

DAILY DEVOTIONALS VOL 1

TERRANCE WILSON

**PRAYERFULLY PROCESS SCRIPTURE BEFORE
YOU PUSH FORWARD WITH EVERYDAY LIFE**

PRO CESS

Don't rush the process.

Too often we pray and then we try to push forward without taking the time necessary to process. Processing allows us to breath, cry, gain perspective, open up or just stop to hear from God in all circumstances of our lives.

This collection of devotionals was designed to help you prayerfully read scripture, process with your specific situation in context, so you can push forward knowing that God is always the answer for everything.

I use these daily devotionals in my life and I hope you'll begin to use them in yours. I love you fam and never forget that you were #CreatedOutOfLove.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to be 'Katie', written in a cursive style.

**HE SAYS, “BE STILL, AND
KNOW THAT I AM GOD; I
WILL BE EXALTED AMONG
THE NATIONS, I WILL BE
EXALTED IN THE EARTH.”**

PSALM 46:10 NIV

01

In this passage, the psalmist is taking a moment to reflect on the magnitude of God’s power. He ends this chapter with instructions from God Himself. This gives us insight on how to understand who God really is. The Lord tells us to know Him; we must “be still.”

In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, it’s hard to find moments to be still. When you are working to make a living, raising a family, going to school, trying to be a good mate to your spouse or running a business, “being still” seems like a hindrance to achieving success. How can you be effective by being still? God continues to defy human logic because it’s in the stillness of life that we understand the magnitude of God’s power. It’s easy to forget the source of life when you get caught up in all life has to offer. The psalmist is telling us to STOP! BE STILL. Take a moment to breathe and be so still you can hear the sound of your own breath and realize Who gave you that breath in the first place. The crowd around you may still be loud, your kids may still be crazy, your boss may still annoy you, but finding stillness and peace in the presence of all-mighty God is not just about an outward application, but about an inward reflection that says my circumstance will not dictate my connection to my God.

We must take these moments daily because reflecting on who God is in your life on a daily basis will always bring you to a place of peace. Jesus showed us this principle time and time again, as He took moments away from the crowd and His disciples to pray. By reflecting on His Father, He found peace, even though He knew death was His purpose. This passage is truly beautiful because by being still and reflecting, we can be confident—with so many uncertainties in life—that God can overcome the impossible. This revelation should cause us to exalt Him above all.

Stillness should produce knowing, and knowing should produce praise. Today we must take the proper time to reflect on God because we will give Him all the praise if we truly know who He is.

**IT’S IN THE STILLNESS
OF LIFE THAT WE
UNDERSTAND
THE MAGNITUDE OF
GOD’S POWER.**

**“ARE NOT MY FEW DAYS
ALMOST OVER? TURN
AWAY FROM ME SO I CAN
HAVE A MOMENT’S JOY”**

JOB 10:20 NIV

02

At this time in Job’s life he feels like God has completely abandoned him. Job believes his life is going to end and asks God to leave him because he feels like he will have a moment of peace with God out of the picture.

Have you ever felt like things would be better off without God? There have been so many times in my walk of faith that I have considered the possibilities of life without God. Would I really feel better without Him, or would it just be momentary pleasure of my flesh? To be honest, sometimes I think life would be a lot easier if I wasn’t living to please God. Although I love the life He has graced me to live, I think about the constant accountability I live in as a spiritual leader. Eyes are always on me. Details of my life get picked apart and become subject to the court of popular opinion. There is a standard that I am called to that I don’t always want to live up to. I have not been afflicted like Job, but I can understand the thought of just having a moment to truly be alone. As real as that thought is, I constantly remind myself that there is no way life without God is better because if I can’t accept His trials, then I can’t accept His blessing.

When I take the parts of God that I like and disregard the parts I don’t like, not only do I put God in a box, I put myself in His place. We only think we are better off without God when we think we can do a better job. When I am reminded that I don’t have the liberty to see the entire story, I release control, knowing that He already has a plan for me. His plans for me are better than anything I can fathom for myself.

**THERE IS NO WAY LIFE
WITHOUT GOD IS BETTER
BECAUSE IF I CAN’T
ACCEPT HIS TRIALS,
THEN I CAN’T ACCEPT
HIS BLESSING.**

**IT IS MY JUDGMENT,
THEREFORE, THAT WE
SHOULD NOT MAKE
IT DIFFICULT FOR THE
GENTILES WHO ARE
TURNING TO GOD.**

ACTS 15:19 NIV

There was a debate among believers on whether or not circumcision was necessary for salvation. After Paul and Barnabas testify about how God was moving among the Gentiles, James spoke up in the debate urging fellow believers not to make it difficult for Gentiles who have decided to turn to God.

