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FAMILY

MISSION



OakhillBC.org
– a family for life –

DEVOTIONALS



Prayer plays a vital role in our relationship to God.

Prayer can give us strength, just knowing that we are talking to the One that is stronger than any situation we may face. Prayer can give us hope in knowing that we are trusting in the One that knows the outcome of our difficult situation, and He is right there with us to help us get through.

Prayer is what can lead us to wisdom. When we don't know what to do, we can pray. Then we can see God open doors that we never knew existed.

What is God wanting YOU to do? I encourage you to Pray. It could just be your strongest and wisest decision yet... then watch as God opens doors.

Join us this week as the WHOLE CHURCH is coming together... to PRAY. These devotionals are written by our own church family to challenge us each day this week. Read a devotional each day and pause to pray about what God is calling you to do.

DAY 1

DEVOTIONALS



“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” Hebrews 12:1-2

The Bible promises so many wonderful truths that we hold onto while living life in a sin-filled world. Promises of a peace that surpasses all understanding, of a God that will never leave us nor forsake us, of a time when there will be no more tears or heartache. Then I open my eyes, go back to work, school, life, and realize that it is very easy to hear these truths, but clinging to them in a world that completely rejects God can be very difficult.

In Hebrews 11, we see a list of amazing pillars of the faith - the heroes we learned about growing up - Noah, Moses, Abraham, Rahab, Joseph. They experienced what we must hold onto on a daily basis - that God is in control, loves us, and redeems us.

But it is not enough to simply acknowledge that we are standing with these great witnesses. We can use these examples from the past to remind us that God is always working in the everyday moments of life. We need to throw off this weight of sin that is holding us back and trust in the promise of who God is.

Now, surrounded by witnesses, unhindered, we run. We run with perseverance, which means pushing through adversity or difficulty. If the race was easy, God would not urge us to run with perseverance. He would simply say, “run”. Instead, we must push through the hard times. We do this by looking back at the witnesses surrounding us - the truths of Scripture. Everything He promised before was fulfilled, so His promises today will be fulfilled as well.

We also run with our eyes fixed on Jesus. The cares of this world are going to try to draw our eyes away, but we must be fixed on Jesus and continue to run. He perfects our faith. When our eyes are on Jesus, we will have the strength to continue, the wisdom to know where to go, and the stamina to keep going when difficulties come.

- Emily Zinn

PRAYER THOUGHT

“Lord, help me to set my sights on You and You alone.”

DAY 2

DEVOTIONALS



“But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task?” 2 Corinthians 2:14-16

Earlier this year I was sitting here on a gloomy day, anticipating the arrival of Spring. My hyacinths were just poking their heads out almost ready to bloom. I love the pleasant, gentle, sweet smell they give off. Their fragrance is unique; no other flower has the same fragrance.

Do you know that all Christians spread the fragrance of the Gospel of Jesus through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Unlike the artificial spray-on fragrance we sometimes use, the fragrance of Christ comes from within the heart and is as unique to us in how we display this as is the sweet, gentle, smell of the hyacinths. What fragrance do we give off in the name of Jesus? Do we spread the truth of the Gospel, exhibit triumph over evil? Are we generous in positive and encouraging words and prayers on the behalf of others? Do we show compassion, love, understanding, and Godly wisdom, and base our relationships on Jesus’ example? Does the world recognize we belong to Jesus by the fragrance surrounding us?

Dear Lord Jesus, “Create in me a clean heart oh Lord and renew a right spirit in me.”

- Sandy Dierlam

PRAYER THOUGHT

Please help me live a life that exemplifies your fragrance.

Please take my heart, take my life, and use it to glorify you. Psalm 51:10

DAY 3

DEVOTIONALS



“He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: “Lord, don’t trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I, myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.” Luke 7:7-9

Jesus had entered Capernaum when this centurion’s messengers appealed for him to come and heal the centurion’s servant. He is moved and goes with them. Now more messengers come and say, “Just speak the word.” And when he arrived at the house, they all found the servant healed.

Jesus proclaims that in all of his travels and ministry, the person with the greatest faith he had encountered was a Roman Centurion. Jesus was awed by the show of simple faith found in the centurion’s confession, “only say the word...”

Lord, that I would be such a person to thrill and bless your heart. To delight you with honor and wonder. But how does one come to rest so confidently in the “enough-ness” of God’s word? The Centurion was a man under authority and in authority. In other words, he was a man with a mature and seasoned ability to follow and lead. It was out of the maturity of his leadership and followership capacities that his faith was born.

This world is not conducive to Christian faith, but it is especially averse to this kind of faith - a faith that marvels Jesus and leaves Him amazed. Our culture - even many churches - proclaim the virtues of leadership but despise its twin, followership.

Let us seek to develop as followers, as much as we strive to grow as leaders, that we may possess a faith proclaiming the sufficiency of God’s word.

- Ubi Ntewo

PRAYER THOUGHT

There remains only our response to the call of God. Pray, “Am I fully trusting in You to do what seems impossible to me? Lord, give me faith that causes You to be amazed in me!”

DAY 4

DEVOTIONALS



“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”
1 Peter 5:8

In my Christian walk there are two quotes I like and keep reminding myself of. One is often attributed to Mark Twain. It says, “The two most important days of your life are:

1. The day you were born, and
2. The day you find out why.”

The purpose of our life is to bring pleasure and glory to God. This must begin with a life of obedience. Placing our faith and trust in the Gospel of Jesus for our salvation and eternity is just the beginning.

Each and every day we face all types of temptations to be disobedient to the Lord. In 1 Peter 5:8 the Lord says, “stay alert and watch out for your enemy the devil for he prowls around looking for someone to devour.”

