

FOUNDATIONS

Life. Family. Church.

**²⁰BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS,
CHRIST JESUS HIMSELF BEING THE CORNERSTONE,
²¹IN WHOM THE WHOLE STRUCTURE, BEING JOINED TOGETHER,
GROWS INTO A HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD. *EPHESIANS 2:20-21***

DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET 2018

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FORWARD

Jesus is Alive!

Easter is such an exciting time to be reminded of the goodness and grace of God toward us in Christ Jesus. In anticipation of God doing a mighty work in our church during the weeks following the Easter season our staff and a few of our members have compiled this booklet of devotions. Our hope is that these devotions will help you take steps to grow in your faith and be more committed to God in the coming weeks. We are praying for you that Easter is the start of something more between you and God. We want you to grow in your faith. We want you to grow in your love for God and your love for others by spending time with the Lord in prayer and in the study of Scripture.

On April 8, 2018 we will begin a new series entitled: "Foundations." The purpose of this sermon series is to help us see the centrality of Jesus Christ to our lives, our relationships, our marriages, and our church. Because Jesus is central we believe that time alone with God and time spent His Word is necessary to build your life on the truth of the Gospel.

You are encouraged to make a commitment to spend time each day during the month of April in the Word and in prayer. In addition to this guide we will be providing a weekly family or group devotional that coincides with the sermon for each week. We look forward to growing together in the Lord as we move forward from Easter together here at Harrisburg.

By His Grace,
Pastor Rob

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Monday April 2, 2018 | Praise

Psalm 40:5

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Read the Psalm 40:5 out loud a few times. Try to match your tone with the words. Can you feel the emotions being portrayed? Think about the fact that God is thinking about you, and know that it is good!

Do you have a heart that is overflowing with praise and thankfulness to God? Do you have a praise list that is equal to your prayer list? Are you careful to take inventory of all the good things God is doing for you?

The psalmist made a powerful statement concerning the goodness of God. He is saying that all the things that God has done for him are too numerous to number. The attitude of the psalmist was one of complete praise and thankfulness. If we are not careful, our attitude is shaped by our surroundings and a spirit of entitlement. We can selfishly arrive at the place where we think we deserve God's goodness. We must strive to have an attitude that says, "God is better to us than we deserve."

The psalmist was meditating upon everything God had done for him. The psalmist felt overwhelmed at the detail of God's concern for him. He realized God was doing more for him than he would ever do for God. He recognized that the thoughts of God toward him could not be measured. Are you at a place in life where you realize that God is more concerned about you than you are concerned about you? Can you take inventory of everything that God has and is doing for you?

Today would be a great day for each of us to assess all the goodness of God in our lives. We need to realize, "they are more than can be told." The day after Easter is the perfect day to read Philippians 4:8 and make a list beginning with the resurrection of Christ!

PRAYER: Spend several minutes simply in praise of God. Make a list, or even Google biblical names for God. Let our Heavenly Father hear your praise.

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Tuesday April 3, 2018 | Joy

Nehemiah 8:10 & Psalm 27:8

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You probably remember the children's song, "I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart"! Our preschoolers still sing this most Wednesday nights in the choir. What does this song mean to us, to them?

The thought of writing a devotional on joy sent my mind back a few years to another song:

"I've got the joy of the Lord flowing over in my soul,
I've got the joy of the Lord bringing me peace,
There is no shadow of doubt that His love can't cast out,
I've got the joy of the Lord living in me"

This is the chorus of a contemporary Christian song, "I've Got the Joy", by Sierra. I can't tell you the number of times I have listened to this song. It became my "theme song" when my children were young. I even had it as my phone's ringtone for several years.

We know that there is a difference between happiness and God's joy. No one can be happy all the time. Circumstances in life are not all happy ones. These circumstances take us through many different emotions each day. But we can always have the joy of the Lord. God's joy is ever-present and everlasting because He is ever-present and everlasting. We can have His joy and peace, regardless of circumstances, because we have His presence.

We have joy because of God's great love for us. He gave His one and only Son for us, as a sacrifice for our sins. Knowing how much He loves us, having a close relationship with Him and knowing that He desires a relationship with us; this is our joy and strength.

PRAYER: Father God, thank you that you give joy — the deep, lasting joy of knowing You; of knowing how very much you love us! You love us so much that you sent Jesus. It is truly amazing grace and love that you have for us, Lord. We love you!

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Wednesday April 4, 2018 | Obedience

Micah 6:8

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“Knowledge is ineffective unless it is followed with obedience.”

From a Jamaican Pastor

What an incredible statement. Sometimes I am concerned with the amount of Biblical knowledge many believers possess contrasted against their obedience. Many Christians have a lot of head knowledge, and many have memorized all the best Sunday School answers, but are we allowing that knowledge to transform us into obedient believers?

Let's say we are building a piece of furniture and we read the instructions over and over. We fully understand what the instructions are calling us to do and can even quote the instructions to others. However, what if we never follow through with action and obedience to the instructions? At that point, all the knowledge we gained from the instructions are useless and have become a waste of time. The goal of having new furniture is not accomplished, and even though we know how to create the furniture, we have no fruit to show.

What is the Lord's instruction for our life? Micah 6:8 communicates that the Lord requires us to, “Act justly, love faithfulness, and walk humbly with our God.” God desires our hearts and lives, but ultimately, He desires our obedience. We are called to act justly and live a life that is aligned with God's plan and His Word. We are called to love faithfulness. Faithfulness is my favorite characteristic of God. It is one we don't deserve or fully understand, but how joyful it is to serve a faithful God! Rest in His faithfulness today. We are called to walk humbly with our God. Every day, everywhere, live a life that points others to Christ. This life is not about us, it's about the glory we can bring to the Father through our pursuit of Him.

