

VOL.12

BETWEEN THE
LINES

a frontline devotional

DEDICATION

This devotional is
dedicated to all those
who choose to follow
Matthew 6:33 every day.
“Seek First The Kingdom
of God.”

Thank you to our faithful
Youth Staff who, by the power of the Holy
Spirit, poured out of themselves to
complete this amazing devotional as a tool
to equip the body of Christ through
the power of the Word!

...taking it by FORCE!
Paulie & Nikki



CONTENTS

DAY 1 **ROMANS 1:16**
S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (Part 2)

- Nikki

DAY 2 **JOHN 14:16**
Our Helper

- Miss Dawn

DAY 3 **HEBREWS 10:23**
Will You Trust Me?

- Mr. George

DAY 4 **2 TIMOTHY 1:7**
Fear Can Frustrate

- Joey

DAY 5 **1 JOHN 4:4**
Get Out From Under

- Miss Lois

DAY 6 **2 JOHN 1:9**
Don't Run Ahead

- Niki

DAY 7 **1 CORINTHIANS 15:57**
You Have the Victory

- Mr. George

DAY 8 **PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7**
No Cares No Worries

- Amanda

DAY 9 **JOHN 4:23-24**
In Spirit and in Truth (Part 2)

- Jasmine

DAY 10 **1 JOHN 1:9**
Shame of Sin No More

- Joey

DAY 11 **NUMBERS 25:1-2**
Can I Have Your Opinion, Please?

- Anthony B

DAY 12 **2 PETER 1:1-12**
S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (Part 3)

- Nikki

DAY 13 **PSALM 141:3**
Keep Paddling Upstream

- Miss Lois

DAY 14 **ROMANS 15:13**
S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (Part 4)

- Nikki

DAY 15 **JEREMIAH 5:25, ISAIAH 59:1-2**
Separation or Salvation?

- Jamie

DAY 16 **MATTHEW 7:13-14**
Two Kinds of Easy

- Anthony B



CONTENTS

DAY 17	ISAIAH 26:3 <i>Perfect Peace</i> - Miss Dawn	DAY 25	1 CORINTHIANS 1:18 <i>The Power of the Cross</i> - Paulie
DAY 18	GALATIANS 1:12 <i>Direct Revelation</i> - Niki	DAY 26	ISAIAH 43:18-19 <i>New Things</i> - Amanda
DAY 19	PSALM 128:2 <i>Perseverance for Your Purpose</i> - Yvonne	DAY 27	MATTHEW 6:25-27 <i>Let Go and Let God</i> - Yvonne
DAY 20	2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 <i>Our Identity in Christ</i> - Paulie	DAY 28	DEUTERONOMY 31:6 <i>S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (Part 7)</i> - Nikki
DAY 21	PROVERBS 3:11-12 <i>S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (Part 5)</i> - Nikki	DAY 29	PHILIPPIANS 1:6 <i>Slow is Smooth, Smooth is Fast</i> - Carrington
DAY 22	JOHN 3:16 <i>You Are Loved</i> - Jasmine	DAY 30	1 CORINTHIANS 6:11-12 <i>Satisfaction or Submission?</i> - Jamie
DAY 23	1 JOHN 2:20 <i>S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (Part 6)</i> - Nikki		
DAY 24	1 CORINTHIANS 9:25-27 <i>Move With a Purpose</i> - Carrington		



PREFACE

As we bring this edition of Between The Lines Devotional to a close, I pray you have been ministered to by each word breathed by the Holy Spirit and written from the hearts of those who love you.

The most amazing thing about God's Word is that it "never comes back void!" (Isaiah 55:11). So as long as you lean on it, trust it with all your heart, and confidently apply it to your daily life, you will never live with any regrets. Instead, you will walk the path of blessings and prosperity! Proverbs 3:5-6 (AMPC) says, "Lean on, trust in, and be confident in the Lord with all your heart and mind and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know, recognize, and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths."

Seek Him first!

Paulie

S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (PART 2)

**SALVATION-TRUST-APPLICATION-
NON-COMPROMISING-DISCIPLE-ANOINTING-
RESPONSIBILITY-DAUNTLESS**

**“FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL, FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD FOR SALVATION [FROM HIS WRATH AND PUNISHMENT] TO EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES [IN CHRIST AS SAVIOR], TO THE JEW FIRST AND ALSO TO THE GREEK.”
- ROMANS 1:16**

We started our acronym for STANDARD last month with Salvation. Today we will take a look at part two, which is to bring others with us into Heaven.

2 Corinthians 3:2 says, “Your very lives are a letter that anyone can read by just looking at you. Christ himself wrote it—not with ink, but with God’s living Spirit; not chiseled into stone, but carved into human lives.” It’s time for self evaluation with the help of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual lives, so take a moment to ask Him to search your heart right now.

Psalms 139:23-24 says, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” We do this to evaluate if our behavior reflects our beliefs. Are we being an example to others of the love of Christ, and is our behavior reflecting the character of our Heavenly Father in our actions? DL Moody said, “Out of 100 men, one will read the Bible, but 99 will read the Christian.” What are people reading from the book of your life? The full knowledge of your salvation, and all the benefits that you hold, show as you walk out this Christian life.

It’s peace when some have conflict, health when others may be struggling with sickness, direction when another may feel lost... these are the pictures others will see from your life. As people notice your walk, they will inquire about it which opens the door for the opportunity to share Jesus unashamedly to them.

You hold the power of the Lord in your life, and that power will save and transform their lives! Think about your friends, family, and the people around you that are in need. You have the power to share the Good News with them on a daily basis. Sharing Jesus with someone starts with your behavior reflecting your beliefs, so turn the cover of your life open for someone to read about Jesus!!

What did the Holy Spirit's evaluation of your heart show?

Ask for the Lord’s help in that area.

Who is on your heart today to share Jesus with?

Walk with the King...
Nikki

OUR HELPER

“THEN I WILL ASK THE FATHER TO SEND
YOU THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO WILL HELP
YOU AND ALWAYS BE WITH YOU.”
- JOHN 14:16

In this verse, Jesus was telling His disciples that when He returned to Heaven, they would not be left alone. Jesus told them that He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to help them. When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost (See Acts 2), He spoke through Peter to the crowd who was there. He told them that those who would repent and be baptized in the Name of Jesus would receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was for those believers and their children, and for future believers to come. (See Acts 2:38-39). Isn't it good to know that wherever we go, or whatever we do, we have a Helper and Strengtheners with us and as believers, living in us? There is never a place or situation that we will be in where the Holy Spirit is not there with us. He is not just sitting by our side doing nothing. He is comforting, empowering, teaching, and guiding us. Here are just some of the things the Holy Spirit is ready and available to help us with:

- He will help us to not be fearful or be timid (2 Timothy 1:7)
- He will give us power, love, and self control (2 Timothy 1:7)
- He will give us the ability to witness to others (Acts 1:8)
- He will warn us of upcoming danger and harm (Acts 20:23)
- He will give us comfort and peace (John 14:16)
- He will tell us what will happen in the future (John 16:13)
- He will teach us and remind us of what we've been taught (John 14:26)
- He will guide us into the truth (John 16:13)
- He will tell us when something is not of God (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- He will help us with our weaknesses and help us to pray (Romans 8:26)

Take time throughout the day to listen for the voice and prompting of the Holy Spirit. We should never have to say, “I don't know what to do” when we can say, “Holy Spirit, help!”