It is important that we don't make the door to salvation a complicated one to walk through. Life is hard enough; getting to God should be easy. Oftentimes believers create roadblocks instead of pathways to the saving knowledge of Christ by putting all these religious stipulations in faith. We have to do all that we can do to show people how gracious our loving God is. We are so closed off as believers at times that we portray God with folded arms rather than an open embrace. God welcomes all who choose to love Him; let's not allow our religion to close the door on a relationship.

Pray with me. God, help me not waste time arguing about who can be near you. Help me to do everything in my power to get as many people as close to you as possible. Amen.

**GOD WELCOMES
ALL WHO CHOOSE
TO LOVE HIM.**

03

**THIS IS THE ACCOUNT OF
NOAH AND HIS FAMILY.
NOAH WAS A RIGHTEOUS
MAN, BLAMELESS AMONG
THE PEOPLE OF HIS
TIME, AND HE WALKED
FAITHFULLY WITH GOD.**

GENESIS 6:9 NIV

04

During a time when God was broken-hearted over His creation, He decided to wipe mankind off of the face of the Earth. Even in a moment of grief, God still chose to focus His attention on the one who was obedient to Him. Noah walked faithfully with God, despite being born into a generation that was not faithful. In turn, God chose to use him to rebuild His creation after the flood.

I love this passage; it reminds me of God's complete and total power, and His ability to focus on the smallest things simultaneously. God was grieved by a generation of crazy people. When the world seemed to have lost its mind, God could still pick out Noah like a needle in a haystack in all of the chaos. He found the one righteous guy in an entire generation of people!

This encourages me because it reminds me that our efforts to pursue God never go unnoticed even when we feel like the world is out of order. Noah's story also teaches us we cannot allow our environment to dictate our character. We are not a part of the crowd; we are children of God that should remain faithful and walk with Him even if it seems unpopular to our own generation. Your generation shouldn't impact your faithfulness; your faithfulness should impact your generation. Through Noah's faithfulness, humanity received a second chance. As this year unfolds, I have decided that I want God to look upon my generation, and when He sees me, He sees hope for the future. Obedience to God will never go unnoticed.

**YOUR GENERATION
SHOULDN'T IMPACT YOUR
FAITHFULNESS; YOUR
FAITHFULNESS SHOULD
IMPACT YOUR GENERATION.**

**AND THE NEWS
ABOUT HIM SPREAD
THROUGHOUT THE
SURROUNDING AREA.**

LUKE 4:37 NIV

After leaving His hometown, Jesus went to Capernaum. With power and authority, He cast out a demon from a man in the synagogue. People were amazed by his power and wanted to understand this new teaching. The people began to talk about the power of Jesus, and the news spread to the surrounding area.

When we have the opportunity, what are we saying about Jesus? Jesus is the Word of God that became flesh, so in essence, everything we say about Jesus should be, "Good News." The truth is that depending on our relationship with Jesus, we may not always find ourselves sharing the best information about Him. The negative press He gets from people has nothing to do with who He really is or what He has done. Its our lack of understanding that can mess up the message of Jesus. People in His home town did not have good things to say about Him. In fact, they wanted to kill Him because they could not understand how Joseph's son could say the things He said.

The people thought they knew Him, but they had the wrong perception of Him. It is our job, as believers, to fully understand who Jesus is so that we can share the right report to everyone we know. Jesus should never get bad press from us because of our lack of understanding or display of His character within us. The things believers say and do may be all someone needs to know about Jesus. This passage forces me to ask myself the question, "What are my words and actions saying about our Savior?" As a child of God, it is my duty to always give a good report.

**IT IS OUR JOB, AS
BELIEVERS, TO FULLY
UNDERSTAND WHO JESUS
IS SO THAT WE CAN SHARE
THE RIGHT REPORT TO
EVERYONE WE KNOW.**

05

**WHEN THIS BECAME
KNOWN TO THE JEWS AND
GREEKS LIVING IN
EPHESUS, THEY WERE
ALL SEIZED WITH FEAR,
AND THE NAME OF
THE LORD JESUS WAS HELD
IN HIGH HONOR.**

ACTS 19:17 NIV

Paul preached and worked with such power and authority so others wanted to mimic him. The Seven Sons of Sceva saw what Paul was able to accomplish through the power of Jesus and thought they could operate under his anointing. When they tried to cast out a demon, the demon answered, “Jesus, I know, and Paul, I know, but who are you?” The demon beat them and left them bloodied. When the Greeks and Jews and Ephesus heard about the encounter, fear struck their hearts, and they held the name of Jesus in the highest honor.