Today, live in obedience and experience the joy only the Father can provide. Act justly. Love faithfulness. Walk humbly with your God.

PRAYER: Lord, help me to be obedient to you. I know your truth, but I pray that every day your truth is followed by my obedience. Lord today, allow me to act justly, love faithfulness, and walk humbly with you. Amen.

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Thursday April 5 | Hope

Matthew 9:18-25

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Hope is only hoping before the answer comes. Once the answer comes and the problem is resolved, hope is no longer necessary. The ruler in Matthew chapter nine showed unwavering hope because his daughter was dead. Hope should have died with her but lived in the presence of Jesus: “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.” Because the ruler had seen and heard what Jesus could do, he knew there was hope.

Hope is often difficult to have in the midst of this unbelieving world that calls us fools for believing in God. When the ruler arrived at his house with Jesus, the crowd of mourners in the house ridiculed and laughed. How could he have hope? But death never has the final word when the Resurrection and the Life walks into the room. The ruler’s hope was not misplaced. All his hope was in Jesus, alone. The life/death of his daughter was in the hands of the Lord. “He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.”

Because we hold the Bible containing the practices and promises of Jesus in our hands, we have seen and heard what Jesus did. We are given the opportunity to put our hope in what the Savior alone can do in our lives and the lives of our loved ones. The world laughs and scoffs, calling us fools, but we wear “as a helmet the hope of salvation” (1 Thessalonians 5:7), refusing to give place to doubt and despair. Because of hope, we know that one day our faith will become sight when we stand face to face with God, forgiven and free from sin forever. Hope is faith that the promises of God will become our reality, regardless of the present crisis we may be facing.

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

PRAYER: All my hope is in you Jesus. You raise me up to live as a child of God, and you call me forward to walk the paths of righteousness. You are my blessed hope.

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DEVOTIONAL

Friday April 6, 2018 | Faithful

Hebrews 11

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Many scholars call the eleventh chapter Hebrews the “Hall of Faith”. It shows how many have trusted God and have been faithful through challenges in their lives. Looking at your own life, you might see how you have been faithful. It may be forty- three years of marriage committed faithfully to your spouse. It may be thirty- nine and half years of service to your 24/7 job! You may have been faithful to the church since birth, a tither since the ninth grade, a Bible teacher, nursery worker, or a church bus driver. Does this make you a faithful person?

As you grow in your understanding of God’s plan and his provision, you’ll find that true faithfulness is not something you do. Galatians 5:22 shows us that as the Holy Spirit influences your life, he will produce in you: love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Faithfulness isn’t a one-time act of obedience. Walking in God’s Spirit sustains you every day in every aspect of your life. Hebrews 13:5 tells us that Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you. Hopefully, you can see how it’s been God’s faithfulness that has made you faithful.

Easter is the time we celebrate what Jesus has done for us through his crucifixion and resurrection. You can live each new day with the assurance and hope of your eternal destiny. Those things which you have been so faithful in are just the beginning of what God has in store for you! Matthew 25:14-30 tells you that you if you are faithful, God will continue to give you new and exciting opportunities to be blessed. Years from now as you look back, it might be how you were faithful in being nice to people; handling unsolicited phone calls or dealing with drivers who don’t go when the light turns green! God gives you so many ways to allow his Holy Spirit to bring faithfulness and joy.

PRAYER: Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. Continue to show me the fruit which comes from being faithful.

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Monday April 9, 2018 | Praise

Hebrews 13:15

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The Old Testament describes several types of sacrifices. Two of the most important sacrifices were the sin offering and the peace offering. The sin offering is no longer necessary because Jesus paid the price for sin once and for all. The peace offering is a sacrifice of praise and celebration. This sacrifice of praise will never end because the redeemed will never have a reason to stop praising God. It will never end because it represents our gratitude and our love for God.

Under the Old Covenant, a peace offering was given to signify the closeness of the people with God. The creator God; infinite, all-powerful, and all-knowing, is personal. The very fact you and I can feel close to God is astounding.

Hebrews 13:10 describes a unique altar for believers. Verses 15 and 16 tell the Christian what to lay on this altar: praise and good works. When I first came across this verse, I wondered aloud, "Why is praise a sacrifice?" I love to praise the Lord. He represents all that is good in my life. For many believers, praise doesn't seem like a sacrifice because things are going well or they are well practiced at praising the name above all names, but this isn't true for everyone.

Sometimes praise struggles to reach our lips. Sacrifice is a word that reminds us to live beyond the moment. Jesus sacrificed himself for our good and bad days. He provides a conduit for a relationship beyond our imagining. Sacrifice also reminds us to make a daily effort to fix our focus and our priority on eternal things. The things of this world seem to trip us up, but the things of God challenge us to think differently and praise even in the midst of difficulty.

PRAYER: God receive my sacrifice of praise today. I praise you because you are creator God. I praise you because you set my mind and heart on the things which bless my soul and bring honor and glory to you. May my praise lead others to confidence in you.

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Tuesday April 10, 2018 | Joy

R o m a n s 5 : 6

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They were together for 61 years. Then, one day, God called her home. Who can imagine the pain of losing a spouse of 61 years? This man's heart was broken. His family and friends who came by to comfort him but what they witnessed was a broken man that broke their hearts. Tears came almost every day. Many prayed asking God to send comfort, peace, and happiness back to this heartbroken, but after many months, the hurt remained. But the story doesn't end here because God answered the prayers of many.