Be salt and light,
Miss Dawn

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

“LET US HOLD TIGHTLY WITHOUT WAVERING
TO THE HOPE WE AFFIRM, FOR GOD CAN BE
TRUSTED TO KEEP HIS PROMISE.”
- HEBREWS 10:23

ADDITIONAL READING: PSALM 91

God is calling us to stop leaning on our own understanding, which is our version of the way we think He should lead our lives. Instead, He is asking us, “Will you trust Me?” The invitation is to the complete surrender of allowing Him to work His Plan – carrying out His way in our lives.

The Hebrew word “Korban” is translated “sacrifice” in the Bible, which simply means “to draw near.” The safest but sometimes most uncomfortable place on earth is right in the middle of His plans for you. Sometimes He does His most miraculous work in the middle of our greatest fear.

Will you trust Him with your disappointments? Your fears? Your struggles? Your life? It’s not always easy, but I have discovered that yes, I can trust Him. He is always there. He always loves me. He carries me and never leaves me. He comforts me and encourages me to keep my eyes on Him.

A great man of God once said, “Dare to trust God.”

Confession for today: “Father, in the name of Jesus, I ask you to help me in my times of trusting and obeying, to move aside my thoughts and allow You, Your Word, and Your Holy Spirit and His way of operating to move in my life. I will obey Him immediately and whole heartedly so I can walk closely with you and enjoy the benefits of my obedience. AMEN.”

Stay Connected
Mr. George

FEAR CAN FRUSTRATE

“FOR GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF
FEAR, TIMIDITY AND ANXIETY, BUT OF POWER,
LOVE, AND SELF-DISCIPLINE.”
- 2 TIMOTHY 1:7

ADDITIONAL READING: JUDGES 6

Fear, which is a root word of anxiety, is running ramped in this world. Over 50% of Americans are now considered to have some sort of mental ailment and another 70% of those Americans are medicated regularly to battle fear and anxiety. It is not by chance that the Bible, over 80 times throughout its scriptures, mentions the term “fear not.” God knows all things and knows that fear and anxiety can not only frustrate you in your walk of life, but it can hinder you.

You see in the scripture above that when you are fearful, you will lose power, love, and self-discipline or self-control. These are key components to being successful in our spiritual walks as Christians! I feel that the lack of faith births fear, and if you truly trust in God for all things, no matter what, then you won’t fear because faith will push out fear!

Now there are multiple forms of fear, one could be fear of something specific like the dark or heights. These phobias are usually triggered by past experiences that are not pleasing to you. Then there is fear of the future, fear of the unknown, you name it. No matter what form of the enemy’s tactic, speak to it in the name of Jesus and send it back to where it came from.

Fear has no place in your body, mind or Spirit!

Another word for fear could be worry, and the Word says don't worry!

Matthew 34 says, "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself." This world is moving a million miles a second, so take each day one at a time. Do devotions and conquer each day, for the day has enough trouble of its own. I want to encourage you to have the opposite of fear and anxiety; have faith! Faith that God will take care of you this day. Faith that God has your back and has nothing but the best interest for you, all you must do is have Faith not Fear!

Thoughts: Do you have anxiety, fear or worry.... Pray these strongholds off of your life and find God's peace in Faith!

God is good... all the time... all the time...

Joey

GET OUT FROM UNDER

“YOU, DEAR CHILDREN, ARE FROM GOD AND HAVE OVERCOME THEM, BECAUSE THE ONE WHO IS IN YOU IS GREATER THAN THE ONE WHO IS IN THE WORLD.”

- 1 JOHN 4:4

“Under the circumstances...” “I suppose I’m doing pretty well under the circumstances.” Have you ever caught yourself saying that?

If you have ever said something like that, I want you to kick those words right out of your vocabulary! Because you are a child of God, you have no business living your life “under” your circumstances. You don’t have any business letting problems and situations rule over you.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus – the One who is in you – ruined satan’s kingdom. Through His death on the Cross, He legally entered hell and stripped satan of everything. He took his authority; He took all of his armor. He bound satan, spoiled his kingdom and triumphed over all of his power. Then Jesus turned around and gave that power, authority and armor to you. Praise God!

Remember that! Because He lives in you, you have the victory. You never have to live “under the circumstances” again!

Confession for today: “I am of God and have overcome the world. For He Who is in me is greater than he who is in the world” (1John 4:4).

*Something George and I pray everyday: “God’s favor goes before us, opening doors no man can shut, changing rules, regulations and policies on our behalf when necessary.”

I can tell you that so many times God has worked on our behalf and I know He will do it for you. Be blessed!!

Hugs
Miss Lois

DON'T RUN AHEAD

“ANYONE WHO RUNS AHEAD OF GOD AND DOES NOT ABIDE IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST (WHO IS NOT CONTENT WITH WHAT HE HAS BEEN TAUGHT) DOES NOT HAVE GOD...”

- 2 JOHN 1:9

There are so many things in this world that could distract us out of the simple and profound Gospel of Jesus Christ. The charge to love one another as you love yourself, and to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul and with all of our strength and mind (Luke 10:27) is one that is so clear, yet can and should affect every dimension of our lives. It requires a soul that is surrendered and submitted to the love of God in action both internally and externally. We are called to love ourselves before we can show God's love to others. Do you love yourself?

From the launching pad of love, and seeing yourself as a son or daughter of the King, comes privilege. This privilege impacts us personally and relationally. From a place of spiritual privilege should come a committed and daily devotional life and the growth and usage of the fruit of the spirit in increasing measure, thereby enriching our God-given relationships and associations for God's glory. So if your answer to the above question is a “no,” “I don't think so,” or “not really,” it's time to renew your mind with how God sees you. To omit this from your perspective is to run and remain outside of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Open the Word and ask the Lord to speak to you about your value, uniqueness, and worth in the Kingdom and in your life in the here and now! The Holy Spirit said to me once, “no one else can play the song in the orchestra of life that I've written on your heart.”

With all of the input going on around us, we are always acquiring something. Today, let us attain a holy perspective of you! Remember, there is nothing to be gained outside of the Gospel. Sometimes our flesh wants to run ahead or outside of His vision and timing for our lives. Sit, wait, pray, and draw purpose and God-given direction out of the deep waters in you (Proverbs 20:5).

Your sister in Christ,
Niki

YOU HAVE THE VICTORY

“BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHO GIVES US THE
VICTORY - MAKING US CONQUERORS THROUGH
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”
- 1 CORINTHIANS 15:57

ADDITIONAL READING: ROMANS 8:29-39

Conquerors, that’s what the Bible says we are. Let the reality of that sink in and spend some time thinking about what it really means.