The simple truth is, the name of Jesus is nothing to play with. There are real enemy forces at work, and the power of God is all we have as believers to combat those forces. The hard lesson the men of Ephesus had to learn that day is, calling on the name of Jesus without the relationship to back it up will leave you powerless. The demons only knew who Paul was because of his deep devotion to Jesus. Christ’s name is not some counterfeit power you can conjure up just because you heard it works for someone else. It would be like some random person that knows I have a truck permitting someone else to use my truck. When the person they permitted to get my truck comes to me, I’m going to look at them crazy because I have no idea who they are! If you want access to the things I have control over, the prerequisite to those things is a relationship with me!

It’s the same thing with God. People want to operate in the power of Jesus without the relationship. Jesus is not a magic potion or a quick fix. He is God! Respect Him enough to have a real relationship before trying to use the power only He can give us access to. We live in a generation that wants capacity without connection, ability without alliance; they want the benefit without the bond! His power is unmatched, and His name deserves respect! A real relationship with Jesus is the only way for the power of His name to be effective in our everyday lives. Respect His name enough to have a personal relationship with Him.

06

**CALLING ON THE NAME
OF JESUS WITHOUT THE
RELATIONSHIP TO BACK
IT UP WILL LEAVE YOU
POWERLESS.**

**WHEN THE LORD YOUR GOD
BRINGS YOU INTO THE LAND
YOU ARE ENTERING TO POSSESS
AND DRIVES OUT BEFORE YOU
MANY NATIONS — THE HITTITES,
GIRGASHITES, AMORITES,
CANAANITES, PERIZZITES, HIVITES
AND JEBUSITES, SEVEN NATIONS
LARGER AND STRONGER THAN
YOU— AND WHEN THE LORD YOUR
GOD HAS DELIVERED THEM OVER
TO YOU AND YOU HAVE DEFEATED
THEM, THEN YOU MUST
DESTROY THEM TOTALLY. MAKE
NO TREATY WITH THEM, AND
SHOW THEM NO MERCY.**

DEUT 7:1-2 NIV

07

While the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, God (through Moses) continued to remind His people of the promises He made them. Due to their disobedience in the past, God cautions the people while telling them about the future victories that await them. He tells them they will overcome adversaries that are larger and stronger than they are, and when they conquer them, they must fully destroy them. God wanted to make sure his people left no room for disobedience in the Promise Land.

I love this passage because it starts with the phrase, “When the Lord.” It is always encouraging when you don’t have to question if God is going to do something. Because God promises the Israelites victory over more powerful adversaries, I can always know that God has things lined up for me in my life that no one has the power to come against. God will give me the victory. However, there is one powerful component that we must never forget as believers. We must never compromise who we are. No amount of money, opportunity, person or anything should lead us to compromise our faith. Everything that looks good isn’t good for us, and there may be opportunities that seem appealing, but are contradictory to God’s will for our lives. No matter how amazing something may seem, as children of God, we are obligated, at every turn, to destroy the enemy in our lives, because nothing he has to offer me will ever be good for us.

Knowing that God gives us the victory in every circumstance should always drive us to hold on to our convictions. There is no place for compromise in the life of a victorious child of God. Period.

**THERE IS NO PLACE
FOR COMPROMISE
IN THE LIFE OF A
VICTORIOUS CHILD
OF GOD.**

**THEN THE OFFICERS
SHALL ADD, “IS
ANYONE AFRAID OR
FAINTHEARTED? LET
HIM GO HOME SO THAT
HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS
WILL NOT BECOME
DISHEARTENED TOO.”**

DEUT 20:8 NIV

08

In this passage, the Israelites are being given instructions for war. In order to find the men best suited for battle, instructions are given to separate the men who are battle-ready from the ones that are not. Any man who was scared or faint-hearted was instructed to go home because their attitudes could affect the other men.

This passage is powerful because it speaks to the powerful truth that the battle is won or lost before the first blow has ever been inflicted. We must overcome the battle in our minds before we can overcome the enemy. Fear has no place in war, neither do bad attitudes. This principle is extremely practical in everyday life. No one wants to go to war with, work with, or build something with a negative or scared person. Negativity and fear can spread throughout a group like cancer and kill you before you even start. To be effective men and women of God, we must check our attitudes before entering the battlefield because we never want to be a liability to the soldiers standing next to us. We cannot let fear and doubt set the tone for battle. We must operate in confidence and joy because it is in the joy that we find true strength. If you know you don't have the right attitude, it's just best to stay out of the fight. When you are encouraged again, fight on because your faith and energy can be a powerful tool towards victory. Today I choose to face life's battles with the right attitude knowing my attitude affects those fighting with me.