The man's great-grandson began to take his first steps. As the baby boy was brought to visit, a small smile was seen for the first time in many weeks on the old man's face. The child visited almost every morning and a difference was evident in the man. Then one day the little boy "toddled" over to his Papaw sitting in his recliner. He reached up with both hands, grabbed the shirt of his great-grandfather, and tried to pull himself into his Papaw's lap. The old man reached down and pulled the boy to him. With teary eyes, he received a hug and a kiss from the little boy. The man said, "God knew just what I needed at just the right time." His smile stretched across his face. The wonder of this little child reminded him of joy.

My friend told me, "Sometimes you have to get them lost before you can get them saved." It is the same is with joy. We cannot understand the joy that comes from living for Christ until we experience how our sin is seen by God.

If you are without Jesus or in a dark place, cry out to God. (Psalm 34: 17-18) Acknowledge you are a sinner. (James 4:8-10) You need the "joy" that only comes from repentance through God's Son, Jesus. (Luke 5:31-32) At just the right time, Christ died for you. And at just the right time you will experience the joy that Jesus speaks about in John 15:11. God provides "At just the right time."

PRAYER: Thank you Father for knowing what I need, when I need it. Thank you for the small wonders of this world that remind us of your joy in your creation.

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Wednesday April 11, 2018 | Obedience

Romans 12:2

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“Because I said so!” We’ve all heard it or even said it as a parent. We certainly feel that we know what is best and expect our children to simply obey when first asked. In our home, we refer to this as expecting “first-time obedience.” Besides, it really is for their own good. We would never tell them to do something harmful, but only things beneficial for them.

We have a bookcase full of guides on parenting, ranging from getting a baby to sleep through the night, controlling toddler tantrums, and making them eat all their vegetables. There are various opinions and techniques from many authors. We want the best for them because of our love for them. When parenting, striving for first-time obedience is the goal.

However, why do we as believers think that we sometimes know what is best or beneficial for ourselves instead of what God has commanded us? Just as we say in parenting “Mama knows best,” God really does know what is best for us as Christians. In His Word, He has given us the ultimate guidebook that provides perfect direction for our Christian lives.

As Christians we should strive for the same “first-time obedience” we demand from our children. God loves us and knows what we need even if we don’t understand it or like it. When we obey His commands our Christian walk changes, and our transformation becomes more noticeable to those around us. As Christians, we are called to look and act differently than our surrounding world. Am I different from those around me? Do my co-workers notice that there is something special about my life? Obedience is not always easy, but it always starts with God’s Word.

PRAYER: Lord, thank you for caring enough about me to set a standard for my life. I know you love me because you call me to live according to your Word which considers my greatest need—a relationship with you.

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Thursday April 12, 2018 | Hope

Jeremiah 29:10-14

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One day a friend and I were sharing stories of our children's mishaps when she told me one I will never forget. My friend's little boy, let's call him "Sam," had a major Spiderman obsession when he was four years old. He constantly wore a Spiderman costume, slept on Spiderman sheets, and would go entire days only responding when referred to as "Spiderman." One day Sam and his cousin were playing in his bedroom while his mom was busy caring for his little sister. The boys were playing, you guessed it, Spiderman. At some point, just pretending to climb the walls wasn't enough; so, Sam and his cousin went to the pantry to retrieve the stickiest substance known to little boys—peanut butter. Armed with a jar of Jif they returned to Sam's room, slathered their hands with peanut butter, and ... well, you can imagine the scene my friend discovered.

It sounds silly to us. Of course, peanut butter can't hold a four-year-old to the wall. But, a lot of us have the same problem. Our hope is misplaced. We look for solutions that will never solve our problems. We hope that our jobs will provide for our future. We hope our kids will make us proud and that our spouse will always love us. We hope our friends will stand by us. But those hopes are placed in people and things that may fail us. The only safe place to put our hope, reliance, and trust is in God. When we do otherwise, we just end up with a mess.

The verses that you read today were written to God's people when they were exiles. They were in the middle of being punished for putting their hopes in things that could never deliver. But God still had a plan, a hope, and a future for them. He offers the same thing to us.

PRAYER: God reveal to me the false promises of the world in which I place my hope. Give me a desire to long for the hope which has been prepared for me.

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DEVOTIONAL

Friday April 13, 2018 | Faith

Luke 7:1-10 & Mark 6:1-6

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What amazes you? What greatly surprises, astounds, or suddenly fills you with wonder? The answer can be negative or positive.

Do you know that Jesus was amazed only two times when He walked the earth? In Luke 7:1-10, Jesus was amazed at the faith of a centurion in Capernaum who sent friends to come and ask Him to heal his servant. A Gentile, an officer of an occupying power, who knew Him not at all, greatly believed and Jesus was amazed.

Contrast Luke 7:1-10 with Mark 6:1-6. Jesus was in Nazareth and he was amazed at His hometown's lack of faith. The people who knew Him best didn't believe, and Jesus was amazed. In the first instance, Jesus was amazed because of a great demonstration of faith! In the second, because of a gross demonstration of unbelief.

Jesus was amazed two different times, for two different reasons, with two different results, but the common thread was faith: his hometown crowd's lack of it, and the Roman centurion's abundance of it. The faith of the people seems to be the fuel that either enabled Jesus' miracles or hindered them. It is humbling and haunting to think that our lack of faith can, in some ways, hinder Jesus from doing certain miracles in our lives.