The dictionary says that victory means: “final and complete supremacy or superiority in battle or war, success in any contest or struggle involving the defeat of an opponent or the overcoming of obstacles.”

To conquer means: “to get the better of in competition or struggle, to master, suppress, prevail over, overwhelm, to gain superiority, to subdue, to vanquish, to crush, to defeat.”

Situations can sometimes look so challenging, you might be tempted to think they are hopeless or you’ll never be able to overcome them. But that’s not what Almighty God says about you. His power and ability to overcome everything the devil tries to throw at you lives in you. The Holy Spirit is the Great One, whose power and ability will cause you to triumph every time (2 Corinthians 2:14).

In God, no situation is helpless because of His Anointing. The Anointing is the very dunamis, the mighty power of God, at work in you and your situation, but you must believe it. You have to trust Him to help you rather than trying everything you know to do, to turn the situation around yourself. Jesus said, “Have faith in God” (Mark 11:22) or have the God kind of faith!

Stay Connected
Mr. George

NO CARES NO WORRIES

“DO NOT BE ANXIOUS OR WORRIED ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERYTHING [EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE AND SITUATION] BY PRAYER AND PETITION WITH THANKSGIVING, CONTINUE TO MAKE YOUR [SPECIFIC] REQUESTS KNOWN TO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD [THAT PEACE WHICH REASSURES THE HEART, THAT PEACE] WHICH TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING, [THAT PEACE WHICH] STANDS GUARD OVER YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS [IS YOURS].”

- PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

According to Merriam-Webster, anxious can be defined as: characterized by extreme uneasiness of mind or brooding fear about some contingency; worried.

Often times, when we are in a place that causes us worry or anxiety, we let our emotions take over, rather than allowing God to take over. When we choose to be anxious instead of praying, we are essentially saying that we don't trust God to protect us, guide us, or fulfill His promises. It is important that we trust God to do what's best for us. Here are four easy tips to help us Trust in God, even when we're feeling anxious.

Trust in God's understanding, not your own. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in and rely confidently on the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know and acknowledge and recognize Him, and He will make your paths straight and smooth [removing obstacles that block your way].”

Run to the throne of grace. Hebrews 4:16 says, “Therefore let us [with privilege] approach the throne of grace [that is, the throne of God's gracious favor] with confidence and without fear, so that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find [His amazing] grace to help in time of need [an appropriate blessing, coming just at the right moment].”

Remember who God was and is. Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ is [eternally changeless, always] the same yesterday and today and forever.”

Remember the qualities of God. Micah 7:18-19 says, “Who is a God like You, who forgives wickedness and passes over the rebellious acts of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He [constantly] delights in mercy and loving-kindness. He shall again have compassion on us; He will subdue and tread underfoot our wickedness [destroying sin’s power]. Yes, You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.”

Confession for today: “Lord, I give you all of my cares, worries, and doubts because I know you care for me. God promises to be my perfect peace. You assure me You are constantly with me, strengthening and supporting me. I pray that God will help me to keep my eyes and focus on You, not on the circumstances surrounding me. Lord, help me choose not to worry, but instead to pray, allowing Your Spirit to guard my heart and mind in You.”

Love and Nuggs,
Amanda

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH (PART 2)

“YET A TIME IS COMING AND HAS NOW COME
WHEN THE TRUE WORSHIPERS WILL WORSHIP
THE FATHER IN THE SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH, FOR
THEY ARE THE KIND OF WORSHIPERS THE
FATHER SEEKS. GOD IS SPIRIT, AND HIS
WORSHIPERS MUST WORSHIP IN THE SPIRIT
AND IN TRUTH.”
- JOHN 4:23-24

In this passage of Scripture, Jesus was talking to the woman at the well. He was sharing with her who He was and why He was there. It was a moment in which Jesus was able to share with her what it means to truly worship God. Jesus alluded to the fact that He would break the barrier that was set in place as it was prophesied. The position we are in because of the Blood of Jesus is one of freedom. We are able to come into the presence of God at any moment, for any reason, and for any length of time. We are not limited to a time constraint or required to worship in a specific location. The only stipulation that we have is the posture of our heart. Through this conversation Jesus had with the woman at the well, we see what God is looking for. He wants His people to worship in Spirit and in truth.

Spirit in this passage refers to the Holy Spirit, and when we are worshipping, the spiritual part of us should be open and influenced by the Holy Spirit. Truth is referring to a state of mind that is free from pretense, falsehoods, or deceit. Worship is simply coming into the presence of God just to worship Him. We worship in Spirit and in truth when we bring all that we are into God's presence and glorify Him. God doesn't require that we have a perfect life, He simply wants us to enter His presence with a heart set on Him. That is worshipping in Spirit and in truth. That is what God is looking for from us.

Find peace in His embrace,
Jasmine

SHAME OF SIN NO MORE

“IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.”

- 1 JOHN 1:9

Sin and falling short of the glory of God can take a toll on us as time goes on. Everyone has messed up and fallen short. When we mess up and sin in this life, we have to remember that there is a God who loves us and forgives us when we TRULY repent.

I will be the first to admit that I have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God in multiple ways through my walk with Christ. There was a stretch of time where I didn't "feel" worthy to pray over people or to be used in any way because I felt the things that I did were too detrimental in my own eyes. To myself, and to most people who are dealing with things and struggling, the situation or issue seems too big or the sin we are guilty of is too "bad" to come back from. When this lie of Satan arrives in your mind, it can bring on a lot of sin and shame. This guilt starts to press in, and the devil becomes happy because during these states of shame and guilt, we are stagnant in use for God.

I am here to tell you that God is a forgiving God, and He sent His son down to the filthy world just to be the sacrificial lamb for us. He did this so when we fall short and sin, we can be forgiven and be free mentally, emotionally, and most importantly spiritually.

You see there are two parts to forgiveness - for myself I believed whole heartedly that Jesus forgave me and that I would one day be with Him in Heaven as I truly repented and turned my ways. But the second part was to forgive myself, something that I struggled with for almost a year. It kept me in a bad place and I couldn't enter in to worship at times. I was not allowing myself to be used. I leaned on the scripture in 2 Corinthians that states, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come, the old has gone, the new is here!"

I had to set in my mind and spirit that I was a new creature, that the old way of thinking and the old sin, shame, and guilt were tossed away, and I was made brand new again by Christ! I eventually found revelation in this and now know that I am a new creature for Christ!

Thoughts: Maybe you have sinned in the past and you feel that you don't think you could forgive yourself or even that Jesus wouldn't be able to forgive you.... Know this: nothing is too BIG for God, nothing! Ask for forgiveness and turn to Him and He will be there to comfort you!

God is good... all the time... all the time...

Joey

CAN I HAVE YOUR OPINION, PLEASE?