**WE CANNOT LET
FEAR AND DOUBT
SET THE TONE
FOR BATTLE.**

**THESE ARE THE NATIONS
THE LORD LEFT TO TEST ALL
THOSE ISRAELITES WHO
HAD NOT EXPERIENCED ANY
OF THE WARS IN CANAAN
(HE DID THIS ONLY TO
TEACH WARFARE TO THE
DESCENDANTS OF THE
ISRAELITES WHO HAD NOT
HAD PREVIOUS BATTLE
EXPERIENCE)**

JUDGES 3:1-2 NIV

After the passing of Joshua and the elders of his time, a generation of Israelites grew up not knowing the ways of God, or what He had delivered them from. They became a Godless nation, prostituted themselves out to their enemies and whatever foreign gods they served. God enabled judges to fight on behalf of His people as a show of compassion towards them, but when a judge would die the people reverted back to corrupt living. Instead of driving out their enemies as He has done for Joshua's generation, God allowed them to live among their enemies in order to teach that generation how to fight, because they had no previous battle experience.

I believe this passage shines a light on the issues humanity is faced with still this current day. Many of the struggles we see this generation battle with, in this Information Age, are a direct result of the fact that there is a generation growing up with no previous battle experience. Trapped in a world of limited social interaction, many young people have placed themselves in technological prisons, and what we see is a generation that finds it hard to have real interactions with people. They dismiss issues that don't fit into their Instagram feeds and would rather give up face to face meetings for more Facetime. Today's generation has no experience with real struggle, so they take the liberties for granted that others fought and died for.

I believe it's the church's job to teach and equip the youth of this generation with the Word of God because it's the only real weapon they have against the enemy. God allowed the generation after Joshua to experience trials to build up their battle experience. Could it be through today's struggles that God is trying to use this generation to build an army of warriors to fight in these last days? When tests and trials come your way today, don't get discouraged; count it as basic training. God wants to use us to build His Kingdom, but He needs battle-tested people. Believers don't have the luxury of being weak. We must be strong in faith, and gain experience with our sword, the Word of God, because a time is approaching when we must all be prepared to stand and fight.

09

**GOD WANTS TO USE US
TO BUILD HIS KINGDOM,
BUT HE NEEDS BATTLE-
TESTED PEOPLE.**

**THE OVERSEER REPLIED,
“SHE IS THE MOABITE WHO
CAME BACK FROM MOAB
WITH NAOMI. SHE SAID,
‘PLEASE LET ME GLEAN AND
GATHER AMONG THE
SHEAVES BEHIND THE
HARVESTERS.’ SHE CAME
INTO THE FIELD AND
HAS REMAINED HERE FROM
MORNING TILL NOW,
EXCEPT FOR A SHORT REST
IN THE SHELTER.”**

RUTH 2:6-7 NIV

10

Ruth, a Moabite woman, decided to live with her mother-in-law Naomi after her husband's death. She had the choice to go back to her homeland and parents who could provide for her, but she chose to stay with a woman whose God and customs were totally different than what she was used to. While living with her mother-in-law, she decided to work in the fields, not knowing that her loyalty and work ethic would become the topic of Boaz's conversation, the owner of the field.

The story of Ruth is not a story of luck. It's a story of hard work and dedication. Ruth didn't get noticed for sitting and doing nothing. The first thing she decided to do in a strange land with strange people was get to work. You don't have to be in a comfortable place to work hard. Any task that's in front of you is a task worth doing well.

Ruth worked hard with minimal breaks and she was noticed by her overseer. She had no idea that her work ethic would get her talked about by the right people. I believe this with all my heart; your reputation will get to places before you do. What's your reputation say about you? The truth is that if Ruth didn't work, no one would be talking. An entire book of the Bible is dedicated to a woman that decided not to let her past dictate who she was. She decided to work towards her future. When you work, you get noticed. When people notice you working, you build up a reputation that will open doors for you that you could have never imagined. Because Boaz noticed Ruth, they came together and had a son named Obed. Obed had a son named Jesse. Jesse had a son named David, who became king, and from his lineage comes our Lord and Savior Jesus. Because my reputation goes before me, it's my job to make it great. As a man of God, I choose to own what's in front of me because there is far more than just my name at stake.