This brings me to my second quote which comes from Charles Stanley. “You can’t be obedient to God with a closed Bible.”

The world is preoccupied with self. People are valued by their accomplishments and financial success. Yet Jesus sees value in everyone. Society is accepting lifestyles and beliefs that are opposite the teachings of God’s Word.

I believe if we do not stay grounded in the Word, we are all apt to compromise where we should not..

The strength to live an effective Christian life is dependent on God and His truths which are only found in the Scriptures.

- Jerry Guinn

PRAYER THOUGHT

How do you need to be prepared to answer the call of God? Pray that He will guide you with His Word.

DAY 5

DEVOTIONALS



*“When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.”
With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”
John 19:30*

Have you ever had anyone tell you to “make sure to save your receipt?” I always hang on to my receipts “just in case.” You’ll find my car console full of them. I also have a “safe” place in the house to make it easy to find that one receipt if I should need it. The only problem is, whenever I do need one, I seem to never be able to find the one that is needed. No matter how hard I look, I can never find that one receipt!

Thanks to our Lord, there is one receipt that I do not have to worry about finding, because it is in Jesus’ hands! The words Jesus used on the cross, “IT IS FINISHED!” was actually a single Greek word -tetelestai. It is the same word used in those times on tax receipts. Receipts with tetelestai meant it was PAID IN FULL. The price for our redemption from sin was “PAID IN FULL” by our Lord’s death on the cross! The holes from the nails in his hands and feet is one receipt we only have to look to Him to find!

-Ralph Cheaney

PRAYER THOUGHT

Lord, there are not enough words, but I will begin with thank you from an unworthy, unlovable, sinful creature. Thank you for forgiveness and making all things new by paying my debt in full.

DAY 6

DEVOTIONALS



“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

Life is full of challenges and difficulties; I know this is how life has seemed to come at me at least! All too often, I have tried to get through life’s challenges on my own power and will. While things may be accomplished in this way, it almost always comes with a level of stress and anxiety that is just not necessary. Perhaps this is why I have a smooth head and a pesky 10...or 15 pounds I can’t seem to lose!

John 15 starts with the familiar passage of the “Vine and the Branches”. The theme is that we are to bear fruit by obeying and relying on Jesus for the source of our strength and spiritual output. In the first 10 verses we see the word abide or remain, 10 times. “Abide in me” (v.4), “The one who abides produces fruit (v.5)” etc. (For the full story read John15:1-11.)

Abiding in Christ has another benefit for the believer, which is peace while going through life! Think about your home, another word for a person’s home is “Abode”. We go about our busy lives and we return to our Abode, the place of rest and peace, or at least where we should be able to find rest and peace. How much more so will continuing to Abide in Christ produce peace?

Life can be difficult when we attempt to fix things and make things happen on our own and with our own strength. Don’t do it! Abide in Christ and rely on Him to be the source of your strength for all of your needs. How much more can we speak for Christ (v.8) when we don’t fret about life like those who don’t know Him! Verse 11 sums it up nicely, “I have spoken these things to you so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete!”

Abide, rest, know peace, produce fruit, and share the Good News!

- Phil St. Germain

PRAYER THOUGHT

Pray for God to give you rest, “Lord, I am tired of trying to live my life for You. Come and live Your life through me.”

DAY 7

DEVOTIONALS



“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13

The world defines joy as an emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune, or by the prospect of possessing what one desires. As usual, the world only provides us partial answers. True joy finds our well-being in the security of God’s love for us, the success of living according to His will, the “good fortune” of knowing that, no matter our circumstances, our salvation and our place in His family are secure apart from our works, and from the knowledge that we have found the one thing, the ONLY thing in this world that can satisfy and fill us.

Because it is not based on me or my circumstances, I can experience joy continually. And I have. Not because of any merit of my own. Simply because God grows that in my life through the Spirit. The most obvious example of this for myself was when my wife was diagnosed with ALS, a terminal neuro-muscular disease. It was a crazy hard thing to go through. But, even in the midst of one of the most difficult situations I will probably ever face, I still had the joy of the Lord in my heart...because He was IN my heart! I knew that God had provided the ultimate healing that no clinic could ever provide her: He had saved her from her sin. When the disease took her life, even in the sorrow and loss of a spouse, there was gratefulness and amazement at the love Christ showed to Gayle by dying in her place so that she could live forever. What gave us both strength during that time was the joy of the Lord. I don’t understand how people can make it through something like that without Him, without the joy He freely pours into our hearts. A joy that is independent of our circumstances.

I have also experienced times when joy seemed completely elusive to me. Times when all I felt was loss, despair, fear, or shame. For me, honestly, the only times I feel that is when I take my eyes off of Him. About a month after Gayle died, I started dwelling on myself, my future, all that I wouldn’t be doing/experiencing/living because of being a widower. Grief is one thing. This was something else. For 2 months, I endured a very dark time, because I was shutting God out and just looking at my changed life. God hadn’t changed. I had.

When we let sin separate us from God, the fruit of the Spirit starts to wither around us. Joy subsides. Our strength and ability to persevere wanes. Apart from Him, we really can do nothing.

God is just waiting for us to call upon His name...to stop wandering off and getting lost in ourselves and to come back into the protection of His marvelous love. And when we abide there, He pours joy into us until we’re overflowing in it, strengthening us for the life He’s called us to live.

- Lyle Reid

PRAYER THOUGHT

“Lord, strengthen me to not wander but to invest myself in You that my joy might be complete. Teach me how You would have me sacrifice so that we can be one family on one mission?”



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