**“THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AND THE PRIESTS AND
THE LEVITES HAVE NOT SEPARATED
THEMSELVES FROM THE PEOPLES OF THE
LANDS WITH THEIR ABOMINATIONS...”**

- EZRA 9:7

**“...AND THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO PLAY THE
HARLOT WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF MOAB, WHO
INVITED THE [ISRAELITES] TO THE SACRIFICES
OF THEIR GODS, AND [THEY] ATE AND BOWED
DOWN TO MOAB’S GODS.”**

- NUMBERS 25:1, 2

How many people in your life do you allow to give you advice? Who are these people, and why do you trust them specifically? Are they friends? Are they family members?

The Israelites had a tendency to allow ungodly people to dwell among them and give them advice or make suggestions. They fell victim to these suggestions and started pursuing ungodly things. But how in the world did these people end up among them in the first place? In the two references above, they were neighboring nations to Israel who worshiped their own foreign gods. The Israelites eventually began intermingling with them, listening to their suggestions, and then they slowly stopped pursuing life God's way in order to chase after their false gods and self-invented lifestyles. They reasoned their way out of living under God's wisdom.

It's time to identify people in your life that are still under the rule of another kingdom. So many times believers trap themselves in friendships, thinking it's the only way to get that person saved, but instead of that friend converting to Christ, the believer ends up adopting part of that friend's ungodly way of life, which dilutes the believer's life.

Maybe you befriended some unsaved people at a young age, and you have a sense of trust with them because you've known them for so long.

But there's a good chance their advice will send you on wild goose chases. Before you realize it, you're after something that God did not place before you, utilizing methods that drain all your resources long before you're satisfied with the results. This is exactly the opposite of pursuing things God's way. His way, while not always easy, energizes you and keeps your soul at peace.

Examine your relationships! If ungodly people you trust are influencing you more than you're influencing them, it may be a good idea to take a step back or spend less time with them. Give it some thought and talk to God about it in your prayer time with Him today.

Pursue your purpose in Him,
Anthony B.

S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (PART 3)

**SALVATION-TRUST-APPLICATION-NON-COMPROMISING-
DISCIPLE-ANOINTING-RESPONSIBILITY-DAUNTLESS**

READ 2 PETER 1:1-12

**V.10: “FOR THIS REASON, BELOVED ONES, BE EAGER TO
CONFIRM AND VALIDATE THAT GOD HAS INVITED YOU
TO SALVATION AND CLAIMED YOU AS HIS OWN. IF YOU
DO THESE THINGS, YOU WILL NEVER STUMBLE.”**

**”BUT PROVE YOURSELVES DOERS OF THE WORD
[ACTIVELY AND CONTINUALLY OBEYING GOD’S
PRECEPTS], AND NOT MERELY LISTENERS [WHO HEAR
THE WORD BUT FAIL TO INTERNALIZE ITS MEANING],
DELUDING YOURSELVES [BY UNSOUND REASONING
CONTRARY TO THE TRUTH].”**

- JAMES 1:22

In our acronym for STANDARD today we are focused on the A - application. Our two verses for today talk to us about being doers of what we have learned, what we have heard, and what we see in the Word. Application is taking something and putting it to use. Think for a moment about the application of paint.

There are correct steps for applying paint to get the desired result. First you see an area in need of change; next you prepare that area by sanding or filling holes or maybe taping off a section. Following that, you can set up the supplies, brushes or rollers, a paint stirrer, etc... then you can start to put the paint on the applicator transferring paint to the space desired. Application is a process of putting to use what you have, so let's think of this application in spiritual terms now.

We have the Word of God to apply to our lives that will transform us! We start this application process by John 15:5 which talks about staying joined to the Vine. We seek after the Lord for what we have need of, we take a scripture verse the Word of Life and we receive, decree it and act on it! It's the step of acting on it that is essential. Remember from our salvation devotional that our behavior should mirror our beliefs so it is time to put it all into action. We choose to obey the truth we've heard, and then we become doers of the Word, not just hearers.

Application of God’s Word to your daily life will get easier the more you do it. The more you practice a skill, the easier it becomes and the more proficient at it you are. Same with being skillful in the Word; you will not have to read the verse, it will just come from your memory and that will always be your first response without needing to think about it.

Where can you apply a new coat of the Word to in your life?

What scripture will you put on?

Walk with the King...
Nikki

KEEP PADDLING UPSTREAM

**“SET A GUARD OVER MY MOUTH, O LORD; KEEP
WATCH OVER THE DOOR OF MY LIPS.”**

- PSALM 141:3

Let me ask you a question, do you really believe that you need to guard your mouth? Most Christians don't, and you can tell that just by listening to what they say. They will talk about being broke, being sick, or not succeeding in life, and the more they talk about the problems the worse the problems get. But if you try to tell them they are broke, sick or lacking because that is what they believed and spoke out of their mouth, they look at you like you have lost your mind.

Now, if you dig into the Bible and find out what it has to say, you would realize that the words we speak have a tremendous impact on our lives. If you have made Jesus your Lord, you have already experienced the most powerful example of that. You believed with your heart and said that Jesus is your Lord, and you changed the course of your life. You know just how powerful your words are!

If you are like me, you may still find that speaking faith-filled words all the time is tough to do. That's because the world around you is in a negative flow. Like a rushing river, it's always pulling at you, trying to get you to flow with it. Living by faith and speaking faith-filled words is like trying to paddle upstream. You can do it - but it's a lot of work. If you relax a little bit, you will just start drifting right back down the river of negative speaking.

Make a decision right now to watch what you say. Determine to fill your mouth with God's words and everything you say will take you a little further upstream!

Confession for today: "I allow the Lord to set a guard over my mouth and keep a watch over the door of my lips" (Psalm 141:3).

Hugs

Miss Lois

S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (PART 4)

SALVATION-TRUST-APPLICATION-NON-COMPROMISING-
DISCIPLE-ANOINTING-RESPONSIBILITY-DAUNTLESS

“I PRAY THAT THE GOD WHO GIVES HOPE WILL FILL
YOU WITH MUCH JOY AND PEACE AS YOU TRUST IN
HIM. THEN YOU WILL HAVE MORE AND MORE HOPE,
AND IT WILL FLOW OUT OF YOU BY THE POWER OF
THE HOLY SPIRIT.”
- ROMANS 15:13

In our acronym STANDARD today, we are focused on the T-TRUST.

So much is gained as we put our trust in all God is! In Romans 15:13, we see joy and peace fill us as we trust the Lord, which creates hope in our hearts. We all can use more peace, joy and hope which increases through trust!! Trust, by definition, is reliance on the integrity, strength and ability of person or thing; confidence. For us, trust is all our confidence in the strength, ability and integrity of who God is! The enemy wants to cause broken trust in our experience with people or circumstances, and have that broken trust reflect God’s credibility. This is deception!! The enemy knows that distrust causes distance, and distance from God is danger. If we don’t trust His Word and if we become uncertain in what we believe, that causes us to lose our confidence in who we are in Jesus. When this happens, it pulls us away and sways us from our walk with the Lord! I will say that again; distrust causes distance and distance is danger! Hebrews 10:35 says, “don’t throw away this confidence/trust in the Lord...”

Trust is built by stepping out in faith, so think of a trust fall with a friend. As you get closer and closer to the Lord (through these daily devotion times, praise and worship, and being in church), the closer you get, the easier it is to lean on Him. As you start to trust Him, you will find out He is the only One who will never let you fall!