**YOUR REPUTATION
WILL GET TO
PLACES BEFORE
YOU DO.**

**FOR WE DO NOT HAVE
A HIGH PRIEST WHO IS
UNABLE TO EMPATHIZE
WITH OUR WEAKNESSES,
BUT WE HAVE ONE WHO
HAS BEEN TEMPTED
IN EVERY WAY, JUST AS WE
ARE — YET HE DID NOT SIN.**

HEBREWS 4:15 NIV

11

I love this passage because it gives me a clear picture of God in the flesh. We serve the God who walked the Earth and did not live a life void of feelings, but rather, He embraced them to have greater compassion and understanding of the human condition.

God does things that make me laugh. Why does an all-powerful, all-knowing God have to walk in the flesh to understand His creation? He doesn't. He did it for us to have a greater understanding of Him. I love God so much more because he was willing to put himself in my position and experience the emotions He created me to feel in order to allow me to empathize with Him. It worked! No one on this planet knows what it's like to be Terrance in the flesh...but God. He understands my character flaws, the things that tempt me, and my emotional response to them. Therefore I worship Him because he gets me. The simple fact is though I have only been a dad for a short time, I've found that children are willing to listen to you when you come down to their level. I can shout from up high or squat down and communicate on a level that my daughter understands. Though God's perspective is different from mine, I accept His perspective because of the position He chose to present it from.

Pray with me. God, thank you for always communicating with me in a way that makes it easy for me to receive. Help me to give the same grace to others that don't share my point of view.

**HE WAS WILLING TO PUT
HIMSELF IN MY POSITION
AND EXPERIENCE THE
EMOTIONS HE CREATED ME
TO FEEL IN ORDER TO ALLOW
ME TO EMPATHIZE WITH HIM.**

**SOME TRUST IN
CHARIOTS AND SOME
IN HORSES, BUT WE
TRUST IN THE NAME OF
THE LORD OUR GOD.**

PSALM 20:7 NIV

This Psalm is a prayer from King David preparing for battle. He wants his army to be bathed in prayer before the fight begins. Before battles, the Bible tells us numerous times that David inquired of the Lord. While opposing armies may have relied on the sheer strength and numbers of their armies, David knew to put all his trust in the Lord.

No matter what types of battles lie ahead, as believers, we must go into every situation with complete and total trust in God. One of the many reasons David was a man after God's own heart was that he never entered into a battle without seeking God first. There are many battles we will face daily as believers. Some of us battle attitudes at work, tough tests at school, or broken relationships at home. Maybe our financial situation or our health has caused a life and death dilemma to appear before us.

Believers never have to fear the outcome of a battle because we serve the one true God that has already won the war. We must be willing to stand and fight to see the victory that has already been set before us. It seems logical to put our faith in the one equipped with the best gear and the largest army in a battle. As it pertains to God's army, our army and equipment's size may not always seem like the best, but our commander and chief makes up for anything we may lack.

The very name of the Lord supercedes anything the enemy will ever try to throw at us. Today my confidence and trust are not in what I have; it's in who God is, knowing that He will always make me victorious.

12

**BELIEVERS NEVER
HAVE TO FEAR THE
OUTCOME OF A
BATTLE BECAUSE WE
SERVE THE ONE TRUE
GOD THAT HAS ALREADY
WON THE WAR.**

**TELL THE RIGHTEOUS
IT WILL BE WELL WITH
THEM, FOR THEY
WILL ENJOY THE FRUIT
OF THEIR DEEDS.**

ISAIAH 3:10 NIV

13

The prophet Isaiah is delivering a message from God, the father of discontentment for Jerusalem and Judah. People are not focused on the father, but focused on rituals and religion. God was angered by their rebellion and is basically saying there will be consequences for their actions. Out of nowhere, when it seems like these people have no more hope and God has washed His hands of them, Isaiah offers a glimmer of hope.

When it seems like the world is crumbling around us, friends and family have gone astray, and we feel like God has abandoned us; fear not because God's word to the righteous is, "it will be well with them." God never forsakes those who seek Him even when we can't see or hear Him. He is present and engaged in our situation. God is like the air we breathe; we can't see it, but because it's actively engaged with our lungs to maintain life in our physical body, we know it is present. God is encouraging the righteous to continue doing good because they will reap the rewards for our labor.