I can't help but wonder if my faith is strong enough to amaze Jesus. I highly doubt it. In fact, I'm probably more like the rest of Israel in that my familiarity with the Lord breeds laziness in my faith. It is easy to forget to be "amazed" that God loves us so much that he sent his only Son to redeem us; to lose sight that it is through grace, and not of my own doing, that I'm able to have faith at all.

I have to ask myself the question, "what does my faith look like?" Would Jesus be amazed at the lack of it, or the abundance of it? What is your faith level? Is it fuel for a miracle or is it a hindrance to one?

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I know You want to do a miracle in my life. May my faith cooperate with Your power. May You be amazed at my faith.

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DEVOTIONAL

Monday April 16, 2018 | Praise

Colossians 3:16-17

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“We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction.” -Harry Ironside

Praising God is an antidote to stress and difficulties of the moment. When we are faced with overwhelming circumstances we can overcome our worry by praising God for what He has done for us in Christ. Our salvation by faith in Jesus Christ is the well-spring of thankfulness that results in our praise.

Paul exhorts us in Colossians 3 to “let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly”. This means that we need to build our lives on the truth of Scripture and grow in our understanding of it. The Bible is to be so central to our lives that it shapes how we worship together and how we live for God.

When we worship together we teach the Word, sing the Word, and pray the Word. The result of teaching, singing, and praying is thankfulness to God for what He has done for us through Jesus Christ. The more that we let God’s Word dwell in our hearts and minds the more thankful we will be in our hearts toward God.

In Colossians 3:17 we are called to do everything in the name of Jesus Christ. This literally means everything, and that means if we can’t do it in the name of Jesus Christ then we shouldn’t do it all. In any and every situation, including the most difficult and discouraging we live thankful for what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.

Our salvation is worth more than anything or anyone else in this world. God cultivates in our hearts an attitude of thanksgiving that helps us to fight against our desires for more. When you feel dissatisfied with life, think about Jesus. When you feel discontent, look to the cross. Let the Word and truth of Christ dwell in you richly, and live your life as praise to the one who has given you eternal life.

PRAYER: Father, thank you for the salvation you have given to me through Jesus Christ. Help me to live for you in all that I do today.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday April 17, 2018 | Joy

Romans 15:13

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When I think of the topic of Joy, I am reminded of the late Billy Graham's words. He said, "Joy cannot be pursued. It comes from within. It is a state of being. It does not depend on circumstances, but triumphs over circumstances. It produces a gentleness of spirit and a magnetic personality".

I often ask myself what brings me joy. One thing that brings me joy is the opportunity to serve with God's people here at Harrisburg Baptist Church. At Harrisburg you don't have to go out looking for friends, they will simply find you. Understand that joy and happiness is not based on possessions, power or prestige, but the relationships with people you love and respect. When I think of Harrisburg, I think about all the members who have gone to be with the Lord. Sadly, there are too many to name, but all have left gigantic footprints around this beautiful village.

I have joy knowing that I will see those loved ones again in Heaven. I don't question God's plan with the recent passing of my mom. I have joy knowing my mom is happy and she wouldn't come back now if you asked her because she is home. She would want me and all who read this to make plans to come see her. Many of you have experienced the loss of a loved one. I don't know how anyone makes it through a tough time without a church family. I plan to use my joy to help those that find themselves at the most difficult crossroads.

Joy, it's all around us really. The greatest joy of all is the love Jesus has for me. It's not a part-time love. He didn't finance anything and made no down payment. He paid it all, and He did it for all.

PRAYER: Lord, you know of the most difficult moments in my past. I thank you for giving me a reason to be joyful even when the world says I shouldn't be. Thank you for being the joy of my heart.

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DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday April 18, 2018 | Obedience

Psalm 84:11-12

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I believe some of us want to do things our own way. The old gospel hymn “Trust and Obey” comes to mind. I remember sitting on a wooden pew of my home church as a child singing this song. It was a favorite song. The chorus says, “Trust and obey, for there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”

“Trust and Obey” was written in 1887 by John H. Sammis. Trust and obedience go together. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and He will make your paths straight.”

Obedience means denying self and taking up your cross and following Jesus. When we say no to self, we can say yes to the Lord.

We can also say yes to reading the Bible. The first verse of “Trust and Obey” says, “When we walk with the Lord, in the light of His Word.” To walk in obedience, we must not neglect the light of the Word. The Word of God is powerful. When we memorize it and hide it in our hearts, we are obeying Psalm 119:11. Obedience keeps us on the right path. The Bible is our G.P.S. It is directing us toward the Lord. Sin, on the other hand, takes us down roads we should not be traveling and takes us to wrong destinations. Repentance recalculates our direction back to the Lord.

I do not know for sure where you are on your journey. Detours and road construction may be ahead, but remember the preacher who said, “It’s Friday, but Sunday’s coming.” Jesus overcame death and the grave. Praise God we serve a risen Savior! Hope is found in Jesus, the one we worship and adore.

PRAYER: Lord, I want to be obedient to your Word. Help me be an example to others in the way I trust you and obey you.

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DEVOTIONAL

Thursday April 19, 2018 | Hope

1 Peter 3:15b

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At the end of the apostle Peter's days, he wrote letters of encouragement to believers scattered among the nations. These believers were facing fierce persecution because of their faith in Jesus. Yet, in 1 Peter chapter 3, he entreats these believers to, "Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you."

Despite difficult living conditions and great suffering, Peter knew that these first century Christians were filled with hope. He also knew that this hope would be recognized by the lost people in their community. When we have hope in the midst of suffering—people ask, "Where does this hope come from?" So, Peter urged the early believers to be prepared.