What area of your life are you unshakeable in your trust with the Lord?

What area can you close the gap and lean on the Lord more?

Walk with the King...
Nikki

SEPARATION OR SALVATION?

“YOUR WICKEDNESS HAS TURNED THESE [BLESSINGS] AWAY, AND YOUR SINS HAVE WITHHELD GOOD [HARVESTS] FROM YOU.”
- JEREMIAH 5:25

“BEHOLD, THE LORD’S HAND IS NOT SO SHORT THAT IT CANNOT SAVE, NOR HIS EAR SO IMPAIRED THAT IT CANNOT HEAR. BUT YOUR WICKEDNESS HAS SEPARATED YOU FROM YOUR GOD, AND YOUR SINS HAVE HIDDEN HIS FACE FROM YOU SO THAT HE DOES NOT HEAR.”
- ISAIAH 59:1-2

What is sin? Sin is anything in our lives that would separate us from God. What is it that we each allow to come between us and loving fellowship with our Heavenly Father? This is a question that we should ask ourselves often as we read the Word daily, growing in our knowledge and understanding of what constitutes ‘sin’ and needs to be removed from our lives.

We need to consistently check our life’s heading and course, question our own motives, realign our thoughts and conduct so that they are in harmony with the will of God. If we decide to ignore a pursuit of righteousness and instead embrace wickedness, we are intentionally choosing to turn away from God, cutting ourselves off from every good thing He would want to bless us with in life!

It would be as if the mailman arrives at our house to deliver a special package sent to us by God, but he finds our mailbox is gone, our welcome mat says ‘Go Away,’ and our home is boarded up tight! When we choose disobedience over obedience, compromise over righteous living, slavery to sin over serving God with devotion, we are rejecting God’s protection, provision, purpose, peace, and blessing for our lives.

Examine yourself today and make every effort to turn toward God in loving appreciation of your salvation from separation, sin, and death!

Fight the good fight of faith!
Jamie

TWO KINDS OF EASY

“ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE. FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT. BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT.”

- MATTHEW 7:13,14

You’ve probably heard that pursuing the wide path is considered easier than following Christ. You also may have heard that doing things God’s way is also easier in its own way. This is not some Christian contradiction. Let’s take a closer look at the two.

The wide path is easier in the beginning, but more damaging in the end. It’s an in-your-face solution to a problem or desire you have. You might even call it an instinctual solution, but only because it requires little thought. For example, guy and girl each think the other is cute. Guy/girl asks the other out. Guy and girl end up in a relationship. Guy and girl break up. Guy and girl repeat the cycle multiple times with other people or with each other again. A few years down the wide road, after guy and girl are scarred from all those relationships, each falls in love with yet another person, carrying all that baggage into a not-so-happy marriage. The wide path is the thing that everyone else is doing because everyone else is doing it. Some might say, “It’s just a part of life.” On the wide path you can’t help but accumulate garbage.

The narrow path is perhaps a bit harder. It’s the narrow path because you don’t always find it right away, as if it’s buried behind the deepest section of some rainforest in the middle of nowhere. It’s watching everyone else, apparently way happier than you as they date around. The narrow path is waiting a little longer for the right spouse because you trust God more than your own sense and reason. You wait through the loneliness, but then you finally meet the spouse that God thoughtfully crafted just for you. You have a deeper appreciation for the relationship, because you’ve longed for it for so long. Your marriage is more fruitful and fulfilling because you don’t have any baggage from past relationships. The narrow path is God’s best for your life. It makes you think, “This is too good to be true,” but it really is true and you don’t have to look back and wonder if you made the right decision. In the long run it is easier because you’re not carrying burdens of the past. Pursue the narrow path God has for you, no matter what it takes. Confess to Him that you trust the plans He has for your life, because God always has a perfect plan. Always.

PERFECT PEACE

**“YOU WILL KEEP IN PERFECT PEACE THOSE
WHOSE MINDS ARE STEADFAST, BECAUSE THEY
TRUST IN YOU.”
- ISAIAH 26:3**

**ADDITIONAL READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 10:5,
PROVERBS 4:23, PHILIPPIANS 4:7**

This verse tells us that when we keep our thoughts focused on trusting in God, He will give us PERFECT PEACE.

Did you know that we have the ability to keep our thoughts on whatever we decide to think about? No one can make us think something unless we accept that thought. We are in charge of the thoughts we allow ourselves to think. The Bible says we can take our thoughts captive and make them obey. (See 2 Corinthians 10:5).

We should be careful about what we think about! We should never let the devil steal our perfect peace by trying to make us think wrong thoughts. We can use this verse to take wrong thoughts captive by saying, “I have perfect peace because I trust in God!”

When we do, we’ll keep wrong thoughts out and God’s peace in.

Be salt and light,
Miss Dawn

DIRECT REVELATION

**“FOR INDEED I DID NOT RECEIVE IT FROM MAN,
NOR WAS I TAUGHT IT, BUT IT CAME TO ME
THROUGH A DIRECT REVELATION GIVEN BY
JESUS CHRIST.”
- GALATIANS 1:12**

When it comes to praying for the salvation of other people, this scripture boosts my faith and gives me so much hope. In your own life, I am sure that there are those that have been on the receiving end of a Word of Truth you have shared, or spiritual encouragement that has its basis in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Then, on the outside, there is no change, maybe not even an acknowledgement of what you said. Your heart is to see salvation spring up in this person's heart, and your spirit longs to see them walking in the full knowledge of Jesus. You know that if he/she picks up the revelation of the freedom of the cross, everything would change for them. But, it just doesn't seem to be clicking.

Rejoice over the seeds you are planting, because the process does not stop there. First Corinthians 3:6 says, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God all the while was making it grow and gave the increase.”

You are a link to salvation for this person, whether it takes place in prayer with you, or sometime down the road. You may not see the fruit, but you are vital!

God unveiled and revealed Himself to Paul (then Saul) directly when He saw fit and was pleased (v. 15 and 16). Saul zealously persecuted the church and actually tried to destroy it and make havoc of it (v. 13). But at a time designated by the Lord, God unveiled His Son within Saul so that God might use him to proclaim Christ among the Gentiles and spread the glad tidings of the Gospel (v. 16).

A revelation is something disclosed that was not formerly realized. God discloses Himself and His will to His people. We hear stories often of The Lord making Himself known to someone in a jail cell, in a remote location, in the night when they are alone, in dreams, etc. We need to have faith that says, Lord, You revealed Yourself to Paul by direct revelation, no one taught him or told him. That is in your nature, you do not change, so I believe You still disclose the Gospel directly to people as it is pleasing and fit for You.

Verses 22–24 talk about how people had heard that the man who was persecuting the church was converted and proclaiming faith in Jesus, but did not know him by sight.

“And they glorified God as the Author and Source of what had taken place in me.”

Let’s remember, we are delivery people of the Truth, and are directly connected to the Author and Source. He gets the glory for every good work! Hallelujah!

