

DARING
FAITH
30-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Daring Faith Devotionals

AN INTRODUCTION

Why have a special set of devotional materials?

We at Peninsula Community Church want to see everyone grow spiritually! Life can become humdrum. Ordinary hours flow into days, which flow into weeks, which flow into months. We can easily float through life, depending on our pre-set schedule to make decisions and think for us, ignoring our Lord. The Christian church has found that we believers need periods in which we focus and give special emphasis to renewing our faith. Some churches have “revivals;” others have “special meetings;” others take part in area-wide “evangelistic campaigns” like those of Billy Graham or Luis Palau. This year at PCC we are holding a “Daring Faith” campaign. We are calling everyone in our church to re-examine and renew our faith in Jesus Christ and to make bold, new plans to serve Him and witness to His wonderful salvation. If we are to know our Lord’s leading in the coming days, each of us needs to spend time with him, reflecting on Him and how we respond to Him in faith. So, these devotionals have been prepared to help each of us give attention to our Lord and hear what He is saying to us about our faith in Him.

How should I use these devotional materials?

- Try to set time aside for these devotions every day during the Daring Faith campaign. There are six devotions per week, giving you one “day off.”
- Get away into a quiet place, where you aren’t distracted by people, radio, TV, etc.
- Put your phone on silent and leave it in another room.
- Give adequate time to the devotionals so that you aren’t hurried. You should plan time for reading the devotional and related Scripture, reflecting on it, and praying over it.
- Some Christians find that listening to praise music helps them focus on the Lord and worship him in prayer. Why don’t you try that out?

What is in the devotionals?

The topics in the devotionals all have to do with “faith” in one way or another. After a brief article on the topic, there are questions for your reflection and prayer. In addition, in each week there is a focus on one of the PCC Daring Faith goals.

How can I really take in all the ideas in these materials?

The last devotional in each week is a review devotional in which you are asked to focus on the most important things you have learned from the week. That review can help you sort out what you are learning and hearing from the Lord.

Good Luck!

Daily Devotionals: Week One, Day One

LET GOD EMPOWER YOUR PURPOSE

“I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:12-13 NLT)

You need more than positive thinking to live a life of faith. You need the power of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul says it like this, *“I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”*

In other words, you can do anything—with God’s help.

A man came to Jesus and asked him to heal his son. He said, *“If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”* Jesus said, *“If you can? Everything is possible for him who believes.”* Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, *“I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”* (Mark 9:22-24 NIV) That’s one of my favorite prayers in the Bible. It’s so honest! And that’s what God wants from you in prayer—honesty. If you pray that prayer, *“I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief,”* God will answer. He wants you to be strong in your faith. He wants you to overcome your unbelief.

Faith means we believe that Jesus can do what we ask, and that with His help, we can do what He asks us to do too.

Have you been trying to live life on your own power? If so, I guarantee you’re getting nowhere—at least on the things that really matter in life. You can read all the motivational books in the world and still never make any progress towards your dreams. You need the supernatural help of God to live a life of faith. Surrendering your life to Jesus is the best decision you’ll ever make. I will teach you to trust God, and it will stretch your faith as you see that indeed you *“can do everything through Christ,”* who gives you strength.

This week we are focusing on the “F” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Fill our worship center with 400 worshippers at PCC’s weekend services by the end of 2018.”

1. What things encourage you to have greater faith in God?
2. What things discourage you from having faith in God?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to faith?
4. Who can you pray for in faith to help us at PCC fill our worship center with 400 worshippers?
5. Talk to God about who these people are, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week One, Day Two

FAITH COMES FROM HEARING GOD'S WORD

**“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,”
(Romans 10:17 NKJV)**

A gardener can plant the same kind of seed in three different locations and get three different results. In one spot, she'll get giant tomatoes. In another, she'll get small tomatoes. And in the third, she'll get nothing. What's the difference? It's not the seed, it's the soil. The soil must be prepared for the seed.

The same is true when you hear God's Word. It's why you can take two people to church, sit them side-by-side, and one will walk out thinking God really spoke to him, while the other won't get anything out of the service. The heart of one person was prepared; the other's heart wasn't.

How can you prepare the soil of your heart for the Word? The Bible says, *“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.”* (James 1:19b-21 NIV)

For good reception, this passage teaches you to have four attitudes:

- **You must be Quiet.** *“Be quick to listen, slow to speak.”* You can't hear God if you're doing all the talking.
- **You must be Calm.** *“Slow to become angry.”* If you're frantic, you're not going to hear God. The Bible says, *“Be still and know that I am God”* (Psalm 46:10 NIV). My translation of that is: *“Sit down and shut up.”*
- **You must be Clean.** *“Get rid of all moral filth and evil.”* Before you can meet with God, you need to take out some emotional and spiritual garbage. Get rid of the stuff that stinks in your life. You get rid of the garbage by confessing your sin to God and agreeing with him that what you did was wrong.
- **You must be Humble.** *“Humbly accept the word planted in you.”* Be ready to do whatever God tells you from his Word. A prideful attitude makes a hard heart.

Today we continue our focus on the “F” goal of daring faith for our questions. It states, “Fill our worship center with 400 worshippers at PCC’s weekend services by the end of 2018.”

1. What things encourage you to create better “soil” in your life?
2. What things discourage you from having good “soil” in your life?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to faith?
4. Who might you pray for in faith to help us at PCC fill our worship center with 400 worshippers? What can you do to help cultivate their “soil?”
5. Talk to God about who these people are, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week One, Day Three

FAITH MEANS I TRUST IN GOD'S PROMISES

“All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. For God had something better in mind for us, so that they would not reach perfection without us.”

(Hebrews 11:39-40 NLT)

It's not easy to live by faith. We live in a broken world. When God kicked Adam out of Eden, He told Adam that life would be hard. And it is. There's a cosmic battle for your life going on both inside and outside of you. The weather doesn't work right. Our bodies don't work right. Our relationships don't work right. You battle with your own sinful nature. You also battle against Satan himself, who wants nothing more than to “steal, kill, and destroy.” And sometimes it just gets to us. We just want to give up.

But in Hebrews 11, God urges us to hang on. God hasn't forgotten us, and He will fulfill his promises one day. He promises to give us a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29:11). He promises to take away our tears (Revelation 7:17). And He gives us many other promises throughout his Word.

Hebrews 11 mentions a variety of Biblical heroes who demonstrated faith in God's promises: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Samson, and David, just to name a few. Though they endured many difficulties, they kept going in their spiritual journeys.

Then Hebrews 11:39-40 says, *“All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. For God had something better in mind for us, so that they would not reach perfection without us.”*

When you feel like giving up, remember the heroes of the Bible and imitate their faith. One day, your faith and theirs will be rewarded, and we will all reach perfection together.

Let's continue our focus on the “F” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Fill our worship center with 400 worshippers at PCC's weekend services by the end of 2018.”

