

**The Summer Devotional Series is written by a variety of different Jacob's Well staff members, overseers and leaders, based on their real-world experiences. May the broad perspective and style minister to you throughout these summer months! You can also find the Summer Devotionals on our website [jacobswellchurch.church](http://jacobswellchurch.church).**

**Monday, June 17th** (Contributed by Jordan Hurlburt)

Men: The world is constantly telling us what we're worth as men. We never measure up, we always need to produce more and if our bank account doesn't reflect wealth then we're failing altogether. Social media, sitcoms and television portray men as ignorant, crude, spineless and selfish. But what if men of God started showing the world where our true worth comes from? We're children of God! As you read this poem today, reflect on the things that you've let define your worth and ask God to give you a clear vision of the worth that He's created in you by calling you His child. You've been saved by Grace!

Women: As we celebrate Father's Day and the goodness of man, how can we come alongside the experience of men named in the previous paragraph? What does it look like to call out the worth of man that every man, woman and child would experience the saving grace of God?

*The Worth of a Man*

*It's found in the fancy truck in the driveway  
And the amount of the check on payday  
Whether it's how many sales he can make  
Or how many yards he can rake*

*Is he really all that he's cracked up to be?  
Or is he too focused on "me", not "we"?*

*He has the biggest house in the best part of town  
He walks around with a smile, not sporting a frown*

*But deep in his soul there rages a battle  
His mind has the mic, but his heart won't tattle  
He questions his value and what is his place  
Do I even belong, or do I just take up space?*

*I've got all the things my heart could wish for  
My name in lights and people who adore  
Yet I strive, and I fight and can't find rest  
My true sense of worth is being put to the test*

*The highest degree I did achieve  
I showed all those doubters that they should believe  
I have all the stuff and I've been all the places  
My home filled with plaques and trophies in cases*

*I've read all the books and put in my time  
Put together all the pieces, yet my life won't rhyme  
I've put all that gold in my 401K  
They said that was a key to being 'OK'*

*A legacy I want to leave, a wealthy estate  
But if there's no life change, will it be too late?*

*So, who am I, and what is this "we"?  
I've built my castle now just let it be*

*But a voice deep inside that's been ignored for too long  
Roars out like a lion and a sounding gong  
"Your worth is not tied up in these things you acquire  
I have what you need, your heart's deepest desire*

*You can't find your worth in money or fame  
Just trust in me and the power of my name  
I gave up all of heaven to come and be  
My life was given, I died on a tree*

*But dead I did not stay  
For love made the way  
For me to pay the ultimate price  
So your life is more than a roll of the dice*

*If you seek to know where your worth lies  
Take a deep breath, and close your eyes  
You're not just a soul floating around  
You are my child, and of you I am proud*

*So, stop seeking worth in treasures and fame  
Remember that I have given you a name  
My child, my child you can never outrun  
My great love for you can't be undone"*

*So, let's redefine the worth of a man  
For far too long his heart has ran  
His life's been defined by his drive and his goal  
"Be still my child, I'm the One who can make you whole"*

**Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>**

Scripture is ripe with vivid word pictures that beckon us to enlarge our imagination as we seek to be with God. Consider these words from *The Message* in Psalm 42:1-2: *"A white-tailed deer drinks from the creek; I want to drink God, deep-draughts of God. I'm thirsty for God-alive. I wonder, 'Will I ever make it—arrive and drink in God's presence?'"*

Spend some moments picturing thirsting, panting deer arriving at a shaded, cool creek where pristine water flows. The deer draw deeply for long moments until their thirst is quenched and renewed vigor and vitality is theirs.

Now consider yourself, hot and parched, so dry you cannot create enough saliva to swallow and you know that only fresh, cool water will truly satisfy. You are searching desperately for that water, hoping to find a source before your strength ends. And then you stumble upon that shaded, cool creek...

How do you respond to the water/creek? What actions do you take to receive the water?

Recall a time you experienced thirst to such extent that upon receipt you wildly drank deep gulps.

When in your life have you experienced thirsting for God.....being parched, dry, needing renewed vigor and vitality? How did you quench your thirst?

