



Daily Devotion

Wilsonville Baptist Church
Steve Thomas, Pastor

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry.”
Psalm 41

November 2, 2016 is a date I will never forget. Something happened that day that I had been waiting for most of my life. It was, beside the day of my salvation, the day of my marriage and the birth of my daughter, the best day of my life. So, you asked, as you rack your brain to remember, what happened that day that was so important. Well, on that day for the first time in 108 years, my beloved Chicago Cubs won the World Series. I had, for years, endured many seasons of losing, and a few times when it looked like the Cubs were finally going to win, only to end in heartbreak. I tried to console myself with the old adage ‘Wait till next year.’ But next year would never seem to come, until November 2, 2016.

I not only do not like waiting for the Cubs to win the World Series, I hate waiting for anything. I hate waiting in long lines, I hate waiting for my food to cook, and I hate waiting for winter to become spring. I also have to admit to not being real fond on waiting for God. Waiting tests my faith and my belief that God is faithful and knows what is best for me. Learning to trust Him and not lean on my own understanding is an important lesson of faith. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

I am afraid that in our hurry, we often settle for the fast food of life instead of waiting on God’s best. Over the years I have found that waiting on God has been hard, but in the end God’s timing is always perfect. For us to find renewal, we need to learn to wait on the Lord for his will in our lives.

*Dear Lord, teach us to learn to wait on you and your will for our lives.
May we always lean on your wisdom and not our own understanding
In Jesus Name, Amen.*

Day 7—Chuck Webb

Hawaii Missile False Alert

Shortly after 8 a.m. on Saturday, January 13th, the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency sent an alert to cell phones on the islands stating, "Ballistic missile threat inbound to Hawaii. Seek immediate shelter. This is not a drill." A television banner added, "A missile may impact on land or sea within minutes." State government officials revoked the alert after 38 minutes, according to media reports, and later said the message went out because of human error. But amid heightened tension with North Korea, some Hawaiians and tourists thought their lives could end within the hour.

My brother, Craig Webb, is the new assistant executive director of the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention. He had just finished washing his car when a neighbor relayed the alert. He said he felt "a peace" and didn't realize until later "how upset everybody else was."

Hiking with University of Hawaii international students later that day, my brother used his experience to give a Gospel witness. My brother said, "I shared with them my experience about the peace I had, knowing that should we really be vaporized or killed somehow, because of the blood Jesus shed and by receiving the free gift of His salvation, we would spend eternity with Him."

"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (Matthew 24:36, NIV)

On that day, will you be like my brother and have that peace, knowing you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Or will you be like many, lost and afraid with no peace in Jesus? If you have that relationship with our Lord, are you sharing Him with your lost friends?

*Wilsonville Baptist Church
2018 Church Renewal*

Day 1—Steve Thomas

Ephesians 4:23-24

Being renewed in the spirit of your mind is important to the Christian. There is a change that takes place when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We are not the old person anymore, but we are renewed in Jesus. Paul follows these verses by talking about some of those changes. We put away lying. We learn how to handle anger. We stop stealing. We do not let corrupt language come from our mouths. We are renewed in Jesus.

The problem for many Christians comes in when we are living around people who are not Christians and therefore do not act like Christians. We are constantly reminded of the ways of the world, and if we are not spending time in prayer, Bible Study, and with other Christians, we begin to act like the world.

When this happens, many get upset if it is pointed out. Our attitude stinks and we don't see it. Many times, we feel like we have the right to feel this way. Our actions are ungodly and we excuse it because others are doing the same things. We speak vulgar language and gossip and excuse it for the situation we are in.

When we are renewed in the spirit of our minds, we acknowledge the conviction by The Holy Spirit of the sinful attitudes, actions and words that come from our lives. We realize we are not acting like children of God, but children of the devil. As Christians, we need a constant renewal so God will shine through and we can show the love and forgiveness to others that God has shown to us.

Dear God, thank you for loving me and saving me. Thank you that I am one of your children. Help me to be seen by the world, and especially my church family as a child of God. Renew my spirit today so I can live in joy and share your love with all those around me. Please forgive me where I fail you. Change me in my attitude, my actions and my words. Make me more like you. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 6—Frank Martin

How Does Your Back Feel?

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” Colossians 3:1-2

An article in a San Francisco newspaper reported that a man who once found a \$5 dollar bill on the sidewalk, decided that he would always look down while walking. Over the years he, it was reported, that he found among other things, 29,516 buttons, 54,172 pins, 12 cents a bad back, and a miserly disposition. But he also missed so much more—the glory of the sunlight, the wonder of a full moon, the smiles of friends and family and the blueness of a clear sky.

I am afraid that we can also be like this man. We may not walk around looking down for some hidden treasure. But we do often become so engrossed in the things of this world that we miss the eternal blessings that God wants to give us. Perhaps we have gotten a taste of a fleeting pleasure of this world and spend our lives chasing after more. That is a dangerous pursuit, because it leads to a life invested in things that will give us temporary joy, but not eternal contentment.