Your sister in Christ,
Niki

PERSEVERANCE FOR YOUR PURPOSE

“YOU WILL EAT THE FRUIT OF YOUR LABOR;
BLESSINGS AND PROSPERITY WILL BE YOURS.”
- PSALM 128:2

The above scripture is a promise, something we can guarantee will happen when we labor for the things God places in our lives. Oftentimes we think that following God’s purpose means that He is simply going to lay things in front of us that we do not have to work for. But this scripture clearly tells us that we can eat the fruit of our labor only if we first labored. Success takes work, it takes time, and it takes patience. While we are laboring in whatever God has us doing, we are learning, growing, contributing – this is what allows God to pour out His blessing and His prosperity upon us.

We cannot lose faith during this laboring either. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, “there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” This means that we need to patiently wait for each season to end before the next one can begin. We have to envision God moving the chess pieces in our lives to help create strategic moves for us.

In order to labor after what God has for us and to stay the course, we need peace. Peace doesn’t mean, “I’m good now that everything worked out.” Peace means, “I am trusting that God will work it all out for me.” We cannot live from one high to the next, sinking deeper into lows when we do not see things going our way. We have to go back to Psalm 128:2 and know that as we labor, God is preparing our blessings for us and we can walk in peace and steadiness knowing that He works everything out for our good!

Confession for Today: “God, thank you for Your Word that is full of promises to sustain me. I thank you Lord that You have a perfect purpose for me, and that as I labor, You are preparing the next course of action and the blessings to follow. I thank you Lord that I have favor going before me as a shield. I will rest in the peace of knowing that You will never let me down, in Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Believing with you,
Yvonne

OUR IDENTITY IS IN CHRIST

“THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION. THE OLD HAS PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, THE NEW HAS COME.”

- 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Are we publicly, visibly, and clearly identified with God and His word? Whoever or whatever you get your identity from is what you will defend, promote, and protect. God wants us to get our identity from Him!

Our identity is in Jesus Christ: Who we are in Him and Who He is in us!

Confess these verses to remind yourself who you are in Jesus!

Acts 17:28: You live and move and have your being in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:21: You are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:5: You are enriched (have knowledge) through Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:30: You have righteousness, holiness and redemption in Jesus.

1 Corinthians 8:6: You live for Jesus.

Colossians 1:16: You have been created by God and for God.

Ephesians 1:5: You are loved into sonship through Jesus.

Ephesians 5:8: You are no longer in darkness.

Ephesians 6:10: You are strong in Jesus.

Philippians 4:19: You have all your needs met in Jesus.

Colossians 2:10: You have fullness of life in Jesus.

Colossians 3:3: You are hidden with Christ.

Confession for today: “Holy Spirit, give me the ability to never have any identity with anything that is of this world, but rather help me always have my identity in Christ.”

Seek Him First!

Paulie

S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (PART 5)

**SALVATION-TRUST-APPLICATION-NON-COMPROMISING-
DISCIPLE-ANOINTING-RESPONSIBILITY-DAUNTLESS**

**“MY CHILD, WHEN THE LORD GOD SPEAKS TO YOU,
NEVER TAKE HIS WORDS LIGHTLY, AND NEVER BE
UPSET WHEN HE CORRECTS YOU. FOR THE FATHER’S
DISCIPLINE COMES ONLY FROM HIS PASSIONATE LOVE
AND PLEASURE FOR YOU. EVEN WHEN IT SEEMS LIKE
HIS CORRECTION IS HARSH, IT’S STILL BETTER THAN
ANY FATHER ON EARTH GIVES TO HIS CHILD.”
- PROVERBS 3:11-12**

The next letters in our acronym of STANDARD are N & D: non-compromising and disciple. In order to be a disciple, you will need to live a non-compromising Christian walk. You can do this as you heed the discipline of your Heavenly Father. Looking at the meaning of the word compromise will give greater understanding of what it means to be non-compromising. To compromise is to walk the middle ground and to make adjustments. As you choose to live a non-compromising Christian life, as one of His disciples, you will be determined not to bargain in your beliefs and not to make adjustments to the gage of godliness. Understand there is no middle ground when it comes to sin. Gratefully, this is attainable because the Lord loves us deeply enough to discipline us. His discipline is what keeps us in that heart centered place of walking uprightly.

Hebrews 12:11: "Now all discipline seems to be more pain than pleasure at the time, yet later it will produce a transformation of character, bringing a harvest of righteousness and peace to those who yield to it." Let's appreciate the way this verse validates that no one likes discipline, but says that if we allow God to discipline us, we will benefit greatly because of it! As we do we will walk, talk, act, and think like Jesus, being an imitator of Him, as one of His disciples. The question today is, what area in your life do you find compromise in? Is it your words - maybe gossip, lying or cutting words? We have a heart-mouth connection, meaning what is in our hearts will come out of our mouths! Are you finding the Lord is showing you that purity is an area you need discipline in, or is there an unhealed hurt that has stemmed to anger? Ask the Lord to search your heart and show you; as you desire to be more like Him, live by the STANDARD of the Word!

Walk with the King...

Nikki

YOU ARE LOVED

“FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.”

- JOHN 3:16

This scripture is probably a familiar one for you, especially if you grew up in church. It is one of the first scriptures I memorized, and as I got older I realized I never took the time to grasp what it truly meant. There are so many things like that in the life - of someone who has heard the same scriptures and stories basically from birth. You can start to feel desensitized to the power of these words.

I don't know about you, but there are days in my life where I don't feel like someone who was worth dying for. I don't always feel worthy of the free gift of love that Christ offers me every day. However, He did and does love me. God's love for me is higher than any mistake, greater than any negative word, and stronger than any worldly love. God loves me. He loves you. This love is personal; it isn't a generic memory verse that all children are required to learn to graduate Sunday school. It is a love that reaches you right where you are today. It is a love that sees you in this very moment. It is a love that covers you through every moment of your life. That great love is what is described in this scripture that we have heard a thousand times. Let it become personal to you today.

Spend some time thinking about what this scripture about God's love means to you. Write down your thoughts in a place that you can look back and always remember that you are loved.

Find peace in His embrace,
Jasmine

S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (PART 6)

**SALVATION-TRUST-APPLICATION-NON-COMPROMISING-
DISCIPLE-ANOINTING-RESPONSIBILITY-DAUNTLESS**

**“BUT YOU HAVE AN ANOINTING FROM THE HOLY
ONE...”**

- 1 JOHN 2:20

Our next letters in our acronym are A for Anointing and R for Responsibility. You are anointed, you have been anointed, and you have the anointing of God in you! Now you may be saying, “what does that mean for me today?”

Maybe you think that is only for the pastors, when they are in church and praying for people. The anointing came when we received Jesus as our Savior, and this anointing that is in you and on you is for a purpose and a reason.

Read these next scriptures:

Luke 2:25-27: The Holy Spirit was on Simon just as the Holy Spirit is on you for the purpose of revealing to you God’s will and moving you to be at the right place at the right time.

Luke 4:18: We learn the Spirit of the Lord is upon us and has equipped us to do great things!