Two thousand years later Peter's question still asks me, am I prepared? What is my defense? What answer will I give if someone asks me about my hope? My answer is—Jesus! He is the answer, the source of my hope.

Yet to an unbelieving world, a name alone probably does not adequately explain what my hope encompasses. What words can I use to explain Jesus, what does He mean to me?

To fully answer I will have to pull out my phone and play a song. The first time I heard Travis Cottrell's arrangement of "In Christ Alone" I was moved to tears. The music stirred my soul, swept me up as the movement swelled then exploded in joy, and finally, quietly concluded in the peace of truth. That's a lot for one song to do, but it was more than music. The lyrics are a statement of faith, a defense of hope. "In Christ Alone" has become the song I want to be sung at my funeral. I long for it to be my life's testimony.

I encourage you to use the links below to discover the song for yourself. Read the words. Let the music move your soul. But above all, see Jesus, the only source and reason for our hope.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjR_A2pGPrY

<http://www.stuarttownend.co.uk/song/in-christ-alone/>

PRAYER: Lord, my entire confidence is in you and you alone. You are my hope for the present and for the future. Thank you for loving me enough to give me hope.

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Friday April 20, 2018 | Faithful

Revelation 19:11-16

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Proverbs 20:6 ask, “Who can find a faithful man?” Maybe you have wondered the same thing? The current politics and social media scandals it may seem like no one can be faithful.

Being raised on all the fairytales of beautiful princesses, knights in shining armor, and “happily ever afters,” can lead to dire consequences when real life fails to deliver. Life happens, which is why the Bible is the only book that adequately answers the question, “Who can find a faithful man?”

The faithful man, for whom all our hearts long, is described in Revelation 19:11-16, and He is coming for us. One day, our Prince; our King will truly come on a white horse to deliver us safely into His Kingdom that has no end. And His name is “Faithful and True.”

“He will be faithful to the end.
He will provide time and time again.
He will be faithful, so faithful to the end.
He will be there when all else fades.
His love is stronger than my pain.
He will be faithful – so faithful to the end.”

-Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir

“Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all His words and kind in all His works.]”

Psalm 145:13 (ESV)

“O Lord, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, for You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.”

Isaiah 25:1 (ESV)

PRAYER: Lord, I want to be described as faithful by those that know me, but especially by you. Let me emulate you in my faithfulness always. Amen.

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DEVOTIONAL

Monday April 23, 2018 | Praise

Psalm 47:1-2

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I heard the saying, “PTL” or, “Praise the Lord,” a lot growing up. We even had a club in high school that was named “PTL.” I thought that I was “too cool” to be in such a club, and thought other clubs better suited me. As I look back, I realize how little I knew back in those days.

Moving ahead several years, marrying my sweetheart and watching our children be born and grow up, I realize that I have so many undeserved blessings for which I can, “Praise the Lord.” Blessings such as seeing our little girl put out her “Jesse Tree” ornaments at Christmas and asking how to ask Jesus in her heart. Seeing our son recite scripture with his granddad and later in front of the church as a little man is another blessing. I also saw the blessing of my wife leading children during worship.

Looking back, we cannot count the blessings in the number of doors that were opened to us, the people that we have met, and how God walked before us each step of the way. Those blessings include being a part of the Harrisburg staff; watching our kids grow in the Lord, our son marrying a Christian girl, and then grandchildren!!! “Praise The Lord!”

Every day I pray, “I need you Lord in everything I do, think and say and I can’t do this day without you.” Now today and for as long as I live, I’m no longer “too cool” for the “Praise the Lord” club. I believe Psalm 63:3-5 says it best, “Because your love is better than life, my lips will praise you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you.”

PRAYER: I praise you for blessings without number. Your love is as infinite as your kindness. Help me to wake up each morning with a “Praise the Lord!” attitude.

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DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday April 24, 2018 | Joy

1 Peter 1:3-9

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Chris Tomlin added this chorus to the Christmas song, “Joy to the World”:

*Joy, unspeakable joy.
An overflowing well, no tongue can tell.
Joy, unspeakable joy.
Rises in my soul, never lets me go.*

1 Peter 1:3-9 should be read with excitement and passion! These words are amazing, they are awe inspiring, they build up in your heart and make you want to burst out in song. God has made us alive because He is merciful and good to us. We have been promised an inheritance that is imperishable and unfading- this promise is our salvation; it is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Because of what God has done for us in Christ we can rejoice right now. Peter recognizes that right now may come with trials and struggles, but right now also comes with the promise of God and the help of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, even though we can't always see what God is doing, we know that He is at work. Even when it doesn't feel or seem like things are going to work out, we can rejoice.

Because joy is the result of Christ in our lives, we can rejoice in the midst of every situation we face. Since joy is not the same thing as happy, we can experience a myriad of emotions in life and yet still rejoice in our salvation because we believe the truth of the Gospel.

Joy is the product of the overflowing well of God's mercy and grace to us in Christ Jesus. Rejoice today with the joy that rises up in your soul and never lets you go.

PRAYER: Lord, help me today to have joy in the midst of all that I experience. Help me to find my joy and my comfort in my relationship with you and not with my circumstances. Thank you for loving me and for holding on to me when I struggle.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday April 25, 2018 | Obedience

1 John 2:3-6

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Even though our children are almost out of the house, I still have memories of the words we consistently used to encourage them to do what we said: “Obey Mommy,” “Obey Daddy,” “You need to obey.” The phrases were repeated regularly and often. We knew in our hearts, if we could ever get the word obedience to stick, it would lay the right foundation for a future with God.