1. *What things encourage you as you read about the “champions” of faith in Hebrews?*
2. *What things discourage you as you read about them, if anything?*
3. *How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to trusting in God's promises like the heroes of faith did?*
4. *Who can you pray for in faith to help us at PCC fill our worship center with 400 worshippers? Who do you dream will one day become a “hero?”*
5. *Talk to God about who these people are, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith, and how you might be mobilized in this.*

Daily Devotionals: Week One, Day Four

FAITH MEANS I REFUSE TO GIVE UP

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith . . . ” (Hebrews 12:1 NLT)

What do you do when you feel like giving up? We all have those moments when we just can't see any light at the end of the tunnel. We've been struggling with something—maybe a health issue, a broken relationship, financial problems, or depression—and we start to wonder if we have the strength to keep going. If you find yourself at that point today, I want to share some encouragement with you from Hebrews 12 and give you a powerful reason to keep on keeping on.

Hebrews 11 is the “faith chapter” that tells us about great people of the faith: Abraham, Moses, David, and many others. Their stories are the sources of encouragement in and of themselves. But a phrase that starts off the first verse of the next chapter is what I want to focus on. Hebrews 12:1 says, *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith...”*

God is saying, “Don't give up, because heaven is watching and cheering for you.” That's encouraging news!

You have an audience. Nothing you do is private. Nothing you have ever done has been hidden from heaven. God sees it all. As Job said, *“He sees everything I do and every step I take”* (Job 31:4 TLB). And Jesus tells us, *“Every hair on your head has been counted”* (Luke 12:7 GW). God knows every detail of your life. He watches every breath you take. There is nothing about you that he doesn't already know. And he loves you in spite of it all!

And it's not just God who's watching. Abraham, Jacob, Moses and all the other saints are there as well. How is this encouraging? When you start to get discouraged, remember that people who have gone through much worse circumstances are watching to see how well you're enduring. And they're cheering you on from the grandstands in heaven!

Let's continue our focus on the “F” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Fill our worship center with 400 worshippers at PCC's weekend services by the end of 2018.”

1. What things encourage you in your refusal to give up or give in?
2. What things discourage you and tempt you to give up?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to giving up?
4. Think of the person whom you have been praying for the longest. How might greater faith be required when it comes to continually praying for them? How might you ensure that you never give up on them?
5. Talk to God about who these people are, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week One, Day Five

GRATITUDE BUILDS MY FAITH

“Sink your roots in him and build on him. Be strengthened by the faith that you were taught, and overflow with thanksgiving.” (Colossians 2:7 GW)

Anybody can thank God in good times. But if you can thank God even in the bad times—when life doesn't make sense and your prayers to unanswered—your faith will grow stronger and your roots will go deeper. Gratitude helps you remember the faith-lessons that God has already taught you. It helps you *“sink your roots in him and build on him,”* and to *“be strengthened by the faith that you were taught.”*

When the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk went through tough times, he said, *“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.”* (Habakkuk 3:17-18 NIV)

In the midst of his trouble, Habakkuk rejoiced. What was the cause of his gratitude? *“I will be joyful in God my Savior.”* When everything else stinks in life, you can be grateful because the Lord is your Savior. You can be thankful to God just for being God. He has promised to see you through those tough situations, and your faith will grow even stronger because of it. Just say, “God, I know you're in control. I know you love me, and I know you can bring good out of this. I'm thankful that you're bigger than my problem.”

That is the ultimate test of the depth of your faith. Can you thank God when life stinks? When you're going through tough times, don't look at what's lost. Look at what's left, and be grateful for it!

As we continue our focus on the “F” goal of Daring Faith, take some time to pray for the sermon this weekend at church and for the new people coming.

1. What things encourage you to be more joyful in Christ our Savior?
2. What things discourage you finding joy in Christ?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to your understanding of joy in Christ?
4. Who might you pray for who is struggling in their faith or struggling with a life trial? How might an increase in your faith play a part in building a relational bridge with them?
5. Talk to God about who these people are, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week One, Day Six

THE KEY FOCUS THAT GOD HAS FOR ME THIS WEEK

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (Matthew 5:8)

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus commended “the pure in heart.” Many Christians misread this as meaning “blameless and unadulterated by evil.” A word study of “pure in heart,” shows that a better basic understanding is “having a focus on God’s Kingdom with no conflicts.” The purity that Jesus envisions is one of concentration, intensity, and total commitment to God’s Kingdom.

In the weeks of the Daring Faith campaign we in Peninsula Community Church want you to reflect on your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and how that faith might be strengthened in practical ways so that your faith might increasingly be “pure in heart.” We hope that each daily devotional will stimulate you as you seek to follow Jesus in faith. But we are aware that five new insights about faith each week are more than most people can fully assimilate and put into practice in a short period of time. God often develops His disciples bit-by-bit over a period of time, rather than overnight. God has His focus for your development at this point in time.

So, we are asking you to review the verses and insights God has given you in the last week. Of the many lessons you have learned, what one thing is most important for you to focus on and incorporate into your life right now?

- A command to obey
- An example to follow
- A promise to claim
- A Scripture to study further
- An idea to think through
- A relationship to renew
- A sin to forsake
- A person to love
- Etc.

As you reflect on that focus, in what ways can that focus help you to work with all the brothers and sisters at PCC to reach our Daring Faith goal: “Fill our worship center with 400 worshippers at PCC’s weekend services by the end of 2018”?

Daily Devotionals: Week Two, Day One

EXPECT THE BEST: GOD IS AT WORK

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28 NIV)

Do you ever find yourself asking, “Why is life so hard?” Frustration is the result of living in a world that is broken by sin. You can’t avoid suffering. There will be pain. There will be days of doubt. And that’s exactly the time you should expect the best from God, and declare in faith *“that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”*

No matter how bad the situation may seem, the Bible says you can be sure God is still in control and that God is working things out for your good. If you want to expect the best from God, remember these four truths:

- **The Holy Spirit is praying for you.** *“The Spirit himself speaks to God for us, even begs God for us with deep feelings that words cannot explain.”* (Romans 8:26 NCV)
- **God uses everything for your good.** *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.”* (Romans 8:28 NIV) God is bigger than your enemies. He’s bigger than your critics. He’s bigger than your problems. And He’s working it all for good in your life.
- **God wants you to succeed.** *“If God is for us, who can ever be against us?”* (Romans 8:31 NLT) God wants you to succeed in all those areas where you are failing. He’s pulling for you.
- **God will give you what you need.** *“Since God did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won’t God who gave us Christ, also give us everything else?”* (Romans 8:32 NLT) God solved your biggest problem when He paid for all your sins, including the sins you haven’t done yet. If God cared enough to save you and give you the gift of eternal life, don’t you think He cares about the problems in your daily life? If it’s big enough to worry about, it’s big enough to pray about. And if you pray about it, you won’t have to worry about it.

