase your influence. God will bless your level of faithfulness.

Challenge

What are your gifts? Name at least 4.

Examples: good listener, great with sports, encourager, love to read, compassionate...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

How can you encourage your camper to trust and believe "all things are possible with God"?

Using your gifts. Be Creative! Your camper uses a wheelchair or has cerebral palsy You would like to take him/her to a walk/hike. Be Creative!!! Write down a couple of things...

Day 2

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible.”
Matthew 19:26

Servants do every task with equal dedication. Whatever they do, servants “do it with all their heart” (Colossians 3:23).

This is a unique opportunity to let God use your time, your hands and your heart to make an eternal difference in the life of a child, teen or adult with a disability and their families.

It will be your job to be a friend, giving the gift of your time and love. You will also enjoy a wide variety of Family Retreat activities – from singing, and horseback riding, hiking, water slide and climbing walls.

“Unless you are faithful in small matters, you won’t be faithful in large ones. If you cheat even a little, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities.” (Luke 16:10 NLT)

Devotion by Rick Warren

Servants Are Faithful In The Small Things

The size of the task is irrelevant. The only issue is, does it need to be done?

You will never arrive at the state in life where you’re too important to help with menial tasks. God will never exempt you from the mundane. It’s a vital part of your character curriculum. The Bible says, “If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody” (Galatians 6:3 NLT).

It is in these small services that we grow like Christ.

Jesus specialized in menial tasks that everyone else tried to avoid: washing feet, helping children, fixing breakfast, and serving lepers. Nothing was beneath him, because he came to serve. It wasn’t in spite of his greatness that he did these things but because of it, and he expects us to follow his example (John 13:15).

Small tasks often show a big heart. Your servant’s heart is revealed in little acts that others don’t think of doing, as when Paul gathered brushwood for a fire to warm everyone after a shipwreck (Acts 28:3).

He was just as exhausted as everyone else, but he did what everyone needed. No task is beneath you when you have a servant’s heart.

Great opportunities often disguise themselves in small tasks. The little things in life determine the big things. Don’t look for great tasks to do for God. Just do the not-so-great stuff, and God will assign you whatever he wants you to do.

There will always be more people willing to do “great” things for God than there are people willing to do the little things. The race to be a leader is crowded, but the field is wide open for those willing to be servants.

Sometimes you serve upward to those in authority, and sometimes you serve downward to those in need. Either way, you develop a servant’s heart when you’re willing to do anything needed.

Challenge

What is the definition of a servant?

Give 4 examples of a servant.

Examples: good listener, great with sports, encourager, love to read, compassionate...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

How can you encourage your camper to trust and believe “all things are possible with God” though your servanthood?

How can you have a servant’s attitude towards your assigned camper/family? Be Creative! What if your camper uses a wheelchair or has cerebral palsy Or has Down’s syndrome or uses a speech device Think outside of the box. Can you serve them by taking him/her for a walk/hike? Be Creative!!!

- What do you think it means to be a "servant leader"?
- Are you prepared to do menial tasks to serve people even when your efforts may never be noticed by anyone? What good is it to do things for people who will never find out?

I Corinthians 12:5

There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

Let’s be the Hands and feet and the Heart of Jesus

Day 3

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible.”
Matthew 19:26

No previous experience with disability? No problem. We fully train every STM before Family Retreat begins – there is nothing to fear!

STMs are committed Christians with a desire to serve families affected by disability. They are flexible team players who are able to offer friendship, support, and general assistance to help families get the most out of their week. As a STMs you must be able to serve the entire length of the retreat and attend training prior to the retreat.

“Let go of your concerns! Then you will know that I am God. I rule the nations. I rule the earth.” (Psalm 46:10 GW)

Devotion by Rick Warren

Let Go, and Know God Is In Control

Every day, you have to decide who’s going to be in control of your life — you or God.

That choice is a battle. There are things in your life that you want to control. You want to make your own rules. But stress relief always starts with letting God be God. It always starts with saying, “God, I’m giving up control, because you can control the things that are out of control in my life.”

Psalm 46:10 says, *“Let go of your concerns! Then you will know that I am God. I rule the nations. I rule the earth”* (GW).