One of the pitfalls against which we had to guard was that of rewarding outward obedience only. Obedience which only changes behavior might make one seem compliant when the parent is around but can produce sneakiness and deceit. Yes, our precious darlings learned early on that being good outwardly when parents were around was not enough. We fought (and continue to fight) for their hearts, desiring for them obedience to God. Paul writes, “not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God” (*Colossians 3:22*).

In trying to teach our children to obey, God used those very lessons to illuminate our own deceptions. God is interested in the inward condition of our hearts. Jesus spoke to the Pharisees, calling them hypocrites, “Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness” (*Matthew 23:28*).

Obedience from the heart really measures whom we love most: ourselves or God. 1 John 2:3-6 reveals that those who really know and love God, do what He says, not just outwardly for the world to see, but from the heart.

PRAYER: Help me to be obedient to you outwardly and most important, inwardly. I give you my heart today in obedience and ask for the strength to give it to you everyday as you lead and guide me.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Thursday April 26, 2018 | Hope

Romans 8:24-25

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Some words just have a certain “oomph” to them. The word hope energizes me. It is used over 150 times in the Bible. Sometimes it is used in a general sense: “I hope to see you soon”, or “I hope it’s sunny on Saturday.” However, it is most powerfully used when it is used in the context of salvation.

First Timothy 1:1 tells us our hope is in Christ. The Lexham Bible Dictionary defines a spiritually attuned hope as, “The confidence that, by integrating God’s redemptive acts in the past with trusting human responses in the present, the faithful will experience the fullness of God’s goodness both in the present and in the future.” A wonderful aspect of hope is the present benefits it provides to the spirit. Hope produces “moral fruit” such as “joyful confidence in God, unashamed patience in tribulation, and perseverance in prayer”, according to the Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology.

Romans 8:24-25 speaks of the futuristic aspect of hope. Hope is something we have in the present that promises a future reality. Though we may be saved in the present, the fullness of salvation comes to a believer in the future as they get their resurrection body and the completion of end times prophecies have been fulfilled. The redeemed have much to look forward to in the future because God keeps his promises, and his promise to the redeemed is beyond understanding.

Ask yourself, “What spiritual hope do I anticipate the most?”; “Am I energized by the promises of hope in the Bible?” God loves you and wants you to have hope to help you persist through tough times. Do you claim such a hope?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank you for seeing my need for hope; for knowing my needs now and in the future. Please let the hope I have in you inspire others to know you and believe. May others see the moral fruit of hope in my life today.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Friday April 27, 2018 - Faithful

Psalm 86

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My kids are experts at catching me in lies. No, I am not a big, bad liar. But sometimes I promise an outcome I can't deliver. You know, like when there is a train at Crosstown, and you are running ten minutes late, and we can't stop for ice cream before an appointment. The accusations start to fly. "Mom you lied! You said we could get ice cream first." My frustrated response is typically something about my lack of ability in seeing the future. The lie wasn't intentional. I just made a promise I couldn't keep due to forces beyond my control.

One of the things that amazes me most about God is that He never breaks a promise. He never accidentally over-promises. He is never caught off guard. He always tells the truth. He is always worthy of our trust. And he does know the future.

As you read Psalm 86, I'm sure you notice many of the ways God is described. He is good, forgiving, and abounding in steadfast love— and in verse 15, He is faithful. God is who He says He is and does what He says He will do. He keeps His word. When I read passages like this, I'm reminded that by comparison, I am not good, or forgiving, or abounding in steadfast love. I don't always keep my word. And, on the inside, I'm not always who I outwardly profess to be. Those are all reasons I need a faithful God. God who sent His Son to live the perfect life I could never live and die to pay for my mistakes.

There are so many things that happen in my life that I don't understand— much bigger things than having afternoon plans change because of a train's schedule. When those things come my way, I'm especially thankful that I know the God who does not lie, not even accidentally. He is faithful and true.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, I am humbled by your faithfulness. Every time I make a mistake I am reminded of your love, compassion, and faithfulness. Bless me today with greater insight into your character.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Monday April 30, 2018 | Praise

Psalm 150:1-2

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The psalmist wrote Psalm 150:1-2 to answer four strategic questions: Where to? What for? With what? and Who?

The psalmist talks about praise because praise is very important. It's more than raising your hands on a Sunday morning in the worship service. It means to live a life of praise every day by worshipping God with all that you are. That's right, praise should be a lifestyle of adoring God for who He is and for what He has done for us. Our praise should always start off with adoring who He is. To adore Him means to put God on a pedestal in your life. If you love someone with all your heart, then you will do just that.

God deserves to be on the pedestal of our heart. "Why," you may ask?

1. Because He is the Creator and Sustainer of all life. Without Him, we wouldn't exist.
2. Because everything that we have comes from Him. Our material belongings were given to us by His Providence. Not that we deserved anything, but because He is so good to us even when we don't deserve it.

So, to praise Him, we must start with an acknowledgment of who He is, then praise him for what He has done. Let's make it personal. To truly praise and worship Him, we must come into His presence with a clean heart by repenting of any known sin and loving one another regardless of how they look. Because where would we be if God looked at us that way? He is deserving of all of our praise.