In this second week we are focusing on the “A” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Amplify PCC’s ministries to children and adults by updating classroom facilities.”

1. What things encourage you to expect the best from God?
2. What things discourage you from expecting the best from God?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to your expectations of God?
4. PCC is facing the challenge of amplifying our ministries to children while using outdated and wornout facilities. In what ways might God be working in this challenge to us?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Two, Day Two

EXPECT GOD TO ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS

“If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him, for he is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom to all who ask him . . . But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to tell you . . . If you don’t ask with faith, don’t expect the Lord to give you any solid answer.” (James 1:5-8 TLB)

God wants to direct you in life, but two things need to line up: You have to ask the right person—God, and you have to ask with the right attitude—in faith, expecting an answer.

Have you ever asked God for something but didn’t expect to get it? That might be why you didn’t get it. God expects us to have great expectations of Him. So many times we say, “God, please guide me!” and we walk away not even waiting for guidance. We just immediately start to work. We say, “God, I want you to give me wisdom; help me make the right decision” But we don’t really expect Him to do that. We think it all depends on us. But the Bible says, “*When you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to tell you.*” (James 1:6 TLB)

Wisdom is seeing life from God’s point of view. Wisdom is the ability to make decisions the way God makes decisions. God has promised to give you wisdom, if you will ask. “*If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him, for he is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom to all who ask him.*” (James 1:5 TLB)

Think about this: God never makes a bad decision. He never makes a mistake. He says if you trust Him and listen to Him, He will guide you. But you must ask in faith. “*If you don’t ask with faith, don’t expect the Lord to give you any solid answer.*” (James 1:8 TLB)

Where do you need wisdom today? Ask God what you should do, and then expect Him to tell you. Give Him time to answer your prayer.

This week we are focusing on the “A” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Amplify PCC’s ministries to children and adults by updating classroom facilities.”

1. What things encourage you to expect God to answer your prayers?
2. What things discourage you from expecting God to answer your prayers?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to your expectations about God answering your prayers?
4. PCC is facing the challenge of amplifying our ministries to children while using outdated and wornout facilities, and we should pray with positive expectations that God will answer our prayers. What is that kind of prayer like? How should we pray?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Two, Day Three

WAITING FOR ANSWERED PRAYER

**“Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, I have set my face like a stone, determined to do his will. And I know that I will not be put to shame.”
(Isaiah 50:7 NLT)**

When you pray, expect to hear from God. I can't say it any simpler than that. Expect that God will answer your prayer. This is where faith comes in. You wait expectantly on God, just as Isaiah wrote, *“set like a stone, determined to do his will.”* (Isaiah 50:7)

Waiting on God is never a waste of time. In fact, it is time well invested in your life. It keeps you focused on God and living in light of eternity.

Hurry is the death of prayer. One reason you may not hear God speak to you is that you don't wait long enough. He wants you to care enough to listen. He wants to be sure you are paying attention. And sometimes He has to wait for you to calm down so that He can get a word in edgewise.

In Psalms you can find three things to do as you wait:

- **Wait quietly:** *“Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him.”* (Psalm 62:5 NLT)
- **Wait patiently:** *“Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act.”* (Psalm 37:7 NLT)
- **Wait expectantly:** *“I wait expectantly, trusting God to help, for he has promised.”* (Psalm 130:5 TLB)

When you pray, wait quietly, patiently, and expectantly to hear from God. He promises you will not be disgraced or put to shame.

This week we are focusing on the “A” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Amplify PCC’s ministries to children and adults by updating classroom facilities.”

1. What things encourage you to wait on God?
2. What things discourage you from waiting on God?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to waiting on God?
4. PCC is facing the challenge of amplifying our ministries to children while using outdated and wornout facilities, and we should wait on God as we face the challenge. In what ways does waiting on God affect how we face this need?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God's help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Two, Day Four

TRUSTING GOD TO USE YOUR PROBLEMS FOR GOOD

“We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead.”

(II Corinthians 1:8-9 NLT)

None of us are exempt from suffering. We all experience loneliness, criticism, discouragement, and mistreatment. Why does God allow these things to happen to us? It's because God is developing the character of Christ within us. In order to do that, He takes us through the circumstances in life that He took Jesus through.

Did Jesus suffer? Was Jesus sometimes lonely? Was He tempted to be discouraged? Was He misunderstood, maligned, and criticized unjustly? Of course! Does this mean God causes tragedies? No. God is good. He will not cause evil or do evil. But God can use dark and stressful times for your good.

He'll use them to teach you to trust Him: *“We stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God.”* (II Corinthians 1:8-9) He'll use them to show you how to help others: *“He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.”* (II Corinthians 1:4) And He'll use them to draw you closer to other believers: *“You are helping us by praying for us . . . Many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers.”* (II Corinthians 1:11)

So how can you expect the best from God when you're going through difficult times?

- **In faith**, refuse to be discouraged, knowing that God is for you.
- **In faith**, believe God is with you and working things out for your good.
- **In faith**, rely on God's protection and guidance.

This week we are focusing on the “A” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Amplify PCC's ministries to children and adults by updating classroom facilities.”

1. What things encourage you to trust God in the midst of problems?
2. What things discourage you from trusting God in the midst of problems?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to trusting God to use your problems for good?
4. PCC is facing the challenge of amplifying our ministries to children while using outdated and wornout facilities, and we should trust God that He has good for us in this problem. What does this kind of trust mean for you?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God's help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Two, Day Five

EXPECT GOD TO HELP YOU GROW SPIRITUALLY

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (Galatians 6:9 NIV)

When you think about your walk with Jesus, some days you may wonder, “Why is it taking so long to see progress? I’m still struggling with so many problems. When will I finally get it right?”

Spiritual growth is like the growth we see in nature—the best fruit ripens slowly. The problem is we tend to get impatient, so we dig up the seed to check the progress of its growth, and that slows down the process! If you’re not seeing as much fruit as you’d like, don’t despair. Growth takes time. The Bible says, *“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”* (Galatians 6:9 NIV)

Try these steps toward spiritual growth:

- **Nurture growth with God’s Word.** When you read the promises of God again and again, they build your faith and renew your certainty that fruit is coming, even though you may not see it now: *“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”* (Hebrews 11:1 NIV)
- **Cooperate with God as He prunes.** Praise God for the work He’s doing in your life, remembering that *“he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.”* (John 15:2 NLT)
- **Pray through the “fruit list.”** Pray through the list of the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23. The NIV (New International Version) Bible lists the fruit as *“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”* Ask God to help you grow this fruit in your life. Ask Him if there is anything you are doing to hinder its growth.

This week we are focusing on the “A” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Amplify PCC’s ministries to children and adults by updating classroom facilities.”