Over the past 7 years, my wife and I have worked to build God's kingdom in hopes of building our own family. At times I would question if God would hear our prayers, but we never gave up doing what was right. We may have felt overlooked from a blessing at times, but we continued to have faith in the hardest times. I'm so thankful that we are now enjoying the harvest of our beautiful daughter that God designed just for us. In trials, we shouldn't take our hand off the plow, but rather, push even harder because God promises all will be well. We can be confident that we will enjoy the fruits we have been working towards.

**GOD IS ENCOURAGING THE
RIGHTEOUS TO CONTINUE
DOING GOOD BECAUSE WE
WILL REAP THE REWARDS
FOR OUR LABOR.**

**“AS THE FATHER HAS
LOVED ME, SO HAVE I
LOVED YOU. NOW REMAIN
IN MY LOVE. IF YOU KEEP
MY COMMANDS, YOU
WILL REMAIN IN MY LOVE,
JUST AS I HAVE KEPT MY
FATHER’S COMMANDS
AND REMAIN IN HIS LOVE.”**

JOHN 15:9-10 NIV

14

John 15 starts off with Jesus telling His disciples that He is the vine and they are the branches. He emphasizes the fact that they must stay connected to Him in order to produce fruit. Jesus then goes on to tell them that the same love He receives from His Father is the same love He has shown to them. In order to remain in that love, Jesus tells them, they must obey Him, like He obeys His Father.

I love that Jesus instructs His disciples in this passage to REMAIN. Remain means to STAY. Jesus wants us to stay in His Love, which also means we have a choice to leave it. Those who choose to stay in the love of Christ remain obedient to His word. God’s love language throughout His Word has always been obedience. Seasons change, life will constantly change, but with all the change, we must choose to remain or stay in God’s love by continually choosing to be obedient to Him.

Our choices in our ever-changing lives must be centered around complete obedience to God no matter what. I’d rather remain in God’s love than to be disobedient to Him in order to get the approval of men. Obeying God won’t always call you to what’s popular, but it will call you to what’s necessary. The older I get, the more I realize how much I constantly need God’s love in my life. You can choose to obey God because and remain forever in His love.

**GOD’S LOVE LANGUAGE
THROUGHOUT HIS
WORD HAS ALWAYS
BEEN OBEDIENCE.**

**EACH ONE WENT STRAIGHT
AHEAD. WHEREVER
THE SPIRIT WOULD GO,
THEY WOULD GO, WITHOUT
TURNING AS THEY WENT.**

EZEKIEL 1:12 NIV

During the exile of God's people to Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel received a vision of the glory of the Lord. Ezekiel could clearly see four Cherubim surrounding God's glory, and they moved in unison with the Spirit. As the Spirit moved, their focus did not shift, but Ezekiel says they moved without turning as they went.

The way in which the Cherubim move on this passage is a clear indicator to me of how God wants us to walk as Christians in our daily lives. We are to go wherever the Spirit of the most high God calls us to without turning as we go. Cherubim are heavenly creatures created by God to worship him. As human beings, we are created in the very image of God designed to pursue Him, because the closer we get to who God is, the more He reveals to us about who we are. Life offers us distractions that turn us away from the path that we're called to, but as God's children, we are called to have an unwavering conviction that is not moved by what lures us to the right or left.

God wants us to be led His Spirit. Only through a Spirit-led life can we find ourselves experiencing the fullness of God's grace because those that are Spirit-led display complete and total faith in where God wants to take them. It may be difficult at times to turn away from what life has to offer, but life can never take you to where the Spirit wants to lead you. As believers, we must stay focused on the Spirit of the most high God, knowing He will lead us from glory to glory.

Please join me in praying. God, help me to be Spirit led. Help me to take my eyes off of my surroundings so I can be a person that follows Your Spirit without turning. Amen.

15

**ONLY THROUGH A
SPIRIT-LED LIFE CAN
WE FIND OURSELVES
EXPERIENCING
THE FULLNESS OF
GOD'S GRACE**

**THEN AGRIPPA SAID TO
PAUL, “DO YOU THINK
THAT IN SUCH A SHORT
TIME YOU CAN PERSUADE
ME TO BE A CHRISTIAN?”
PAUL REPLIED, “SHORT
TIME OR LONG — I PRAY
TO GOD THAT NOT ONLY
YOU BUT ALL WHO ARE
LISTENING TO ME TODAY
MAY BECOME WHAT
I AM, EXCEPT FOR
THESE CHAINS.”**

ACTS 26:28-29 NIV

16

Before Paul is taken to Rome to appeal his case before Cesar, Festus takes him before King Agrippa. Paul gives the king his testimony about how he was once a Pharisee opposed to “The Way,” and how he was a devout follower of the law. He describes the way he persecuted Christians and how he had a Damascus Road experience that forever changed his life. He told the king that he has been obedient to the Lord’s vision ever since and asked if he believed in the prophets that foretold the coming of Jesus. The King replies, “do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?” I love Paul’s response because, in his mind, he believed it was only a matter of time for the king to accept the truth about Jesus.