PRAYER: Father, you know me and love me which leads me to praise you even more. You are worthy of my praise as the creator and sustainer of all life. I praise you because you are God and I love you.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday May 1, 2018 | Joy

Nehemiah 8:10

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There is an old spiritual chorus that says, “Happiness happens, but joy abides.” Joy stays with us longer than happiness; joy lingers. Happiness is an emotion based on the circumstances around us. Joy is a sense that abides in the heart of the person who knows “It is well” in his or her soul. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit; it is a natural part of Christian life. I believe Jesus lived a joy-filled life. Joy comes from within.

In the Old Testament, Nehemiah had a burden for Jerusalem because the wall and gates were destroyed. The wall stood as protection from their enemies, without it they were defenseless. The temple needed a wall for its protection as well. Nehemiah prayed, mourned, and fasted before he approached the King to get permission to take a leave of absence from his job as a cupbearer. Nehemiah was on a mission to rebuild the walls. King Artaxerxes was very gracious to Nehemiah. He provided time off and even provided lumber to rebuild the walls. Nehemiah had opposition, but with the materials, the manpower and with the wall and gates, the construction was completed in 52 days. After the completion of the walls Nehemiah 8, all of the people gathered to hear Ezra read the law from early morning to midday. The people heard the law and understood their violations; they were grieved and began weeping. Nehemiah began to speak to the crowd and said, “And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength” Nehemiah 8:10b (ESV).

I recently talked to a friend of mine who is a widow. While we were traveling, she was laughing with some of her friends so much that she had tears coming from her face. I told her, “It is good to see you laughing.” She looked at me and said, “It took me a long time to find joy, but once I found it, I didn’t want to lose it.” Don’t let circumstances overshadow the joy we have in the Lord.

PRAYER: Jesus let your strength be my joy. The fact that you know my needs and difficulties brings me joy beyond measure. Let my joy cause me to celebrate you all the more.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Wednesday May 2, 2018 | Obedience

John 14:15

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Throughout Scripture, we see the repercussions of disobedience and obedience time and time again. Cain's rebellion resulted in Abel's murder. King Saul's wickedness resulted in the loss of the kingship for his descendants and the eventual deaths of his family. King Manasseh's idolatry cemented the downfall of the nation of Judah. And Judas' disobedience led to Jesus' betrayal.

But, Noah's obedience saved humanity from destruction, and Abraham's faithful obedience built a great nation. Joseph's diligent obedience saved his family from starvation and preserved the line from which Jesus would descend. And Jesus' unwavering obedience resulted in our salvation.

All of these individuals had choices to make, important moments of decision, and critical crossroads which they encountered along life's journey. And in the end, all of them reaped the consequences of their obedience or disobedience.

God earnestly desires men and women who are eager to serve Him and to demonstrate their love for Him by being obedient to His Word and will. God simply and clearly states in John 14:15 that, "If you love me, you will obey what I command." Jesus was always about the Father's business while He was on earth. He desired to please His Father and do the work He was predestined to do. Ephesians 2:10 says that we are "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." God puts each of us on this earth for a specific reason and a predetermined purpose.

Are you obedient to His call on your life? God chooses to use you because you are the one most suited to minister to the people in your area of influence. It is not by chance you have the relatives, friends, job, and church family that you do. God led you wherever you are for a reason. Pray today that the Lord will begin showing you the destiny He has for you. Ask Him to help you be obedient to His will for your life. Are you willing to serve Him whatever the cost? It is this unswerving obedience and faithful service that God richly blesses.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank You for leading me. I pray that Your strength and wisdom would guide me to make decisions that follow Your path. Help me to place Your Word in my life so that my obedience will be a blessing to everyone who sees You working in and through me.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Thursday May 3, 2018 | Hope

Psalm 46

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Where does our hope come from? In this world, we all have troubles, no one is exempt. There is not anyone who is untouched by small to large troubles in this life, usually on a daily basis. This is just as Jesus said it would be in John 16:33. But He also tells us to, “Take heart!”, because Jesus has overcome the world. Only in Him can we find peace and hope.

We have recently celebrated Easter. What a wonderful reminder of the hope we have in Christ! We have this hope because He came and sacrificed Himself for us. Because of His willing sacrifice, He took our sins upon Himself and we have the hope provided by the forgiveness of sin. Ultimately, we have the hope of eternal life with Him! We have this hope as an anchor for our soul according to Hebrews 6:19.

I love the theology in so many of the hymns we have grown up singing. “Great is Thy Faithfulness” is one of my favorite hymns. God has brought the lyrics to this song to mind several times over the past few weeks. The entire song is encouraging, talking about God’s great faithfulness to us (as the title gives away). In the last verse, the words “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow” jump out at me. Psalm 46:1 says, “God is our fortress.” He gives us enough strength for today. He is our hope for tomorrow, because He has told us repeatedly that He will never leave us or forsake us. We know that God always keeps His promises. Our hope rests in His faithfulness. Our hope is in knowing that no matter what happens, no matter where God takes us, no matter what stage of life we are in, God is always with us. He is always sovereign. He is in control and will see us through.

PRAYER: Dear Father, I honestly don’t know how people make it through life without You. And I am so glad that I don’t have to because of Jesus. Thank you that I can rest in You today, knowing that my only hope is You.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Friday May 4, 2018 | Faithful

Isaiah 25

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God is faithful and true. What an amazing truth to consider. Who else do you know who can be described as faithful and true? Think about it, there isn't anyone on the planet or in all of history who has been faithful and true every time except God.

God has promised to swallow up death forever. He has promised to bring salvation to the world and to take on the sins and guilt of His people. God has promised to be a source of strength for the weak and source of comfort for the afflicted.

God has kept His promises, He is faithful and He is true. God is worthy of all of our praise and all of our honor. He has done wonderful things for us. His plans formed of old have come true for us in Jesus Christ.

