

6-WEEK PURSUIT
DEVOTIONALS
WEEK 1 - FAITH

MONDAY - "THANK-YOU JESUS"

OPENING PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, thank you for your love, wisdom, and knowledge! And thank you for all that you have done for us all. Amen.

My first experience with God was in 1969, in the South Sea of China, in the Gold of Tonka. I was aboard an aircraft carrier, we were having flights dropping bombs in Vietnam; sad times for the people in Vietnam! No place to run, and no place to hide! Then we got orders to drop Agent Orange on the country to defoliate the trees. That was a smell I'll never forget, among other things.

I was ordered to go to the bottom deck (boiler room) and recharge a drinking fountain (Schuttle Butt). As I was charging the unit, a fellow shipmate asked me if I believed in Jesus Christ. I replied yes, he laid hands on me, I fell to the floor (deck) and started crying. I had a feeling over me that was so wonderful, "thank you Jesus"! The next day, I went back to see this brother, and they told me had had been transferred. A little while after, and I had no guidance, and went back to the enemy. It took me from 1969 to 2016 to return to our Lord and Savior. I am grateful to Dan and Marty Womack leading me to Jesus Christ.

Since that time, He has forgiven me of all my sins, and has blessed me with unconditional love, faith, forgiveness, and happiness! Now, when I reach for the Bible, I don't just read it, I hear what I read. Thank you Jesus!

Praise the Lord!
From Glen Allen

REFLECTION:

Take time to reflect on the testimony you have read. God meets us wherever we are, whoever we are, and whenever we are. If you are with a group, discuss what God has done in your life or the lives of others close to you. If you are alone, write down your thoughts instead.

PRAYER:

God, thank you for what you have done in the lives of others! You show no favorites, so I know that what you have done before, you can do again! Move in my life as you have before.

Help me, Jesus, to be a light in the dark. Fill me with your Holy Spirit every day that I may show you more clearly. Amen!

TUESDAY – “ABRAHAM TO JOSEPH”

Faith, it is not often we have examples in our lives that are worthy of following. The Lord has been great to me and given me quite a few who lived their lives showing faithfulness. My mother showed quiet faithfulness. She always supported us even though we were not always perfect. She understood the fact that it is the Lord who makes a person who they can be so with faithful prayer for all of us she never gave up no matter what it looked like on the outside. She showed us what the love of God and faithfulness truly looked like. It isn't always seen by the multitude but it is known to the Lord and He is faithful to fulfill His promises. My mother understood that fact and lived a life faithful to the Lord.

Proverbs 3:3-4 says it all; “Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.”

Seek to be faithful and in turn teach others what faithfulness looks like. It is lived humbly and with love for the Lord and others.

Pastor Vern Weaver

PRAYER:

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

- That you would be found faithful.
- That you would be an example to others of what faithfulness is.
- That the Lord would lead you to others to help them grow in their faithfulness to the Lord.

WEDNESDAY – “THE GALACTIC VENDING MACHINE”

BIBLE STUDY:

Read Hebrews 11 before reading our Devotional

DEVOTIONAL:

Dear Church Family,

Faith is not a currency. Have you ever heard the phrase: “you don’t have enough faith”? Usually, when people say this, they are echoing Jesus’ teachings to His disciples and the people around Him. It’s true, Jesus said things like: “you of little faith”, “if you have faith and do not doubt”, “have you still no faith”, and so on and so on.

Hearing phrases like that, it is easy to fall victim into the mindset that faith is a currency. What I mean is: we think of faith as something we build up and spend to get what we want. In this way of thinking, we see God as a galactic vending machine. If I provide the correct amount of change, or faith, I will then get a soda, er, my prayers answered.

Yes, that illustration is ridiculous. But so is the idea that faith is like money, and that we have to increase our amount of faith to get God’s attention.

So then, what is faith?

Well, our reading in Hebrews 11 answers this question simply. The ESV translation says: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” The key words are assurance, hope, and conviction. This is what defines faith. So then, when Jesus says we do not have enough faith, what He is truly saying is that we have no assurance in what we hope for and therefore have no hope. A lack of faith would also imply that we have no conviction in things not seen.

Now the writer of the book of Hebrews states that all who believe in Jesus Christ have faith. In fact, Jesus, Himself, said that should we have faith the size of a mustard seed, a mere speck of faith, that we could move mountains in His name. So what then is the deal with faith?

More of than not, our lack of faith has less to do with what we believe and how much we believe than who we believe in. When Jesus refers to His disciples having little faith, it is always in reference to Himself. Picture this: Jesus leads His disciples out onto a boat to a cross a sea. As they cross a storm hits and threatens their lives. Do you believe Jesus was surprised when that storm struck? No, He was not. When the disciples awakened Him from his nap upon that stormy sea, they basically cried out to Him: do you even care that we are all going to die?

Jesus immediately orders the storm to stop and then turns to His disciples and comments on their lack of faith; their lack of faith in what? Well, Jesus led them out onto those waters. Their lack of faith was not in a miracle, but that Jesus would care for them.

So you see, faith is not so much about believing hard enough, or wishing with all your might, or even praying desperately and fervently. No, faith comes down to: do you have assured hope in Jesus, and have conviction that He can do the impossible? Do you trust Him when He leads you into a storm? Do you have faith in Jesus' character and hope in His goodness and love?