Have you ever tried to convince someone of the gospel? There are some that I have tried to give them the good news about Christ to no avail. Paul’s response to the king took real guts! Paul replied, “short time or long—I pray to God that not only you, but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.” Paul didn’t care who the audience was or how long it would take. His heart longed to see souls saved by the power of Jesus Christ. He didn’t allow the king’s status, the surrounding audience, his predicament, or consequences to stop him from saying what was right in the situation. He continued to believe that God could change anyone that stood before him.

In my own life, the longest I ever prayed for someone to get saved was my father. I never thought it would happen, but just a few years ago, I was at a church service and watched as he gave his heart to the Lord. It took a long time! He was in his sixties when my prayer was answered, but I’m so happy that it happened. We must be unwavering in our faith to see those we love saved by God’s power. Every opportunity is favorable to preach God’s word. I’ve heard it said that we should always preach, but sometimes use words. Our lives should be a living, breathing, walking, and sometimes talking example of what Christ looks like in hopes that in “Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.”

**WE SHOULD ALWAYS
PREACH, BUT SOMETIMES
USE WORDS.**

“MY MESSAGE AND MY PREACHING WERE NOT WITH WISE AND PERSUASIVE WORDS, BUT WITH A DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT’S POWER, SO THAT YOUR FAITH MIGHT NOT REST ON HUMAN WISDOM, BUT ON GOD’S POWER.”

1 COR 2:4-5 NIV

17

Paul writes this letter to the church in Corinth because he finds out that there is discord amongst the body. People are fighting about whose teaching they should follow, whether it be Paul himself, Apollo’s, Ceophus’, or Jesus’. Paul urges them to understand that Christ is not divided. Jews at the time were demanding the miraculous while the Greeks wanted worldly wisdom. Paul tells them not to put their faith in a man’s wisdom but to believe in God’s power.

Paul’s message is so clear. He tells the church not to get so caught up in what he’s saying or how he’s saying because they will miss the power of what’s being said. The power of the almighty God backed up everything that Paul ever preached. In a world full of quotable and tweetable thoughts and phrases, I never want to lose sight of what gives any of those words power. We must still seek out God’s demonstration of His power because words can only move you so much. It is one thing to get a word; it’s a different experience to feel and see the power of God move. I never want to get so caught up in being eloquent and polished that I neglect God’s power. I want to show this generation that God still moves in His miracle-working power.

Can you please pray with me? God, your power is undeniable. Help me to be someone that moves in your miraculous power so that men may see and believe. Thank you for your power. Amen

IN A WORLD FULL OF QUOTABLE AND TWEETABLE THOUGHTS AND PHRASES, I NEVER WANT TO LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT GIVES ANY OF THOSE WORDS POWER.

**AND NOW THESE
THREE REMAIN: FAITH,
HOPE AND LOVE.
BUT THE GREATEST OF
THESE IS LOVE.**

1 COR 13:13 NIV

Paul is writing to the church in Corinth, educating them on spiritual gifts. He begins to tell them that their spiritual gifts are meaningless if they are not expressed in love. After describing the power of love, he emphasizes the eternal nature of this great power. He reminds them that the greatest of all the things that last forever is love.

This passage is a reminder that the love you give will always outlast the work you do. Not only does love last forever, but it also has the most significant impact on people. Love can only be seen in action, but it's not just about what you do for someone, it's also about how you do it. People see the love in your actions when things are done with the proper heart. I constantly have to remind myself that if love is at the center of what I am doing, then I don't have the right to be bitter or complain because if love is the motivation, my work should be done with a joyful attitude.

If love is at the center of all we do, then our expression should never dictate our attitude. Our attitude should always dictate our expression. Let love be the driving force behind everything you say and do because that will be the thing people remember the most about you. People may not be able to recall all you do for them, but they will always be able to feel and remember the love you do it with. Today, I choose to let love be the driving force behind my actions because my love will always outlive my labor.