Through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has swallowed up death and offers us eternal life. In Christ He took on the weight of our sin and died in our place on the cross to bring us forgiveness for sin. In Jesus Christ we can find refuge, strength, and comfort in the midst of all that we face.

You can trust God today with all that you are facing. You can praise God today in the midst of all that you experience. You can depend on God to be with you in all things because He is faithful and true. Live your life today to be faithful to Him, because He has been faithful to you.

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank you for being faithful to me even when I am not faithful to you. Help me to live today for you and trust you more because you are good. I am overwhelmed at all that you have done for me in Jesus Christ. I thank you for the promise of my salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

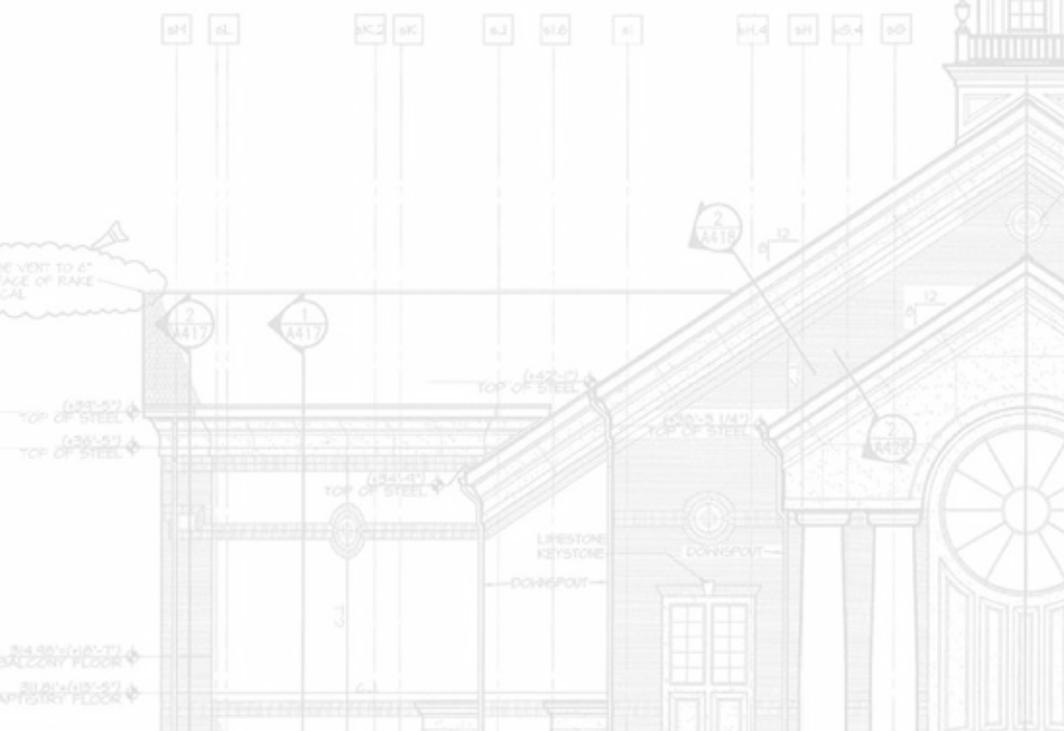
NOTES

A **PROFILE**
 07 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

INDIANA LIFESTONE OR
 PRECAST CONCRETE
 ANCHOR TO SUPPORT
 STRUCTURE WITH 5/8"
 ANCHORS BY HANES.

3 **PRECAST MEDALLION**
 A307 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

PREFAB STEEPLE
 SEE SHEETS A436 & A437



FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL

Listing of Devotional Writers with Dates

April 02 – 06

April 02 - Praise – John Gordon

April 03 - Joy – Angela Mitchell

April 04 - Obedience – JB Long

April 05 - Hope – Aaron Tomes

April 06 - Faithful – David Smith

April 09 – 13

April 09 - Praise – Michael Kelly

April 10 - Joy – Bill Collins

April 11 - Obedience – Ryan & Mary Margaret Simmons

April 12 - Hope – Shelley Farmer

April 13 - Faithful – Jim Baker

April 16 – 20

April 16 - Praise – Rob Armstrong

April 17 - Joy – Mike McCraw

April 18 - Obedience – Tim Alexander

April 19 - Hope – Samantha Fikes

April 20 - Faithful – Aaron Tomes

April 23 – 27

April 23 - Praise – Paul Backstrom

April 24 - Joy – Rob Armstrong

April 25 - Obedience – Alison Tomes

April 26 - Hope – Michael Kelly

April 27 - Faithful – Shelley Farmer

April 30 – May 4

April 30 - Praise – George Stone

May 1 - Joy – Tim Alexander

May 2 - Obedience – Jim Baker

May 3 - Hope – Angela Mitchell

May 4 - Faithful – Rob Armstrong

SEALANT CONT.
AGAINST MEDALLION

1/2" x 1/2" REVEAL

1
RIDGE VENT TO 6"
OF FACE OF RAISE
TYPICAL

PROFILE

SCALE 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

3. PRECAST MEDALLION

A307 SCALE 1 1/2" = 1'-0"

INDIANA LESTONE OR
PRECAST CONCRETE
ANCHOR TO SUPPORTING
STRUCTURE WITH 3/4"
ANCHORS BY 7/16"

PREFAB. STEERLE
SEE SHEETS A458 & A459
N.C.

SP1 BL MLC BK BJ NLA BI BK2 BR D2 D3