Acts 1:8: The Promise that comes with the filling of the Holy Spirit is that you shall receive power and you shall be given power, ability, efficiency, and might!

Acts 10:38: In this same anointing that was on Jesus with the Holy Spirit, and with strength and ability and power, He went about “doing” good...You can also go about and “do good.”

This means for YOU - that His anointing has effects. It equips us, enlightens us, and energizes us!! You are anointed! You are enabled to do the work of the Lord in your circle of influence. The gift of the anointing is to be used; this is your part, taking the responsibility of what you have been given and using it. Through His anointing, you are enabled to do what you cannot do on your own.

What do you need the anointing to accomplish today?

To witness: boldness, right words, opportunity

To walk in favor: steps of the righteous ordered by the Lord, listen to the Holy Spirit's voice

To overcome temptation: God's holiness is in you, which is the knowledge of right and wrong - it is your way out

Confession for today: "Thank you Lord for Your anointing on my life. You have given me a responsibility with the power to speak the right words to the right people. I am energized to do the good works that You have assigned for me to accomplish today. With the anointing from Above, I know Your will for this day. In Jesus Name, I will complete each task You have for me to do with efficiency and might, Amen!"

Walk with the King...

Nikki

MOVE WITH A PURPOSE

“A TRUE ATHLETE WILL BE DISCIPLINED IN EVERY RESPECT, PRACTICING CONSTANT SELF-CONTROL IN ORDER TO WIN A LAUREL WREATH THAT QUICKLY WITHERS. BUT WE RUN OUR RACE TO WIN A VICTOR’S CROWN THAT WILL LAST FOREVER. FOR THAT REASON, I DON’T RUN JUST FOR EXERCISE OR BOX LIKE ONE THROWING AIMLESS PUNCHES, BUT I TRAIN LIKE A CHAMPION ATHLETE. I SUBDUE MY BODY AND GET IT UNDER MY CONTROL, SO THAT AFTER PREACHING THE GOOD NEWS TO OTHERS I MYSELF WON’T BE DISQUALIFIED.”

- 1 CORINTHIANS 9:25-27

Being a human on this planet, it is often hard not to be driven by your earthly purpose. If you know what your purpose is, then you are seemingly happy. If you don't, then you feel lost. If your purpose seems far away, you may feel complacent, or if it is approaching fast you may feel overwhelmed. Those unsure about their purpose, or who feel like they don't have one at all, may just feel like giving up and kind of wander through life never feeling satisfied. 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 says that we are not to just wander through our lives for the sake of living, but we should discipline ourselves and train like a champion athlete. But how do we train for a purpose not yet found? This goes back to the fact that we are focused on our earthly purpose rather than our heavenly purpose. Our heavenly purpose is found in Jesus and supersedes our earthly purpose. God gifts us with an earthly purpose so that we may use it to fulfill our heavenly purpose through Him. We need to train ourselves to focus on our heavenly purpose so that we are not emotionally entangled to our earthly one. When in training in the military, there were many times when we would be hiking up the sides of mountains with loads of gear on our backs. Normally, about half way through the hike, we would all start to get tired and we would start to slouch and look at the ground as we walked. Being bent over in that position and looking down instead of forward slowed our pace quite a bit, and it was not long until we would hear, "Lift your heads up, look where you are going, move with a purpose." As it says in 1 Corinthians, we have to keep our bodies and our minds under control with God's Word so that we can be used to fulfill God's purpose. I encourage you today, lift up your heads, look into God's Word to see where He is taking you. Set your sights on Him and move with a purpose.

Stay Strong and Carry On,
Carrington

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

“FOR THE MESSAGE ABOUT THE CROSS IS
FOOLISHNESS TO THOSE WHO ARE PERISHING, BUT TO
US WHO ARE BEING SAVED IT IS THE POWER OF GOD.”
- 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18

I have a question to pose to you about the cross. Does the cross represent foolishness, or is it the power of God in your life?

As we read above in 1 Corinthians 1:18, does the message of the cross mean anything to you when you think about it, or is it just a medallion that you see on peoples necklaces or on famous statues? If the meaning of the cross does not cause you to realize how important it should be in your life, then you are a fool that is just perishing away like the rest of this dying world. The cross should always bring to your remembrance what price Jesus paid for you to have abundant life here on earth and everlasting life when we go to heaven. Never forget what He carried in your place as He died on that cross for you.

Galatians 3:13 says, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree...”, which means He has carried all our sickness, worry, fear, and anything else we may struggle with in life and bore it all for us on the cross. Don't let the world turn you into a fool and forget all that was accomplished that day when Jesus died on the cross. Instead, allow the cross to become the very power of God that will save you from hell and help you succeed in this life each and every day!

Confession for today: “Lord, help me to never forget all that was done for me when Jesus went to the cross on my behalf. Holy Spirit give me the power to stay away from foolish thinking that would cause me to perish, but instead allow me to live a life worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Seek Him First!
Paulie

NEW THINGS

“FORGET THE FORMER THINGS; DO NOT DWELL ON THE PAST. SEE, I AM DOING A NEW THING! NOW IT SPRINGS UP; DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT? I AM MAKING A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS AND STREAMS IN THE WASTELAND.”
- ISAIAH 43:18-19

How many of us feel like we’re stuck in a rut? Like we’re constantly doing the same thing over and over and going nowhere. That’s what it feels like when we are wandering in the wilderness. The wilderness is an empty or pathless area or region. When we are in the wilderness, God wants to make a way for us. But that requires some work on our part too.

First, we have to change our focus by looking at what’s ahead of us instead of behind us. We must forget the former things and stop dwelling on the past.

Second, you have to clarify your focus by discovering what God wants for you, not what we want for ourselves. What do you see when you view your life? Do you see possibilities or problems? Look back at our verse. It says, “I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.”

We have a choice. We can view our past and the problems of our present, or we can focus upon what God wants to do in our lives. We must see our possibilities as God sees them; He is making a way in the desert. God is able to transform the desert areas of our lives into fields of blessing and abundance. God can take a dried up useless life and transform it into a life of purpose and grace.

Lastly, we have to commit ourselves to God’s plan. God has already set into motion a new direction and a new purpose for your life -- will you follow Him? If we refuse God’s plan, if we refuse to follow where God is leading, then we will be doomed to remain captive in our situations.

Love and Nuggs,
Amanda

LET GO AND LET GOD

“THEREFORE I TELL YOU, DO NOT WORRY ABOUT YOUR LIFE, WHAT YOU WILL EAT OR DRINK; OR ABOUT YOUR BODY, WHAT YOU WILL WEAR. IS NOT LIFE MORE THAN FOOD, AND THE BODY MORE THAN CLOTHES? LOOK AT THE BIRDS OF THE AIR; THEY DO NOT SOW OR REAP OR STORE AWAY IN BARNs, AND YET YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER FEEDS THEM. ARE YOU NOT MUCH MORE VALUABLE THAN THEY? CAN ANY ONE OF YOU BY WORRYING ADD A SINGLE HOUR TO YOUR LIFE?”

