

159. ALL YOU HAVE TO GIVE - THURSDAY - OCTOBER 1, 2026

Good morning, Grace Harbor – it's Dan. Happy Thursday!

Well, there's not much of an update on the squash harvest. It turns out Mr. Rutherford's knees were correct, and it rained most of the day yesterday.

I didn't mind having the day off, as I was still pretty tired. Plus, as fun as it's been to dig in the dirt, I *do* have other responsibilities to get to this week.

But it also gave me time to reflect on the week, especially in light of our theme for the week – loving God with all our strength.

When you hear the word “strength” what do you think of? If you're like me, you might think of a superhero with big muscles. And after this week, I'll also think about Ted's amazing farm hands who seem to be able to keep going no matter how hard the job is.

Early in the week, I was trying to contribute *my* strength. I volunteered to help with the job that required the most muscle. That went ok for the first day, but not long into day two, I was out of gas and falling behind.

When Ted invited me to switch to a less physically demanding job, I was embarrassed at first. I wanted to love God and the farm with all my strength, but my strength seemed like it wasn't enough.

That got me curious about the Bible verse our series has been based on. Do you remember we learned that when the Bible calls us to love God with all our soul – that word for soul also means throat? It sounds odd until you remember that our throat is the passageway for air, water, and food – all the things we need to live. It's also where our voice comes from, which is how we share our thoughts, express our love, ask questions... So, to love God with our soul really means to love God with **all** that we are.

So, I wondered, what was the word for strength? Did it mean something like muscles? Do I need to have super strong muscles to love God the way I'm supposed to?

Well, it turns out, when the Bible calls us to love God with all of our strength, the word for strength **doesn't** mean muscles. It means "much" or "very" or even "force." So, what in the world does it mean to love God with all our "very" or all our "force"?

It means we're to love with all that we can give. That's a great match for our understanding of soul, isn't it? With our soul, we love God with all that we are. With our strength, we love God with all that we can give. One is about who we are, and the other is about what we do. Our identity and our actions.

And here's something important that hit me – even when my muscles gave out, and I couldn't stick with the hardest job, there were other things I could give. For most of Tuesday, all I had to give was a sore back and a towel for

wiping squash, but I gave it, and that matters.

I noticed something else. As I was wiping each squash, I started to pray for my fellow workers. I started with prayers of thanks for the person who had taken over the hard job from me. Then I prayed for the others in my row. Then I moved to the people in the next row, and I got into a pretty good rhythm.

Once I ran out of people there, I realized that each of these squashes was going to end up with a person or a family or at a restaurant to be cooked and eaten. So, I started to pray a blessing for those who would receive the squash I was holding.

It was kind of like the breath prayer we did a couple weeks ago. Do you remember that? You attach a short prayer to the act of breathing in and out. Well, it turns out, you can attach a prayer to a physical action as well! Which might be great news for those of you who find breath prayers to be a little boring.

I wonder, can you think of an action you do during your day that you could add a prayer to? You could pray in rhythm with your steps as you walk or strokes as you swim. You could pray while you cook or while you brush your teeth. When you think of something, go ahead and share it with each other. If you need more time, you can pause the podcast, and I'll be right here when you get back.

[PAUSE]

Whatever you just shared, I encourage you to try it today or tomorrow. I know sometimes, I feel like I don't have time to pray, or I don't have the words to pray. But attaching prayer to a simple action we do is a great way of offering all we have.

Ok, let's close in prayer for today. If you want to, you can close your eyes and fold your hands.

Dear God, everything we have was first a gift from you. And so, loving you doesn't require any more than that. Help us to recognize when we can turn ordinary moments into opportunities to connect with you. Amen.

Ok, Grace Harbor, have a great Thursday, and I'll talk to you tomorrow.

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