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2. What things discourage you from growing spiritually?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to growing spiritually?
4. PCC is facing the challenge of amplifying our ministries to children while using outdated and wornout facilities, and we should trust God that He would help us grow spiritually in this context. What does this kind of trust mean for you?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Two, Day Six

THE KEY FOCUS THAT GOD HAS FOR ME THIS WEEK

“My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.” (Proverbs 2:1-5)

The writer of Proverbs is very clear. To know God more intimately and to understand His will and ways, people have to “accept,” “store up,” “turn your ear,” “apply your heart,” “call out,” “cry aloud,” “look for it,” and “search for it.” In other words, a daring faith calls for a desperate search to know God and His ways.

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- A person to love
- Etc.

As you reflect on that focus, in what ways can that focus help you to work with all the brothers and sisters at PCC to reach our “A” goal of Daring Faith: “Amplify PCC’s ministries to children and adults by updating classroom facilities”?

Daily Devotionals: Week Three, Day One

RELYING ON GOD REQUIRES FAITH

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

When you lean on something, you trust that it will hold you up. When you lean on the Lord, you are saying, “I have faith that God is strong enough to hold me up.”

God told Joshua, *“No one will be able to defeat you all your life. Just as I was with Moses so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forget you.”* (Joshua 1:5 NCV) And God says that to you too. As long as Joshua leaned on God, he was undefeatable. Joshua accomplished the impossible because he was depending on the Lord.

Who or what are you leaning on for strength? Are you leaning on the approval of other people? That is a very shaky foundation. People are going to let you down. Nobody can hold you up all of the time. Eventually, they’re going to get tired and you’re going to get dropped. You can’t even trust yourself. Have you noticed how often you let yourself down? You make promises to yourself all the time that you don’t keep. So what can you do?

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV) Leaning on the Lord can be scary. Sometimes it’s uncomfortable. It can make you worry, “Is God going to come through? Is He going to hold me up?”

That’s why it requires faith to lean on the Lord. You have to believe He has your best interests at heart. You have to trust Him even when you don’t understand, and you have to move forward convinced that He will make your paths straight.

When you do this, you will discover that *“no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.”* (1 Corinthians 2:9 NLT)

As we spend time with Jesus this week, we focus on our third Daring Faith goal. Our “I” goal is “Interconnect our growing fellowship by adding 20 new small groups within 2 years.”

1. How can leaning on God encourage you to have greater faith in God?
2. What things discourage you from leaning on God?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to trusting God?
4. Who can you pray for you in your neighborhood that you can invite to the next small group?
5. Talk to God about your desires to lean on him, your hopes for the neighbors in your life, and more opportunities to grow your faith.

Daily Devotionals: Week Three, Day Two

LET GO OF YOUR DOUBT

“Be bold and strong! Banish fear and doubt! For remember, the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9 TLB)

Doubt will cause you to miss God’s best. James 1:6 (TEV) says, *“Whoever doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven and blown about by the wind.”* When you doubt, you let your circumstances control you.

There are two things that rob your confidence and cause doubt.

- **Comparing yourself to others causes doubt.** 2 Corinthians 10:12 says that people who compare themselves to other people are foolish. You should never compare yourself to anybody else because you are unique. God made you to be you; He doesn’t want you to be somebody else. Most people start off in life as originals and end up as carbon copies—and poor carbon copies at that! God says not to compare yourself for two reasons: You’ll either find somebody who’s doing a better job than you, and you’ll get discouraged, or you’ll find somebody who is doing a poorer job than you, and you will be filled with pride. Don’t compare yourself with others. You are unique, so you are incomparable!
- **Past failures cause doubt.** You might think that because of certain things in your past, God could never use you. Have you ever read the Bible? The spiritual leaders of the Bible did not exactly have stellar records. Moses was a murderer. David was an adulterer and a murderer. Abraham gave his wife away—twice! Jacob stole the family inheritance from his brother. Paul was a religious terrorist before he met Jesus. Peter was a hard driving, hard drinking, hard living fisherman—a salty sea dog! And he probably cussed like one, too. God uses people with checkered pasts because none of us is perfect. God uses average, ordinary, dysfunctional people. If God only used perfect people, nothing would get done in this world.

Believe the Bible when it says that God has a purpose for your life, and even before you were born He had a plan for you. So *“be bold and strong! Banish fear and doubt! For remember, the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”* (Joshua 1:9 TLB)

Today we continue praying for our third Daring Faith goal: Interconnect our growing fellowship by adding 20 new small groups within 2 years.

1. How do comparing yourselves with others and experiencing failure discourage your faith?
2. What things encourage you to focus on Christ and his grace rather than other people or your own failures?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to letting go of doubt?
4. Who can you pray for you in your work/friend environment that you can invite to the next small group?
5. Talk to God about your desires to lean on him, your hopes for the neighbors in your life, and opportunities to grow your faith.

Daily Devotionals: Week Three, Day Three

STAY FAITHFUL WHEN OTHERS DOUBT YOU

**“Everyone assembled here will know that the Lord rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the Lord’s battle, and he will give you to us!”
(1 Samuel 17:47 NLT)**

When God gives you a dream, don’t be surprised when people try to hold you back—sometimes even the people who love you the most.

David faced four giants before he got to Goliath. They weren’t physical giants, but they were giants in his mind. You’re going to face these giants too.

- **The first giant was delay.** In David’s case, his dad held him back. Even after the prophet Samuel anointed David as king, Jesse told David to get back to tending sheep! No dream is fulfilled instantly. God gives you the dream one day, but He doesn’t fulfill it the next day. It may be years before you see the fulfillment of your life dream. There is always a waiting period.
- **The second giant was discouragement.** Goliath created a climate of fear in Israel. Everybody was convinced they were going to lose the battle. But David rose up in faith and said to Goliath, *“This is the Lord’s battle, and he will give you to us!”* (1 Samuel 17:47 NLT) Who are you listening to who says it can’t be done?
- **The third giant was disapproval.** David’s brother questioned his motives and disapproved of him going after Goliath. When God gives you a dream that other people are afraid of and you go for it anyway, you will be misjudged, maligned, and misunderstood. You have to decide what matters more to you—the approval of other people or the approval of God.
- **The fourth giant was doubt.** There was no greater expert on war than King Saul. He told David he was crazy for thinking he could fight a warrior like Goliath. Are you doubting yourself because some “expert” is saying you can’t do it, even though God says you can?

When you face delays, discouragements, disapproval, and doubt, hold on to this promise: *“This is the Lord’s battle, and he will give you to us!”* (1 Samuel 17:47 NLT)

Let’s continue praying for our third Daring Faith goal: Interconnecting our growing fellowship by adding 20 new small groups within 2 years.

1. What giants have discouraged you from living with faith?
2. What promises of God or other Biblical truths give the most encouragement to you in your faith?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to facing the giants that challenge your faith?
4. There may be giants in your life right now, but there also may be giants in the lives of your neighbors, coworkers, and friends. Ask God for greater measures of faith when it comes to these giants, both in your life and in the life of your friends.
5. Talk to God about the giants you are facing, the fears they are creating, and seek God’s face in his word about the many promises destroying these fears.

