



ENTER God's presence

Psalm 86:8-13

- ⁸ Among the gods there is none like you, Lord;
no deeds can compare with yours.
- ⁹ All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.
- ¹⁰ For you are great and do marvellous deeds;
you alone are God.
- ¹¹ Teach me your way, Lord,
that I may rely on your faithfulness;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.
- ¹² I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;
I will glorify your name forever.
- ¹³ For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the depths,
from the realm of the dead.

PRAY: Gracious God, as we gather around your Word, help us to lay aside the distractions and demands of everyday life. Quiet our minds, open our hearts, and help us to give this time fully to you. By your Spirit, draw us closer to you and shape our lives according to your will. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

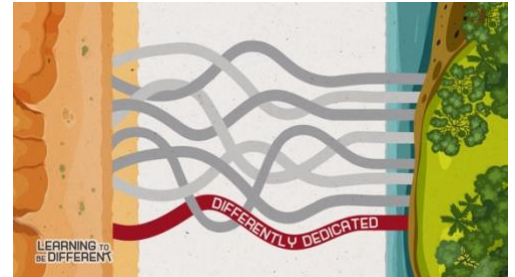


SHARE life together

1. What are your highs and lows since you last met?
2. What is one routine or habit in your week that you really appreciate because it helps life run more smoothly?
3. Think of something you have been genuinely dedicated to at some point in your life – a sport, hobby, project, cause, or something else. What made you so dedicated to it? How did you stick with it?

Week beginning:
Monday 7th September 2026

Worship series:
Learning To Be Different
#8 Differently Dedicated



VERSE for the week

“Now then,” said Joshua,
“throw away the foreign
gods that are among you
and yield your hearts to the
Lord, the God of Israel.”

Joshua 24:23



REMEMBER this week

“Faithfulness in
following Jesus is
not a hobby, but a
lifelong dedication
that bears no other
devotions.”



LISTEN attentively

There is a well-known saying in organisational thinking: *“Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.”* In other words, the results we see are often not accidental; they are the natural outcome of the patterns and practices already in place. The same can be true of our lives. We all develop routines and rhythms around how we use our time, spend our money, respond to pressure, relate to others and decide what gets priority. Over time, those patterns shape the kind of life we live.

As Joshua comes to the end of his life, he gathers Israel together and challenges them to think seriously about the kind of life they will live in the land God has given them. God has rescued them, provided for them and brought them to this place by his grace. Now Joshua asks what their lives will look like in response. As you read [Joshua 24:14–28](#), listen carefully to the choice Joshua places before the people and what he says their decision will require.

4. **What’s one thing in this reading that caught your attention? Something you heard differently or perhaps heard for the first time?**
5. **In verses 14–15, what does Joshua ask the people to do, and what different choices does he place before them? What do you notice about the words he uses to describe serving the LORD?**
6. **In verses 16–18, what reasons do the people give for choosing to serve the LORD? What does their answer reveal about the relationship between what God has already done for them and their commitment to him now?**
7. **Joshua does not simply accept the people’s first declaration that they will serve the LORD. How does he challenge them in verses 19–24, and what seems to be the purpose of that challenge?**
8. **Look particularly at verse 23. What two things does Joshua tell the people to do? What does this suggest about the difference between simply saying, “We will serve the LORD,” and actually living with that dedication?**



GROW deeper

It was easy for the Israelites to say, “We will serve the LORD.” Joshua wanted them to understand that such a commitment would shape the way they lived. They could not dedicate themselves to God while continuing to make room for other gods. The same is true for followers of Jesus today. Our faith is more than something we believe or say; over time it shapes our priorities, habits, choices and relationships. If the patterns and systems of our lives are producing something different from the life God desires for us, perhaps the answer is not simply to try harder, but to ask what needs to change. Having received God’s grace in Christ, what might it mean for us to arrange our lives around the One to whom we now belong?

9. **Joshua challenges Israel to recognise that they cannot serve the LORD wholeheartedly while still holding onto other gods. What are some things in our lives today that may not be wrong in themselves, but can begin to compete with God for our attention, trust or devotion?**
10. **There can sometimes be a gap between the life we say we want with God and the life our everyday patterns actually produce. Where do you think that gap most commonly appears for Christians today?**
11. **Think again about the idea that “every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.” If our habits, routines and priorities are continually shaping us, what might the fruit of our lives reveal about the systems we have built around ourselves?**



LIVE purposefully

MAKE IT REAL:

Looking honestly at the patterns of our lives can reveal things we might otherwise miss. But Joshua does not invite Israel simply to recognise where their loyalties have become divided. He calls them to respond.

Dedication to God, means allowing his grace to reshape the way we live — sometimes changing the patterns that draw us away from him, but also intentionally developing ones that help us follow him more faithfully.

The goal is not to create a perfect system or prove ourselves worthy of God's love, but to increasingly shape our lives around the God who has already given himself to us.

12. Joshua tells Israel to “throw away” their foreign gods and “yield” their hearts to the LORD. What might you need to let go of, change or make less important in order to make more room for God in your life? What might you need to intentionally make room for?
13. Think about one area of your life where the current “system” is not producing the fruit you want. What is one practical change you could make to that pattern or routine that would better reflect your dedication to God?
14. Dedication is rarely sustained by one big decision; it is expressed through repeated choices and habits. What is one practice you could intentionally build into the rhythm of your life that would help you remain dedicated to following Jesus?

Plan your weekly devotions or [download the Church Central app](#) for the daily **LifeWay Devotions**



PRAY intentionally

You might like to pray together the following prayer, or spend time praying for one another about your answers to questions 13 and 14.

Gracious God, thank you for making us your own through Jesus. By your Spirit, help us to let go of the things that compete for our hearts and to shape our lives around you. Give us courage to make the changes we have identified today, and help us to encourage and support one another as you lead us by your Holy Spirit each day to follow Jesus more closely. Amen.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross on their forehead or on the palm of their hand as you say...

[Name], May you know more each day of God's dedication to you. Amen.