

**6-WEEK PURSUIT
DEVOTIONALS
WEEK 6 - STEADFASTNESS**

MONDAY - "WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED"

Devotional:

Jesus said: "Where two or three are gathered in prayer, there I am in the midst of them."

My longtime friend, Sandie, was visiting me in my home in Kirkland Washington, near Seattle. She lived in Wenatchee. During her short stay, she suggested we visit our mutual friend, Molly. We made our way to Molly's home in Tacoma, with our seven children between us and food for lunch. They played nicely with Molly's four, and we had the opportunity to share what had been happening in our lives. We emphasized how different our lives had been since we both found Jesus. Sandie invited Molly to accept Jesus as her Lord and Savior. She prayed the sinner's prayer with us. As it turned out, Molly had known the Lord, but in life's difficulties had gotten away from church, prayer, Bible Study, and dependence upon God.

I was involved in Women's Aglow Fellowship. After Sandie's return to Wenatchee, I contacted Molly by phone, suggesting I drive to Tacoma and take her to an Aglow meeting. I had found out the location of the meeting as well as the babysitting. We enjoyed a good lunch and fellowship with the women around us, who were strangers to both of us. Molly was much bolder than I was, speaking easily to the ladies around us.

The leader announced there had been many prayer request submitted to her. She suggested we join in groups of four or five, and pray for any requests. My heart sank. Oh, this couldn't be happening, I thought. I'd attended several different Aglow chapters in my area, involved in two of them. And nothing like this had ever happened. It sounded very awkward and stressful. Molly, being a new Christian, I thought, must be horrified and frightened. Maybe she would like to sneak out. But Molly grabbed me and said "Well, let's get with it," asking three ladies nearby to join us.

As they shared their concerns and difficulties, and the ladies prayed, (Molly and I did not join in vocally), I soon found out this was not as difficult as I had supposed. We are sisters in Christ. What peace we felt as we joined together, agreeing in prayer with these other Christians.

Submitted by a member of Riverside Lighthouse Church

REFLECTION:

Have you ever had to step out of your comfort zone? What was that like? What happened?

PRAYER:

Jesus, in learning to trust you, we know for sure that you will ask us to step out of our comfort zone. But we also know that you will be with us. Help us Jesus to take assurance and confidence in knowing you will never leave us, never trick us, and never hurt us. Jesus, we trust you no matter what.

TUESDAY – “DANIEL, RADSHACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO”

Devotional:

Things don't always come easy. In fact, most of the time, you will have to work hard at something for it to come together. My nature doesn't like that fact. I love it when things just come together easily.

I have found in my life that creating good habits helps to bring things together more easily. Daniel shows that his habit of praying 3 times a day at the same time and in the same place helped him with being steadfast. I have been very focused in my life to create habits that help me stay focused and steadfast in my walk with Jesus.

The enemy of our souls wants us to get lazy and discouraged so that we will fall away in our walk with Jesus. It has helped in my life to have many examples of people who were steadfast in their walk with Christ. You need to look for people to have in your life that can help you learn habits to help with steadfastness. The Lord desires for us to be a people who never give up but are always pushing forwards to grow in God's grace.

1 Corinthians 15:58 says, “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

Be steadfast in your faith!

Pastor Vern Weaver

PRAYER:

Let's conclude with a time of prayer. You can structure this time however you feel led. Pray...

- Pray that Lord will help you to always be steadfast and immovable in your faith.
- Ask the Lord to help you form habits of prayer and reading the word to help with steadfastness.
- Pray that the Lord will help you to live a life before others that shows steadfastness.

WEDNESDAY – “ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER...”

BIBLE STUDY:

Read Romans 8:18-30 before reading our Devotional

DEVOTIONAL:

Dear Church Family,

Are you restless? Are you anxious about the future, your family, your career, your dreams? These are uncertain days we live in. And in these times, some of us are desperate for a change. Even in better times, I have known many friends who grew restless in their lives. Usually this need, this desire, this thirst for change leads to terrible decisions.

Our God is faithful. In Romans 8:18-30, I am encouraged by those beautiful words: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” This means, if we are following after Jesus, God can take even our greatest mistakes and alter them for good.

In other words: you cannot undo the plans of God. Not even our failures can undo God’s plans. We rely entirely on Him for our salvation and for being made right.

So I do not wish that we sulk or lament over bad decisions that have already been made. Rather, I would hope you would learn to pause and rest, even in the midst of pain, before you leap and hurt yourself again.

We as Jesus Followers live in the hope of Christ’s return. The fact He saved our souls so that we could be with Him forever is what defines and rules over every facet of our lives. So profound and deep is this hope. This hope, when clung to, will fill you to overflowing with joy. You say: no, my circumstances are too deep. The pain in my family is too immense. The wickedness of our nation is too great! To all that I say this:

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:31-39 ESV)

Church family, do not run out of fear, anxiety, anger, or any such motivations. Only be moved by the love your God has for you. Lean into His hope and let that powerful hope motivate and shape your future. Those who wait upon the Lord shall find their strength renewed.