Daily Devotionals: Week Three, Day Four

STEP FORWARD IN FAITH

“For our life is a matter of faith, not of sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7 TEV)

Are you waiting for God to do something? Has it occurred to you that maybe God is waiting for you to do something first? Throughout the Bible we see an important truth: the Holy Spirit releases His power the moment you take a step of faith.

When God says go, He doesn't mean stop. When He says now, He doesn't mean later. God told Joshua to cross the Jordan River when it was at flood stage. He didn't tell him to wait until the torrent subsided. That's typical of God. He tests your faith when things look overwhelming.

When Joshua faced an impassible barrier, the floodwaters of the Jordan River receded only after the leaders stepped into the rushing current in obedience and faith. *“As soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing...The whole nation completed the crossing on dry ground.”* (Joshua 3:15-17 NIV)

What should you do when you know something is God's will but you're scared to death to do it? Do it anyway. Faith is about taking the first step. God waits for you to act first. Don't wait to feel powerful or confident. Move ahead in your weakness. Do the right thing in spite of your fears and feelings. The Bible says, *“For our life is a matter of faith, not of sight.”* (2 Corinthians 5:7 TEV) This is how you cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

God smiles when we take the initiative to step out in obedient faith. Daring faith is the key to discovering the surprises that God has for us.

Let's continue focusing on Daring Faith, and pray for our Daring Faith goal of adding 20 new small groups within 2 years come to fruition.

1. What things do you find encourage you to step out in faith?
2. What things discourage you from stepping out in faith?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to stepping out in faith?
4. Stepping out in faith is difficult; like leading a small group for the first time, or inviting a neighbor to church or a small group. It's scary. Pray for opportunities and courage to do so!
5. Talk to God about your desires to lean on him, your hopes for the neighbors in your life, and more opportunities to step out in faith for the glory of Christ.

Daily Devotionals: Week Three, Day Five

DARING FAITH IS GENEROUS

**“The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.”
(Proverbs 11:25 NLT)**

People with daring faith are generous even when they don't have anything to give. Anybody can be generous when they have surplus. I can be generous with my time when I have extra time. I can be generous with my money when I have extra money. I can be generous with my energy when I have extra energy to spend. It's when I don't have enough time for me, enough money for me, or enough energy for me that God says, “This is a test. I'm watching you to see if you are faithful. Will you be generous, and will you trust me? Will you take me at my word when I promise, ‘*The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed*’?” (Proverbs 11:25 NLT)

Here are five principles in which God will test you and then bless you:

- **God gives to generous people.** Why does God want you to be generous? Because He wants you to be like Him, and God is a giver.
- **Obeying God's vision will bring God's provision.** If you do what God tells you to do, God will bring along the resources you need at the right time. When He gives you the vision, He will give you the provision.
- **When you do all that God tells you to do, He does what you can't do.** God often asks you to do the impossible to stretch your faith. When you give what little you have, God multiplies it and makes up for what is lacking.
- **When you have a need, sow a seed.** Whatever you need in your life, sow it as a seed, and it will come back to you.
- **There is always a delay between sowing and reaping.** There is a season between planting and harvesting. What's going on in the delay? It's a test of your faith. Will you be faithful to give when you have little? Will you keep on doing the right thing? Do what God wants you to do, no matter the cost, and then see what God does.

Three weeks of Daring Faith is almost completed; pray for our goal of adding 20 new small groups within 2 years to come to fruition.

1. What things encourage you to be generous?
2. What things discourage you from being generous?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to being generous for the Lord?
4. A generous spirit is one sign of spiritual health. In what ways can our generosity strengthen PCC's small groups, both internally and numerically?
5. Talk to God about your desires to be more generous for Him.

Daily Devotionals: Week Three, Day Six

THE KEY FOCUS THAT GOD HAS FOR ME THIS WEEK

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts” (Psalm 139:23 NIV).

Jesus is waiting for us to invite Him into our hearts and cleanse us of our sinful ways. We can't hide our sins from Jesus; we can only keep them from the healing power of His presence. And by holding our sin so tightly, we do nothing but embrace our own death, while pushing away the Author of Life. We should daily pray as the Psalmist does, and ask God to search our hearts. We should open ourselves up to the real healing that only God can give.

As we continue in our third week of the Daring Faith campaign, we in Peninsula Community Church want you to reflect on your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and how that faith might be strengthened in practical ways so that your faith might increasingly be “searched.” We hope that each daily devotional will continue to stimulate you as you seek to follow Jesus in faith. But we are aware that five new insights about faith each week are more than most people can fully assimilate and put into practice in a short period of time. God often develops His disciples bit-by-bit over a period of time, rather than overnight. God has His focus for your development at this point in time.

So, we are asking you to review the verses and insights God has given you in the last week. Of the many lessons you have learned, what one thing is most important for you to focus on and incorporate into your life right now?

- A command to obey
- An example to follow
- A promise to claim
- A Scripture to study further
- An idea to think through
- A relationship to renew
- A sin to forsake
- A person to love
- Etc.

As you reflect on that focus, in what ways can that focus help you to work with all the brothers and sisters at PCC to reach our Daring Faith goal: “Interconnect our growing fellowship by adding 20 new small groups within 2 years”?

Daily Devotionals: Week Four, Day One

REPLACE YOUR FEARS WITH FAITH

“From such terrible dangers of death he saved us, and will save us; and we have placed our hope in him that he will save us again.”

(II Corinthians 1:10 TEV)

Fear is a choice. God is watching over you. He knows everything you are going through, and He is not afraid of the outcome of any hardship or trial you are facing. If God is not afraid, you don't have to be afraid either. Trust God, and don't give in to your fears.

When the Apostle Paul was facing certain death, he said, *“This happened so that we should rely, not on ourselves, but only on God, who raises the dead. From such terrible dangers of death he saved us, and will save us; and we have placed our hope in him that he will save us again.”* (II Corinthians 1:9-10 TEV) Paul had the right perspective. He made the right choice. He replaced his fears with faith.

God's promise to believers is that, no matter what happens, *“in all things God works for the good of those who love him.”* (Romans 8:28 NIV) It doesn't say all things are good, but that they are working together for good.

That means you can stop listening to your fears. There is no difficulty, dilemma, defeat, or disaster in your life the God cannot ultimately use for your good and for His glory. There is no need to fear the future.

Your fears reveal where you do not trust God. Today, make a list of your fears, and ask God to help you identify why you have fear in those areas. Then ask Him to help you replace your fears with faith.

This week we are focusing on the “T” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Train at least two-thirds of PCC’s attenders to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ.”