Faith topples mountains, not because we believe hard enough and thus earn it, but because we trust fully and know fully the one who can move mountains, if He so chooses. And our faith in His character is so deep that even if the mountain does not move, we still know He is good and faithful.

Sincerely,
Ty Weaver

CHALLENGE:

Write down what you genuinely hope for the most. Do not overthink it; just react to that previous instruction as it comes natural to you.

Do you have assurance and conviction in what you wrote down? Why or why not?

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 that you may know God's character better.
- Pray for God to increase your trust in Him.
- Pray for Jesus to be your living hope; giving you strength even in hardship.

THURSDAY – “HANDS ON FAITH”

BIBLE STUDY:

Read Mark 5:25 – 34, Luke 8:43 – 48, Leviticus 15:25-30, before reading the devotional

DEVOTIONAL:

Have you ever been to Disneyworld? I had the opportunity to go in high school, and let me tell you, it was awesome. There are 6 parks to choose from, but I’m only going to give you a taste of one. EPCOT is a miniature world. You can visit China, stop in the Netherlands, grab a bite to eat in Spain, and end the night in Morocco. Sure, there are rides and attractions, but as a major “Foodie”, the thought of eating my way around the world was way too exciting. I could have charbroiled octopus at the Coral Reef restaurant, a cheese and béchamel croissant at the Les Halles Boulangerie-Pâtisserie, and end it all with La Sphère, a milk chocolate sphere with chocolate almond cake, praline, and chocolate cream at Monsieur Paul’s. I was a poor high school student, so I didn’t get to actually eat these \$30+ dishes, but the smells were free with admission.

I could go on about all the parks and the amazing experiences I had there, but unless you have been there, you will never truly know what it is like. So, if you’re now depressed or bummed out that you haven’t been, may never go, or you plumb missed out, this is exactly how the woman with the issue of blood felt when she heard about Jesus.

Jesus had been traveling all over Israel preaching, performing miracles, and transforming lives. The woman had heard everything about Him and knew He could heal her. You read in Leviticus what she would have to do to be considered clean, but this poor woman had been bleeding for 12 years! Anyone who touched her or anything she had touched would have to go through a cleansing ritual, so you could bet people didn’t want to be around her, so she was probably lonely and depressed. Instead of just sitting at home, wishing she could be “clean” again, dreaming about what it would be like to be healthy, she got up and went to Jesus herself.

She had faith that if she could just touch the hem of his garment, she would be healed. She had faith that Jesus would heal her, but believing that He could, and putting her faith into action by going to Him, are two very different things. It wasn’t until she *went* to Jesus and touched his cloak that she was healed.

To put it in today’s terms, she could have stayed home and watched the church services, prayed, read her bible, and joined a small group, but she wanted more. She wanted to meet with Jesus where He was at. She had faith that Jesus was so powerful, she only needed to touch His garment to be healed. So, she did. And guess what? Jesus healed her.

CHALLENGE:

We need to be like the woman. We need to not only have faith that God can and will do what He promises us but put it into action. We need to stop sitting at home wishing and half-heartedly praying that things will change. We need to get up and put our faith into action! This week take a step in your faith. Talk to that family member, neighbor, or coworker about Jesus. Invite them to church. Challenge yourself to share your own walk with Christ.

PRAYER:

This week, pray about what God is asking you to do in your life, your school/work, your neighborhood, and your church. Then, put that into action.

FRIDAY – “FOUND FAITHFUL”

“Come on girls, time to get up! Breakfast is ready!”

I can still hear that sweet, soft voice, coming from my mother. It was time for school, and my sisters and I had that special routine. Get up and eat, get dressed, brush our teeth, comb our hair, and out the door to catch the school bus; which was about a quarter-of-a-mile down the road. Her tender voice in the morning was a comfort to me, knowing that the rest of the day would be a bustle of activities.

Waking up to contentment set the stage for my day. The unwavering constant kindness from my mother’s voice was a part of my daily life. Listen, act, and obey. I think about Abraham’s faithfulness in his walk with God. Abraham would listen to God, act on what he was told, and obeyed what God said to him.

Listen to God as He speaks to you in His still, small, loving voice. Act on what He is speaking to you about. And obey Him so you may be found faithful and walk in His delight.

Pastor Anita Weaver

BIBLE STUDY:

Read Genesis 26:4-5

PRAYER:

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

- Ask God to teach you to listen to that still small voice.
- Pray that God helps you to act on whatever the still small voice is asking of you.
- In prayer, obey what God is telling you.

SATURDAY – “AN INTRODUCTION TO MOSES AND JOSHUA”

Moses and Joshua are two pivotal characters in the story of the Bible. Tomorrow on Sunday, we will be talking about how these two men demonstrated humility and a dependence on God. But before we hear from the Sunday Sermon, let's take a moment to setup some background to these heroes of our faith.

MOSES:

Below is a list of questions followed by Bible Verses. Read the verses and then answer the questions to learn more about Moses and his life.

Question #1: Where did Moses come from? Read *Acts 7:17-22*

Question #2: What sort of person was Moses? Read *Hebrews 11:23-28*

JOSHUA:

Below is a continued list of questions followed by Bible Verses. Read the verses and then answer the questions to now learn about Joshua.

Question #1: Who was Joshua? Read *Numbers 27:12-23*

Question #2: What words did God reassure Joshua with? Read *Joshua 1:1-9*

FINAL QUESTION: How would you feel if you had to fill the shoes of someone like as famous and renowned as Moses? What would you do?