Do not lose hope, brighter days are ahead for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

Sincerely,
Ty Weaver

CHALLENGE:

God has a plan for your life. Do you want His plan? Well, what follows next is not complicated. But it is difficult.

Plan a day of rest right now. Jot it in the calendar or have the person who manages your calendar write it down! May I be demanding? Do it now! Schedule, right now, a day of rest, worship, and prayer. If you struggle to pray and give time to God, then join up with others who will hold you accountable. Reach out to your pastors if you need help or advice to make this possible. We were never meant to walk this life alone.

True rest is in God's presence. And it is when we learn to rest that we learn steadfastness.

PRAYER:

Let's conclude with a time of prayer. You can structure this time however you feel lead. Listed below are some topics that could help guide this time of prayer.

- Pray for God to steady your heart; to still the storms raging within you and around you
- Pray for Jesus' living hope to fill your thoughts
- Pray for God's direction and help to trust Him more in the coming days

THURSDAY – “IT’S WORTH IT”

BIBLE STUDY:

James 1:2-4, James 1:12-15

DEVOTIONAL:

I was a high school marching band kid. I competed in shows from Washington to Oregon, to Utah, and California. We even preformed a show at the USC stadium in California. As you can probably tell from my physique, I am not svelte in the slightest, nor physically fit. I loathed going for runs, doing physical warmups, and putting ankle weights on my legs and instrument. I would come home after practices red-faced and wiped out. Yet, when a performance came, I was physically and emotionally ready. I knew what was coming. I knew I had done the routines, warmups, and training, and I knew I could do it.

This is what James is alluding to. We need to be thankful when we go through hard times and difficult situations because we are strengthening our relationship with God. When times are easy, we lean on ourselves and may even forget God is even there.

Yet, when we have hard times, we suddenly remember that God is there, and He needs to step in. What James is saying is that we need to rejoice in the difficult times because it is forcing us to rely on God and His word, forcing us to reflect on Him and what He has done. Then, when the trial is over, we are stronger for it emotionally and spiritually, ready to take on the next difficult time, and ready to give God the glory when times are good.

Becky Weaver

CHALLENGE:

Think of a difficult season or rough time you had recently, or maybe you are currently in one. Write out what is making it difficult and find a passage in the bible or a person in the bible who went through something similar and see how they responded.

PRAYER:

Thank God for the difficult season in your life. Thank Him for being there for you and for creating in you a steadfast heart.

FRIDAY – “DANIEL TO THE THREE HEBREW CHILDREN”

As I was growing up I thought I knew what it was like going through hard times being one of the middle children in a family of four boys. It wasn't long after I was married that I quickly found out what hard times really were.

When my wife's father got sick with cancer and not long after that passed away I began to wonder about my faith. In the bible the Lord always showed up but where was He now when I needed Him most. It wasn't very long after we lost him that the Lord showed up one night in a big way to strengthen my faith. He has proved in my life that He always will. Maybe not in the exact moment I would want it but He is perfect in His timing of when He does. He has proved in my life that I can always put my trust in Him.

Psalm 31:3-5 says; “For you are my rock and my fortress; and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me; you take me out of the net they have hidden for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.”

Pastor Vern Weaver

BIBLE STUDY:

Psalm 31:1-24

PRAYER:

Things to Pray about:

- That through trials I will always remain yours O Lord
- That through trials my faith would grow
- That I would learn from every trial
- My faith and steadfastness would always be a witness to others.

SATURDAY – “AN INTRODUCTION TO YOUR FAITH

Dear church family,

This is the last devotional of our 6-Week Pursuit. I hope and pray that this study has challenged and grown your faith. A great conclusion to this series, as we have reflected and studied the testimonies of others before us, would be to pause and consider our own testimonies.

CONCLUSION:

I would encourage you to reflect on all that we have discussed regarding faith. Then, write your testimony. Your testimony is not your life story. It is the story of how Jesus has saved and revealed Himself to you. The testimony you write can be from your past, or can be rather recent. Our testimonies are celebrations of Jesus; who He is, and what He has done! Amen!

So, if you feel comfortable, with writing up your testimony now, go ahead and feel free to get started. However, if you are uncertain still, below is an outline you can use as a tool to flesh out your own testimony.

As you write your story about Jesus, I pray you are encouraged, blessed, and lifted up as you reflect on all that He has done.

Sincerely,
Your Pastors

CONSTRUCTING A TESTIMONY:

Intro: JESUS is _____

- Always begin and end your testimony with Jesus. It is about Him after all. So start with describing a trait about Jesus that you hold dear in your testimony.

Your Story: I was _____

- Now is where we go into details about our life and story that preceded knowing Jesus or before Jesus changed our lives.

The Turn-Around: But JESUS _____

- This is the part of the story where Jesus showed up and transformed us.

Conclusion: JESUS is _____

- The end of our testimony celebrates how Jesus' character saves, transforms, and fills our lives despite who we are and/or what we have been through.