1. What things encourage you to replace your fears with faith in God?
2. What things discourage you from replacing your fears with faith in God?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to replacing your fears with faith in God?
4. PCC elders and pastors want to see our people receive training so that we all might become stronger disciples of Jesus Christ. Some people are afraid of receiving training in discipleship. What fears about receiving training in discipleship do you have? What would help you to replace those fears with faith?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God's help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Four, Day Two

FAITH IS MORE THAN BELIEVING: TAKE THE NEXT STEP

“And Jesus said to him, ‘Go; your faith has made you well.’ Immediately he regained his sight and began following him on the road.” (Mark 10:52 NASB)

I don’t know what your next step of faith is, but I do know this: You have one. God will never be finished taking you deeper in faith. There is always a next step.

If you don’t take the next step, you’ll get stuck in a rut—and the only difference between a grave and a rut is the length. If you don’t move forward in faith, your heart will grow cold, and you will feel more distant from God. He isn’t going to help you with something. He’s asking you, “Why haven’t you done what I’ve already told you to do?” You may have “been aiming to” do something. Stop aiming and pull the trigger.

In Mark chapter ten, Jesus healed a blind man named Bartimaeus. Before Bartimaeus met Jesus, he was sitting beside the road. After he received his sight from the Lord, he *“began following him on the road.”* (Mark 10:52b NASB) Which of those two phrases describes your life: sitting beside the road or following Jesus on the road?

There is only one way to follow Jesus on the road: Take the next step.

Faith is more than believing. Faith is more than thinking, talking, or having convictions about Jesus. Faith is action. It is movement. It is activity. Faith is something you do. In fact, the Bible says, *“If people say they have faith, but do nothing, their faith is worth nothing.”* (James 2:14 NCV)

What “next step” will you take today to move forward in faith?

This week we are focusing on the “T” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Train at least two-thirds of PCC’s attenders to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ.”

1. What things encourage you to take the next step in faith?
2. What things discourage you from taking the next step in faith?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to taking the next step that God has for you?
4. PCC elders and pastors want to see our people receive training so that we all might take the next step in faith. What training would help you take the next step that God has for you?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Four, Day Three

DARE TO SELL OUT

“The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” (II Chronicles 16:9 NLT)

The Bible tells us three things about the importance of daring faith.

- **God is looking for faithful people.** God is actively searching for people who are sold out to His purposes, so that He can bless them. The Bible says, *“The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.”* (II Chronicles 16:9 NLT)
- **Faithful people are hard to find.** The Bible says, *“Everyone talks about how faithful he is, but just try to find someone who really is!”* (Proverbs 20:6 TEV) A lot of people talk the talk. They say they believe in God, but when things get tough in their finances, or their health, or their job, instead of seeking God, they doubt God—or they blame Him for their troubles. The Bible says, *“God looks down from heaven on the entire human race; he looks to see if anyone is truly wise, if anyone seeks God.”* (Psalm 53:2 NLT)
- **Faithfulness is the key to blessing and victory.** The Bible says *“A faithful man will have many blessings.”* (Proverbs 28:20 HCSB) I want your life to have many blessings. But in order for you to be blessed, you have to learn faithfulness.

The Bible says, *“Every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith. And who can win this battle against the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.”* (I John 5:4-5 NLT)

If you stay faithful to the Lord, He will strengthen your heart and use your life for His purposes.

This week we are focusing on the “T” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Train at least two-thirds of PCC’s attenders to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ.”

1. What things encourage you to be faithful to God and His will?
2. What things discourage you from being faithful to God and His will?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to being faithful to God and His will?
4. PCC elders and pastors want to see our people receive training so that we all might take the next step in faith. What training would help you to be more faithful to God and His will?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. It’s up to you. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Four, Day Four

CHOOSE HOPE

“Yet hope returns when I remember this one thing: The Lord’s unfailing love and mercy still continue, fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise. The Lord is all I have, and so in him I put my hope.” (Lamentations 3:21-24 TEV)

Pain is a natural part of life. We can’t escape it. Broken relationships, missed opportunities, and rough seasons will always be with us. When they come, you can either become bitter or hopeful. The choice is yours.

Jeremiah faced the same choice. When his world came apart, the prophet wrote the book of Lamentations to share his honest frustrations with God. But he didn’t settle in his bitterness. After sharing his bitter feelings, he wrote, *“Yet hope returns when I remember this one thing: The Lord’s unfailing love and mercy still continue, fresh as the morning, as sure as the sunrise. The Lord is all I have, and so in him I put my hope.”* (Lamentations 3:21-24 TEV) In the midst of a terrible situation, Jeremiah changed his perspective. It’s healthy and good to be honest with God about your feelings, but eventually you have to change your perspective. As long as your mind is on your pain, you won’t solve anything. Instead, like Jeremiah, you need to recognize God’s unfailing love and mercy for you. No matter what the problem, no matter how much anger you’ve spewed at God, He still loves you, and that will never change.

The longer you focus on what depresses you, the longer your depression will last. Bitterness keeps you caught in your own pain. Jeremiah gives us a simple cure for bitterness: In the midst of a depressing tirade, he says, *“Yet hope returns . . .”*

How can you have hope even in your darkest days? By remembering that *“the Lord’s unfailing love and mercy still continue.”* You can count on that! God’s mercies are *“as fresh as the morning”* and *“as sure as the sunrise.”* He is all you need. And, no matter what, you can put your hope in Him. You’ll never know that God is all you need until He’s all you have. Are you there yet? There’s no better place to be.

This week we are focusing on the “T” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Train at least two-thirds of PCC’s attenders to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ.”

1. What things encourage you to choose hope in the midst of a painful experience?
2. What things discourage you from choosing hope in the midst of a painful experience?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to choosing hope in the midst of pain?
4. PCC elders and pastors want to see our people receive training so that we all might take the next step in faith. What training would help you to choose hope, no matter what?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. It’s up to you. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Four, Day Five

DARING FAITH HAS BIG DREAMS

“Now glory be to God, who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinately beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes.” (Ephesians 3:20 TLB)

Dreaming is an act of faith. God gave you the ability to create and to imagine. Progress and growth in life seldom happen without a dream of some kind. So how do you get God’s dream for your life? You do three things:

- **Dare to ask God for it.** The Bible says, *“Now glory be to God, who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinately beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes.”* (Ephesians 3:20 TLB) If you want God’s dream for your life, you must dare to ask Him what He wants you to do. Then ask yourself, “What would I attempt for God if I knew I couldn’t fail?” Let that expand your vision.
- **Believe God’s promises.** The Bible says, *“I am the Lord, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for me?”* (Jeremiah 32:27 NLT) Never let an impossible situation intimidate you. Let it motivate you to pray more, believe more, trust more, experience more, learn more, and grow more. Faith can work in realms that seem impossible to us.
- **Dream big.** *“Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.”* (Psalm 2:8 NIV) Let the size of your God determine the size of your goal. You are not able to fully appreciate God’s power until you’ve attempted something that can’t be done in the power of the flesh. God’s dream for you will be a perfect match for your God-given SHAPE: your spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experiences. But it will be impossible to achieve without *“his mighty power at work within you.”*

Dream great dreams for God. It’s a significant step in your walk of faith.