18

**THE LOVE YOU GIVE
WILL ALWAYS OUTLAST
THE WORK YOU DO.**

**FOR IN CHRIST JESUS
NEITHER CIRCUMCISION
NOR UNCIRCUMCISION
HAS ANY VALUE. THE ONLY
THING THAT COUNTS IS
FAITH EXPRESSING ITSELF
THROUGH LOVE.**

GALATIANS 5:6 NIV

19

Paul wrote the Galatian church to remind them that true salvation comes from faith in Jesus Christ, not in circumcision. There was a debate amongst believers about people being justified or not, based upon if they had performed the traditional practice. Paul emphasizes that it doesn't matter, and what does matter is the faith found in Jesus and expressed in love.

It's easy, as a person of faith, to get bogged down by the idea that you must conform to religious practices or customs to live in righteousness. The sole reliance upon any such custom to achieve righteousness makes you self-righteous. The Bible says that our righteousness is as filthy rags. There is nothing you can do in your own power to justify and free yourself. You must have faith in what Jesus has already done on the cross of Calvary.

The part you play after you accept this freedom is to express that faith in love. Love will drive you to do things out of the gratitude you have for what Christ has already done. Love will lead you to abandon lifestyle choices that don't please God. Love will lead you to seek a deeper relationship with God. It will always cause you to love your neighbor as yourself. True faith in God expressed through love is the key to seeing others have faith in God. Love makes your faith real for you and anyone who encounters you. Choose love today because it's a beautiful expression of the faith in Jesus.

Let's pray. God, help me to express my faith with love today. Amen.

**LOVE WILL LEAD
YOU TO SEEK
A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD.**

**THEY WERE ALL TRYING
TO FRIGHTEN US, THINKING,
“THEIR HANDS WILL GET
TOO WEAK FOR THE
WORK, AND IT WILL NOT
BE COMPLETED.” BUT
I PRAYED, “NOW
STRENGTHEN MY HANDS.”**

NEHEMIAH 6:9 NIV

20

Nehemiah was instructed by God to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem after the exile. During the construction of the wall, many people opposed what Nehemiah was called to do. He was threatened, and people were even paid to coerce him into running away and hiding to halt his mission. Through it all, Nehemiah sought the Lord and asked Him to strengthen his hands.

Anything you choose to do in life that's worth the effort will face some sort of opposition. Nehemiah was led by God to rebuild at the end of his people's exile, and from the moment he decided to do God's will, opposing forces came against him. Whenever God calls you to do His will, you can bet that the enemy will try everything in his power to try and stop you. He knows if you can be steadfast in completing God's work, you are fully operating in your purpose and pleasing God.

The devil displeased God because instead of fulfilling his purpose in God to worship Him, he forfeited his purpose for his pride. The enemy wants nothing more than to see you fail because he is a failure. When opposition comes your way, don't turn away and run, but do what Nehemiah did. Ask God to strengthen your hands. Everything God asks you to do will always require His help; if it didn't, you wouldn't need His grace to do it. Never be ashamed to ask God for assistance because His word tells you that He is your ever-present help in time of need.

Pray this with me. “God, today, and every day, I need you to strengthen the work of my hands.”

**ANYTHING YOU CHOOSE TO
DO IN LIFE THAT'S WORTH
THE EFFORT WILL FACE SOME
SORT OF OPPOSITION.**

**SO IF YOU
WORSHIP ME,
IT WILL ALL
BE YOURS**

LUKE 4:7 NIV

After Jesus was baptized, He went into the wilderness and fasted for forty days and nights. During that time, he was tempted by the devil. Satan first used the fact that Jesus was hungry from fasting to tempt Him, but he was unsuccessful. Next, Satan took Him to a high place and showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. He promised that Jesus can have all of what He sees if he worships him.

The enemy always wants to tempt us with the easiest route to success. By asking Jesus to worship him, he promises success without sacrifice. Nothing worth doing ever comes easy. When God gives us a vision for our life, He gives us “the what” and allows us to live through “the how.” How things happen in our life will depend upon how much we are willing to invest. The Law of the Harvest is the way God chooses to operate in our lives. In order to reap a harvest, a seed must be planted and grounds must be worked and watered. When we do something, God provides the growth. There are no easy ways to success because the truth is the things we work for are always the most gratifying. I appreciate the things that required some sort of sacrifice. The enemy always wants us to believe that the road to success is easy because if he can get you to go his way, he can get you to suffer his fate, eternal separation from God. God is not calling us to what is easy. He’s always calling us to what’s necessary.

21

**THE THINGS WE WORK
FOR ARE ALWAYS THE
MOST GRATIFYING.**