- MATTHEW 6:25-27

Worry does not make you escape your trouble; it only makes you unfit to deal with it when it comes. Think about that for a second. How often have you worried about something, only to find that by the time it came around to deal with the situation you were either, a. unprepared for it, or b. it was not as bad as you thought it was. We waste a lot of time worrying about things that we really don't need to, things that will work themselves out or that God already has under control.

When we trust God, we gain confidence. When we gain confidence, then we believe the Word when it says, in Isaiah 40:31, “but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” It sounds pretty exciting to me that I could live a life that is not bound by the ups and downs of worry and anxiety. The freedom to soar above it all only comes when we give it all over to God. Let Go and Let God!

Psalms 144:1 says, “Praise be to the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle.” We are all in training, and worry is a tactic the enemy uses to make sure we do not have the time or the energy to be trained up for the war against sin and death. We need to get on board with God's battle plan and stop letting worry and anxiety dictate our lives.

What are you worrying about right now?

You have the authority to cast down those imaginations in Jesus’ name, so say this prayer: Dear God, I thank you that You care about every little thing in my life - all the way up to the big things in my life. You care about my parking spots, about my job, about my family, and about my health. You do not leave any detail unattended to. I trust You God with the above situation and I cast out worry and anxiety in Jesus’ name. I recognize that it holds me back and I am ready to be trained up for battle! Thank you Lord, in Jesus’ name, Amen.

Believing with you,
Yvonne

S.T.A.N.D.A.R.D. (PART 7)

**SALVATION-TRUST-APPLICATION-NON-COMPROMISING-
DISCIPLE-ANOINTING-RESPONSIBILITY-DAUNTLESS**

**“BE STRONG. TAKE COURAGE. DON’T BE INTIMIDATED.
DON’T GIVE THEM A SECOND THOUGHT BECAUSE GOD,
YOUR GOD, IS STRIDING AHEAD OF YOU. HE’S RIGHT
THERE WITH YOU. HE WON’T LET YOU DOWN; HE
WON’T LEAVE YOU.”**

- DEUTERONOMY 31:6

Our final letter in our acronym for STANDARD is D- DAUNTLESS.

Dauntless means: the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, or pain without fear. The opposite of dauntless is fearful or timid. Fear feeds on insecurity, but you know the T-Truth of who you are in the Lord, giving you security in Him.

To live aiming at and striving toward this standard, you will need to be DAUNTLESS! You are able because we have learned that the A- Anointing - equips, enlightens and energizes us!

Are you facing opposition against your faith and what you believe? When you stand up in the face of opposition without being intimidated, this is a sign to the unbeliever that what you are telling them is Truth! (Philippians 1:28). Your salvation gives you courage and makes you dauntless.

2 Timothy 1:7 says God’s Spirit is in you and gives you power, love, and self discipline. You have the power of the Holy Spirit, the love of your Heavenly Father, and your own determined discipline that qualifies you as dauntless! Whatever is trying to push you back to quiet your voice or impede your walk - rise up dauntlessly against it, move past it, speak to it, and stand your ground!

Walk with the King...
Nikki

SLOW IS SMOOTH, SMOOTH IS FAST

"AND I AM CONVINCED AND SURE OF THIS VERY THING, THAT HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL CONTINUE UNTIL THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST [RIGHT UP TO THE TIME OF HIS RETURN], DEVELOPING [THAT GOOD WORK] AND PERFECTING AND BRINGING IT TO FULL COMPLETION IN YOU."

- PHILIPPIANS 1:6

Training and preparation are constants in life. You start with learning your letters and numbers when you're little. Then you get in school and spend twelve years learning new things each year that build one upon the other. Maybe you're an athlete and train to master a sport along the way. Then there's college, and you guessed it, there's more training for your future career. Finally, you land the job you've always dreamed of and guess what; more training. This training is great and an absolute necessity to help us navigate the changes that life brings.

Sometimes we seek out these changes, but others are just new seasons in life. One thing we can be sure of is that each new season requires us to change along with it. Now, I can admit that when it comes to change, I do not always enjoy the process, and I bet I'm not the only one. I have tried to take shortcuts. I have given up and started over. I have tried to convince myself that the change isn't necessary. I have even intentionally ignored God's voice because of not wanting to patiently wait for God's process. Something that always comes to mind for me in those situations is a phrase my platoon sergeant used to say when I was in the Army, "Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast." This simply means that going through the process is necessary. The training period that precedes you reaching your goal is just as important as reaching your goal. The slow repetitiveness of your spiritual training is what brings a fast spiritual response to the difficult changes you may face. Philippians 1:6 says that the Lord is doing a continuous good work in us and that He will continue to do so until the day of Christ's return. That means that our training and changing is a continual operation and not just a singular task. The important thing to remember is that it is God performing His work through and in us and it is not our job to quickly navigate situations on our own.

Stay Strong and Carry On,
Carrington

SATISFACTION OR SUBMISSION

“...BUT YOU WERE WASHED CLEAN (PURIFIED BY A COMPLETE ATONEMENT FOR SIN AND MADE FREE FROM THE GUILT OF SIN), AND YOU WERE CONSECRATED (SET APART, HALLOWED), AND YOU WERE JUSTIFIED [PRONOUNCED RIGHTEOUS, BY TRUSTING] IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND IN THE [HOLY] SPIRIT OF OUR GOD. EVERYTHING IS PERMISSIBLE (ALLOWABLE AND LAWFUL) FOR ME; BUT NOT ALL THINGS ARE HELPFUL (GOOD FOR ME TO DO, EXPEDIENT AND PROFITABLE WHEN CONSIDERED WITH OTHER THINGS). EVERYTHING IS LAWFUL FOR ME, BUT I WILL NOT BECOME THE SLAVE OF ANYTHING OR BE BROUGHT UNDER ITS POWER.”

- 1 CORINTHIANS 6:11-12

Verse 12 above makes an interesting point. Not everything in life is clearly labeled ‘wrong’ or ‘right.’ Some things in life are ‘allowable and lawful,’ but are they ‘...helpful (good for me to do, expedient and profitable when considered with other things).’ Things like smoking, casual drinking, bad habits, watching certain television shows or movies that are questionable, hanging out with non-believers more often than we should – these aren’t evil acts, but are they helpful to our walk with the Lord? Are they good for us physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually? Are they profitable to our lives when we view our life from a ‘Servant of God’s Kingdom’ perspective?

The Lord cannot fully use us, or operate through us for His perfect will for our lives, if we are unwilling to submit to Him completely. As we grow in our belief, knowledge, and understanding of the Truth of God’s Word, we should naturally draw closer to Kingdom thinking and living as we progressively shed the ways and desires for the things of this world. Our ‘spiritual taste buds’ should crave more and more for righteousness as we develop a deeper and deeper distaste for the cravings of this wicked world.

Will you submit to God’s will for your life today? Or will you surrender to satisfying the unprofitable desires of your flesh? (Read, memorize, and recite Joshua 24:15 every day!)

Fight the good fight of faith!

Jamie