This week we are focusing on the “T” goal of Daring Faith. It states, “Train at least two-thirds of PCC’s attenders to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ.”

1. What things encourage you to dream great dreams for God?
2. What things discourage you from dreaming great dreams for God?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to dreaming great dreams for God?
4. Some Christians keep their dreams small because they fear that they might not have the knowledge and skills to fit in with God’s dreams for them. Are you one of those people? What training would help you?
5. Turn your thoughts into prayer. It could be a prayer of gratitude or praise. It could be a prayer of confession or a request for God’s help. It’s up to you. How do you want to respond to God?

Daily Devotionals: Week Four, Day Six

THE KEY FOCUS THAT GOD HAS FOR ME THIS WEEK

**“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”
(Proverbs 25:11 NIV)**

There is no doubt about it: truth is extremely valuable when understood correctly and applied appropriately. That kind of truth is *“like apples of gold in settings of silver.”* It is one thing to announce that one believes something as true. It is another thing to understand deeply the reasons for its truth and its implications for life.

One challenge that we Christians face in dealing with truth is that there are so many things calling for our attention, even when reading the Bible. We can find so many things to focus our attention on, that we don't give adequate attention to any one thing. Let's seek for the most important things that the Lord has for us, which might be different for different people because we are all in different stages of discipleship. Let's go for the *“apples of gold in settings of silver.”*

In the weeks of the Daring Faith campaign we in Peninsula Community Church want you to reflect on your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and how that faith might be strengthened in practical ways so that your faith might increasingly be filled with *“apples of gold in settings of silver.”* We hope that each daily devotional will stimulate you as you seek to follow Jesus in faith. But we are aware that five new insights about faith each week are more than most people can fully assimilate and put into practice in a short period of time. God often develops His disciples bit-by-bit over a period of time, rather than overnight. God has His focus for your development at this point in time.

So, we are asking you to review the verses and insights God has given you in the last week. Of the many lessons you have learned, what one thing is most important for you to focus on and incorporate into your life right now?

- A command to obey
- An example to follow
- A promise to claim
- A Scripture to study further
- An idea to think through
- A relationship to renew
- A sin to forsake
- A person to love
- Etc.

As you reflect on that focus, in what ways can that focus help you to work with all the brothers and sisters at PCC to reach our Daring Faith goal: “Train at least two-thirds of PCC's attenders to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ.”

Daily Devotionals: Week Five, Day One

DECISION-MAKING IS A FAITH-BUILDING ACTIVITY

“But when you pray, you must believe and not doubt at all. Whoever doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and blown by the wind. If you are like that, unable to make up your mind and undecided in all you do, you must not think that you will receive anything from the Lord.” (James 1:6-8 TEV)

Nothing is going to happen to your dream until you wake up and put it into action. You have to make the decision: “I’m going to go for it!” For every ten dreams in the world, there is only one decision maker. Most people have dreams but they never get to this step—making the decision to trust God and step out in faith. And then they wonder why their dreams are not fulfilled.

James says, *“But when you pray, you must believe and not doubt at all. Whoever doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and blown by the wind. If you are like that, unable to make up your mind and undecided in all you do, you must not think that you will receive anything from the Lord.”* (James 1:6-8 TEV)

Faith is a verb. It’s active and not passive. Faith is not just something you believe, it’s something you do. You have to make up your mind and step up your pace.

Decision-making is a faith-building activity that requires two things:

- **You must decide to invest your time, money, reputation, and energy.** You lay it all on the line; you take the plunge. You say, “God, you’ve told me to do this and I’m going to be faithful to do it!”
- **You have to let go of security.** You cannot move forward in faith and hold onto the past at the same time. In other words, if you want to walk on water, you have to get out of the boat.

This week we are focusing on the Daring Faith “H” goal. It states, “Help take the Good News to an unreached people through support of at least one new career missionary.”

1. What things encourage you to make specific and practical decisions based on your faith in God?
2. What things in life discourage you from making those decisions?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to making specific and practical decisions based on your faith in God?
4. Pray against any doubts you may have today and begin to claim the promises of God not only for you, but for PCC as well.
5. Talk to God about who we might support in the future as a missionary, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith in the area of missions, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week Five, Day Two

FAITH, NOT FEELINGS, PLEASES GOD

**“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.”
(Job 1:21 NIV)**

When you are a baby Christian, God gives you a lot of confirming emotions, and often answers the most immature, self-centered prayers—so you’ll know He exists. But as you grow in faith, He will wean you off these dependencies. God wants you to sense His presence, but He’s more concerned that you trust Him than that you feel Him. Faith, not feelings, pleases God. The Bible says, *“Without faith it is impossible to please God.”* (Hebrews 11:6 NIV)

The situations that will stretch your faith most will be those times when life falls apart and God seems nowhere to be found. This happened to Job. On a single day he lost everything—his family, his business, his health, and everything he owned. Most discouraging for Job was that for thirty-seven chapters of the Bible, God said nothing!

How do you trust God when He is silent? How do you stay connected in a crisis without communication? How do you praise God when you don’t understand what’s happening in your life? How do you keep your eyes on Jesus when they’re full of tears? You do what Job did: *“He fell to the ground in worship and said, ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.’”* (Job 1:21 NIV)

Tell God exactly how you feel. Pour out your heart to God. Unload every emotion that you’re feeling. Job did this when he said, *“I can’t be quiet! I am angry and bitter. I have to speak.”* (Job 7:11 TEV)

Never be afraid to tell God what’s on your mind. He can handle your doubt, anger, fear, grief, confusion, and questions. And He’ll never stop loving you.

We continue focusing on the Daring Faith “H” goal: “Help take the Good News to an unreached people through support of at least one new career missionary.”

1. What things encourage you to trust God when He is silent?
2. What things in life discourage you from trusting God when He is silent?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to trusting God when He is silent?
4. PCC would like to support a new career missionary, preferably one from our own church. So far, God has been silent as to who that might be. What steps of faith can we take in this situation?
5. Talk to God about who we might support in the future as a missionary, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith in the area of missions, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week Five, Day Three

EVERY DIFFICULTY IS FOR YOUR DEVELOPMENT

“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.” (2 Corinthians 4:17 NIV)

When we go through difficulties in life, the first thing we try to do is blame somebody else. But it doesn't matter where your problem came from—God still has a purpose for it in your life. Even when you do something stupid, God can use it. Even when other people hurt you intentionally, he can use it. Even when the devil plans bad things for your life, God can bring good out of it.

God's purpose is greater than your problem and your pain. God has a plan! You need to look past the temporary pain and look instead at the long-term benefit in your life. The Bible says, *“We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that . . . they help us learn to be patient. And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady.”* (Romans 5:3-4 TLB)

What is the purpose of your problems and difficulties? God wants you to learn something. Every storm is a school. Every trial is a teacher. Every experience is an education. Every difficulty is for your development.