I don’t know what you’re going to face this week. You don’t, either. But I can already tell you what God wants you to do: Let go, and know. Let go of control, and know that God is in control. Let go, and know! This is the first step to serenity in your life.

Whenever we face out-of-control situations, we tend to go to one of two extremes. For some of you, the more out-of-control your life gets, the harder you try to control it. Some of you do the exact opposite: You just give up! You have a pity party and invite yourself to it.

Both of those reactions to stress are foolish. They don’t work. Instead of being a victim or becoming hyper controlling, you need to pray the prayer of surrender.

The number one reason you’re under stress is because you’re in conflict with God. You’re trying to control things that only God can control. You can’t control your husband or your kids or your wife or your job or your future or your past or any of that stuff. The more you do it, the more you’re trying to play God, and that puts you in opposition to God. Not only are you going to lose that conflict, but you’re also going to be tired.

Millions of people pray the Serenity Prayer, which is based on the Lord’s Prayer, but most have never read the last eight lines to the prayer: “Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardship as a pathway to peace, taking as Jesus did this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. Amen.”

That's where the power is! There is power when you surrender to God the very things you've been trying to take control of from him.

Challenge

- What does it mean to practically "live one day at a time"?
- What is the result — physical, emotional, and spiritual — when you surrender to God the things you want to control?

How can you encourage your camper to trust and believe "all things are possible with God" though your servanthood?

How can you have a servant's attitude towards your assigned camper/family? Be Creative! What if your camper uses a wheelchair or has cerebral palsy Or has Down's syndrome or uses a speech device Think outside of the box. Can you serve them by taking him/her for a walk/hike? Be Creative!!!

List at least 5 things you can "Let Go, and Know God Is In Control" in your own life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Day 4

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible.”
Matthew 19:26

...they went forth for His name's sake... —3 John 7

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NIV)

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

Devotion by “My Utmost for His Highest”

The Key to the Missionary's Devotion

Our Lord told us how our love for Him is to exhibit itself when He asked, “Do you love Me?” (John 21:17). And then He said, “Feed My sheep.” In effect, He said, “Identify *yourself* with *My* interests in other people,” not, “Identify *Me* with *your* interests in other people.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 shows us the characteristics of this love— it is actually the love *of God* expressing itself. The true test of my love for Jesus is a very practical one, and all the rest is sentimental talk.

Faithfulness to Jesus Christ is the supernatural work of redemption that has been performed in me by the Holy Spirit— “the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit...” (Romans 5:5). And it is that love in me that effectively works through me and comes in contact with everyone I meet. I remain faithful to His name, even though the commonsense view of my life may seemingly deny that, and may appear to be declaring that He has no more power than the morning mist.

The key to the missionary's devotion is that he is attached to nothing and to no one except our Lord Himself. It does not mean simply being detached from the external things surrounding us. Our Lord was amazingly in touch with the ordinary things of life, but He had an inner detachment except toward God. External detachment is often an actual indication of a secret, growing, inner attachment to the things we stay away from externally.

The duty of a faithful missionary is to concentrate on keeping his soul completely and continually open to the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. The men and women our Lord sends out on His endeavors are ordinary human people, but people who are controlled by their devotion to Him, which has been brought about through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Challenge

Read and/or Listen to these words...as a STM can you apply these very words to your commitment?

*“Spent today in a conversation In the mirror face to face with Somebody less than perfect
I wouldn't choose me first if I was looking for a champion In fact I'd understand if You picked everyone before
me But that's just not my story”*

He Knows My Name by Francesca Battistelli

Spent today in a conversation In the mirror face to face with Somebody less than perfect
I wouldn't choose me first if I was looking for a champion In fact I'd understand if You picked everyone before me But
that's just not my story

True to who You are You saw my heart And made something out of nothing, so

CHORUS

I don't need my name in lights
I'm famous in my Father's eyes
Make no mistake
He knows my name
I'm not living for applause
I'm already so adored
It's all His stage
He knows my name
He knows my name

I'm not meant to just stay quiet I'm meant to be a lion. I'll roar beyond a song With every moment that I've got

True to who You are You saw my heart And made something out of nothing

CHORUS

He calls me chosen
Free, forgiven
Wanted, child of the King
His forever
Held and treasured
I am loved

I don't need my name in lights I'm famous in my Father's eyes

How can you encourage your family/camper to trust and believe “all things are possible with God” though your servanthood?