What does it look like for you to "drink God?"

Prayerfully re-read the Scripture allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal God-thirst in your life. How can you respond?

**Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>** (Contributed by Whitney Berthiaume)

Colossians 3:2 *"Set your minds on things above; not on earthly things."*

Lysa Terkeurst says in her book, *It's Not Supposed to be This Way*, "Whatever statement that has been spoken to you that comes against the truth MUST be called a lie. God's Word is the Truth. And His Truth says that you are a holy and dearly loved child of your heavenly Father.

You are wonderfully made.

You are a treasure.

You are beautiful.

You are fully known by Him and lavishly loved by Him.

You are chosen.

You are special.

You are set apart.

No matter what you've done or what's been done to you, these words of God are true about you.

We must let God's word become the words we park our minds and hearts on. We must let God's word become the words we believe and receive as truth. We must let God's Word become the words of our story."

Spend some time in prayer, asking God to make His Truth known to you. How does He confirm the above to you every day? What might He encourage you to look for? How can you rest in this Truth?

**Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>** (Contributed by Diana Peterson)

When we built our house, our landscaping consisted of an unruly corn field. I didn't know much about gardening, but I thought it would be fun to learn. My first project was a small 3-foot diameter circle where I planted a few different plants from friends and neighbors. Over the winter, I poured over books and magazines to learn more about gardening. I created several garden plans for the backyard. When I transferred the plants from that little garden, I noticed some small blue flowers growing in the circle and into the lawn. I thought it was sort of pretty. After doing a bit of research, I discovered it was a freeloader named Creeping Charlie that was extremely invasive. I had good intentions to do the right thing. I knew I should try to pull it all up, but I was busy trying to make sure the areas I wanted other people to see looked good. It was 20 feet from any garden, and the gardens were protected by a border of river rock, so I thought I'd take care of it later.

Now it's later, and Creeping Charlie has taken over the entire yard. Last year I realized despite the river rock, it had found its way into every garden and was strangling some plants. What would have been an hour's project was now a daunting task that will take years to get rid of.

Sin is the same way. We see it and maybe find it a bit attractive. We see it as a small issue--maybe some gossiping, some white lies to make our lives easier, watching a show that isn't appropriate. Before long, we realize it's invaded every area of our life, including those areas we want others to see as "beautiful."

*"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."* Galatians 6:7

*Heavenly Father, help me to see the sins that are strangling my obedience to you. I want to see my actions from your perspective. It's only by weeding out each and every sin that I can keep it from taking over my life. True beauty can be seen in us only as we become more like you. Amen.*

**Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>** (Contributed by Laura Garry)

The journey of my life has not followed the path I planned. All the unexpected twists and turns did not conform to the map I laid out as a little girl. The stuff of fairy tales filled my heart then, but life has been hard and I would not have scripted the story God is writing with my life. Abandoned by my mom, and later left by my dad, I carried profound hurt into my teen years and then into my marriage at the age of nineteen. My husband and I struggled for many years. I confess, in the darkest chapters, I was angry at the author of my story. I wanted God to wave His hand and take away the pain. Many times, I begged Him to whisk my family away to the fairy tales I dreamed of as a child.

Has your life taken unexpected twists and turns? Maybe, like me, life has you wondering where the writer of the world is steering your story.

Over time, God has shown me that my focus must be on Him rather than the story He is writing. The Psalmist penned this truth in the verses of Psalm 84. Through terrible sorrow, his eyes are on God and his trust is in Him. Psalm 84:2 *"My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God."*

The Psalmist knows His heartache will only be healed in the presence of God. The same is true for us. When the journey of life takes us where we do not want to go, God is the only one who can refresh our soul, revive our spirit and give us the strength to continue on. (Psalm 84:5-7) The Psalmist knows that spending one day in the courts of God is better than spending a thousand days elsewhere (Psalm 84:10).

I may not see all the details of the story God is writing with my life, but I do understand that His presence and strength come more and more as I trust Him and wait for His healing and promises. As Psalm 84:12 states, *"LORD Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you."* God is writing our story. We may not understand the twists and turns, but we can trust Him above it all.



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