Most of us are slow learners. If you don't learn something the first time, God will bring it up again in your life. It will come back, because God is more interested in your character than he is in your comfort. He is more interested in making you like Christ than He is in making things easy for you.

You might be facing a major difficult right now: an illness, a financial problem, or strain in a relationship. Does God have a message for you while you're going through your difficulty? Absolutely. God is saying to you, “Don't give up. Grow up.” *“Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”* (James 1:4 NKJV)

We continue focusing on the Daring Faith “H” goal: “Help take the Good News to an unreached people through support of at least one new career missionary.”

1. What things encourage you to have greater trust in God in the midst of pain?
2. What things in life discourage your faith in God when in the midst of pain?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to facing trials?
4. Some churches forget about evangelism and missions when they face other trials. Pray that PCC would not be distracted from take the gospel to the world by any other difficulties.
5. Talk to God about who we might support in the future as a missionary, and what God is doing in your life to make evangelism and missions a priority.

Daily Devotionals: Week Five, Day Four

GOD IS IN CONTROL OF YOUR DEAD-END

“Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.” (Romans 4:17 NLT)

There are certain dead-end words in life: cancer, divorce, bankruptcy, infertility, and unemployment, to name a few. How do you know when you're at a dead end? You know it when things get out of your control.

When you're at a dead end and you're waiting for deliverance, you need to remember this: The situation may be out of your control, but it's not out of God's control. When you face a dead end, don't focus on what you can't do. Focus instead on what God can do.

There are two things God can do that you can't do: He can *“bring the dead back to life and create new things out of nothing.”* (Romans 4:17 NLT) If God can give life to a dead man, He can bring life to a dead career. He can bring life to a dead marriage. He can bring life to a dead dream. He can bring life to a financial dead end.

When you face things that are out of your control, you need something more than a positive mental attitude. You need faith in God, because he can control things when you can't. Most of life is beyond your control, so you need faith far more than you need positive thinking.

The Bible says, *“What is impossible with men is possible with God.”* (Luke 18:27 NIV) God turns crucifixions into resurrections. He specializes in the impossible. It's called *“miracles,”* and He can do one in your life! God is ready to turn your dead end into deliverance.

Today we are focusing on our “H” goal again: helping take the good news to an unreached people group through support of at least one new career missionary.

1. What things encourage you to move beyond the dead ends in your life?
2. What things in life discourage your faith when in the midst of those dead ends?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to dealing with dead ends?
4. Pray against any dead-ends that may come your way and trust God is in control; pray for an abundant increase in your faith and trust in God.
5. Talk to God about who we might support in the future as a missionary, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith in the area of missions, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week Five, Day Five

SEIZE THE MOMENT!

**“Be careful how you act; these are difficult days. Don’t be fools; be wise: make the most of every opportunity you have for doing good.”
(Ephesians 5:15-16 TLB)**

Everyone has a dream, but most dreams never come true. It’s not that we aren’t smart enough, or outgoing enough, or even spiritual enough. Usually, our dreams don’t come true because we’re unwilling to take the necessary risks to reach them.

The Bible shares a sad one-sentence commentary about a king who failed to achieve an important ambition in his life: “[King] Jehoshaphat built a fleet of trading ships to go to Ophir for gold, but they never set sail—they were wrecked at Ezion Geber.” (1 Kings 22:48 NIV) While it’s a tragedy for your ship to never come in, it’s a greater tragedy to build a ship and never set sail. Imagine the energy and money expended by King Jehoshaphat. He built an entire fleet of ships to go after the gold, but not one of them set sail. Evidently a storm came up while they were in the harbor, and slammed the ships against the rocks. They were all destroyed.

Some people spend their whole lives waiting for their ship to come. But God isn’t waiting for your ship to come in. He’s waiting for you to sail your ship out of the harbor. I know a man who for thirty years had a dream of starting a ministry, but he never took the risk to do anything about his dream. He never got his ship out of the harbor. Eventually, the man died—and so did his dream.

The Bible’s antidote to that kind of tragic procrastination is as simple as an overdone catchphrase but excruciatingly difficult to apply at times: Just do it! The Bible says, “Be careful how you act; these are difficult days. Don’t be fools; be wise: make the most of every opportunity you have for doing good.” (Ephesians 5:15-16 TLB) The Bible urges us to seize the moment and act now. To live a life with unfulfilled dreams is a tragedy. Ships aren’t made for the harbor. They’re made to set sail. Are you ready to set sail?

On our last day we are focusing on our “H” goal again: helping take the good news to an unreached people group through support of at least one new career missionary.

1. What things encourage you to set sail?
2. What things in life discourage you from setting sail?
3. How can you strengthen the “encouragements” and weaken the “discouragements” when it comes to setting sail with your dreams?
4. Pray against any forces that would hinder you as an individual or PCC as a church from setting sail to make a greater impact in the world around us for the gospel.
5. Talk to God about who we might support in the future as a missionary, what God is doing in your life that is increasing your faith in the area of missions, and how you might be mobilized in this.

Daily Devotionals: Week Five, Day Six

THE KEY FOCUS THAT GOD HAS FOR ME THIS WEEK

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2 NIV)

Following his majestic and profound explanation of the Christian faith in Romans, the apostle Paul discussed many practical implications of the truth of the gospel. He very quickly brought up “the renewing of your mind.” Life change begins on the inside with what we think and works its way out to what we do. How does that happen? There has to be a commitment to living out the truth of the gospel, which Paul mentions in Romans 12:1. Based on that commitment, we need to think through our world view and our lifestyle and bring both of those into conformity with the truth of the gospel. That kind of reflection requires a person to prioritize what is necessary at the moment, mull it over and over, and then live it out.

In the weeks of the Daring Faith campaign we in Peninsula Community Church want you to reflect on your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and how that faith might be strengthened in practical ways so that your faith in Jesus might increasingly move you to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” We hope that each daily devotional will stimulate you as you seek to follow Jesus in faith. But we are aware that five new insights about faith each week are more than most people can fully assimilate and put into practice in a short period of time. God often develops His disciples bit-by-bit over a period of time, rather than overnight. God has His focus for your development at this point in time.

So, we are asking you to review the verses and insights God has given you in the last week. Of the many lessons you have learned, what one thing is most important for you to focus on and incorporate into your life right now?

- A command to obey
- An example to follow
- A promise to claim
- A Scripture to study further
- An idea to think through
- A relationship to renew
- A sin to forsake
- A person to love
- Etc.

As you reflect on that focus, in what ways can that focus help you to work with all the brothers and sisters at PCC to reach our Daring Faith goal: “Help take the Good News to an unreached people through support of at least one new career missionary.”

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

Hebrews 11:6