How can you have a missionary's attitude towards your assigned family/camper? Be Creative! What if your camper uses a wheelchair or has cerebral palsy Or has Down's syndrome or uses a speech device Think outside of the box. Can you serve them by taking him/her for a walk/hike? Be Creative!!! Pray and ponder on these things.

Day 5

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible.”
Matthew 19:26

As a STM, during the day you'll provide servant leadership with the children and youth...allowing moms and dads to attend seminars, hear passionate biblical teaching, and enjoy time together as a couple. You'll help families experience all the excitement of being at camp: the recreation, the crafts, the games, and the outdoors. Together with other STMs you'll set an example of having fun and being still enough to hear the voice of God.

It won't be all work, you'll have free time in the afternoon to **rest or enjoy fellowship** with other volunteers. Then after free time you'll join back up with your family for exciting evening events.

Devotion by Joni Eareckson Tada

Jesus, I am Resting: Gods hands shape us

We can rest in Jesus, because God's hand rests on us and gives us guidance, protection, and blessing.

Hi, I'm Joni Eareckson Tada, the one who loves to sing hymns. And today I want to sing for you a beautiful hymn, an old one called "Jesus, I am Resting, Resting." It comes straight out of Psalms 63, verse 8 where the Psalmist says: Oh, God, let your hand rest on the man at your right hand." What a beautiful picture. God is not only putting His hand on you, He is resting His hand on you and it feels and looks like this:

*Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee, and Thy beauty fills my soul, for by Thy transforming power, Thou hast made me whole. Jesus, I am resting, resting Resting in the joy of what thou art. I am finding out the greatness of thy loving heart.**

His hand rests on you. That's pretty amazing when you think of all the other things God does with His hands: He holds back the rain, He curbs satanic schemes, causes the sun to rise and set — all with His hands. He directs the paths of his people, His hands open doors of opportunity for His children and with his hand He blesses us. With His hands He has carved out rivers, puckered up mountain ranges, ladled out seas, dug the channels for streams and springs — all kinds of things, not to mention those same hands spread wide on the cross at Calvary. And just to think all that and hand rests on us.

Well, since this week I have been sharing my favorite poems, I have one here that speaks so beautifully of all that God's hands have done:

The Hands that shaped the flaming spheres and set them spinning, vast light years away from Planet Earth, have laid aside the Robes of State, donned human likeness by the great indignity of birth. The Hands, responsive to Love's Plan, that formed the God reflector, Man, of dust and destiny, outstretched — by Man's fierce hate impaled — wrought life anew; Love's Plan unveiled upon Golgotha's Tree. The Hands that found it nothing strange to pucker up a mountain rang or ladle out a sea, hands that balance Nature's systems still, and shape all History to His will, are holding, they are molding, me! — Marion Donaldson

This is a poem I have quoted in at least two of my books and all these many years later, it is still a favorite

Finally, right now, this moment, remember that the hand of God rests on you; And you are resting in Him. There you are at His right hand and that hand is upon you with God's rest. Elsewhere in Psalms, it says that the hand of God guides you; And in another Psalm, God's hand protects you, and then again, you are being upheld by the righteous right hand of God. That's reason enough to pause to thank and praise Him because today you are resting in that wonderful truth. So, be still and know that He is God as His hand rests today upon you. Rest in Him would you. Rest!

* "Jesus I Am Resting" written by Jean S. Piggot, composed by James Mountain, 1876. Public Domain. © Joni and Friends

How can you encourage your family/camper to trust and believe "all things are possible with God" through your rest?

When you rest in Jesus and take the time to be still and know that He is God as His hand rests today upon you...it refreshes you with the heart of Jesus attitude towards your assigned family/camper. We can be more creative! So, if your camper uses a wheelchair or has cerebral palsy Or has Down's syndrome or uses a speech device we are strengthen to think outside of the box in how we can serve our families. God gives you Creativity!!! Pray and ponder on these things.