Let us not trade in the eternal things of God by setting our minds on this world to receive the world's buttons and pins. Let us set our heart on the things above where Christ is. By the way, how does your back feel?

Dear God, lead us to daily set our hearts on heavenly treasures that are eternal, instead of the things of this world that can be destroyed or stolen. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Day 5—Chuck Webb

Going through the Motions

I have been in church since nine months before I was born. I remember most of the Bible stories in the Bible. It is great to have knowledge of the stories but sometimes it can be a negative. Sometimes when I am going through my devotion time and I am instructed to read a certain passage or chapter, I skim through it because I am already familiar. Instead of reading the passage, meditating on the passage, and gleaning something new, I assume I already know what I need to know from that passage of the Bible.

However, when I am studying a passage, sometimes I see something I do not remember reading before. I realize that God is wanting to teach me something new. I need to listen to Him!

I need to remember God's word is living and active and the same passage I read last month, could offer a new perspective this month.

Day 2—Chuck Webb

Christian Friends

When life gets difficult and we get frazzled, staying close to our Christian friends will help us to get through.

I read about a woman named Anne and her friend who were traveling together. Her friend seemed a bit frazzled. When they got to the airport, her friend forgot to have her identification readily available and couldn't find her reservation confirmation number. The ticket agent waited patiently, smiled, and then helped her at the self-serve check-in. After receiving her ticket, the friend asked, "Where do we go next?" The agent smiled again and said to her, "Stay close to your friend" (pointing at Anne).

That can be good advice for all of us when our lives get frazzled—stay close to your godly friends. We need each other. We need that small group time with godly Christians. Although Jesus is our best friend, we also need relationships with fellow believers to help us survive life.

"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:8-11, NIV)

Peter was writing to believers who needed one another because they were suffering for their faith. He also included the need for believers to use their spiritual gifts to minister to one another. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 we're encouraged to comfort each other with the comfort we've been given by God and to build each other up in love.

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." (1 Thess. 5:11, ESV)

Day 3—Frank Martin

How Close is too Close?

“The woman was convinced. How lovely and fresh looking it was! And it would make her so wise! So she ate some of the fruit and she gave some to her husband, and he ate it too.” Genesis 3:6

Have you had the experience of being in a crowded elevator? If you are like me, it can feel awkward, because you're forced to stand too close to other people you don't know, invading your personal space. Scientists have actually studied what is acceptable personal space for most people. They have concluded that invisible boundary that marks our absolute limit of personal space as being between 8 to 16 inches from our faces.

When it comes to temptation, how close is too close? When do the warning lights go off in your head when you realize you are too close to sin? In Genesis 3:6, we find Adam and Eve eating from the only tree that God had forbid them to eat from. Eve knew this, yet she listened to the serpent and his deception. But for me, it begs the question, why was Eve anywhere close to the one tree God had told them not to eat from? Why did Adam eat fruit from the one tree he knew he shouldn't eat from? How close is too close?

You see, Satan does not have to work that hard to tempt us, when we have already decided that we are going to get close to that sin. I'm going to look at the sin. Possibly, trying it on for size. Just get close enough to it to enjoy but not sin.

That is when Satan's temptation has us. How close is too close? Anywhere close to sin is too close. To find renewal in our walk with God, we need to make the commitment that when we recognize temptation to run from it and to seek God's way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Dear Lord, help me to seek your way of escape when temptation comes. May I commit to not intentionally walk close to sin, when I am aware of it. Help me to realize that temptation always over promises and under delivers. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 4—Steve Thomas

Psalm 51:10-12

David was at a point where he was broken and ready to get his relationship with God renewed. He wanted to get back to where he had been before he chose to go against God's Word and do what looked good at the moment. He had become miserable because the relationship with God was not right. He needed renewal.

David had a friend, Nathan, who was willing to confront David with the truth about the unconfessed sin in his life. These were words that could have been used by David to have him put to death. Instead, David was broken with these words. Psalm 51 is the prayer David prayed as he looked to God for forgiveness so the relationship could be restored.

In Psalm 51, David seeks renewal so he can be fully used by God to lead a nation. He seeks a new heart and a new spirit. David came to a point that we all need to come to. I need to come before God in repentance and look to Him to restore the relationship so I can be effective for Him. I need to accept that what God calls sin is sin and I have no excuse for going against what He says. I cannot hide my sin from God and there are always consequences. I need renewal.

We all need a friend like Nathan. We seem to want friends that tell us whatever we do is fine. That it's okay. Friends like that are not friends. Friends that will go out with us and sin with us are not what we need. Real friends can be honest with us and help us to get back to where we need to be. Real friends understand that when we are hurting ourselves and our witness they will help us to see it. We all need a friend like Nathan.

Dear Jesus, thank you for going to the cross and giving me the opportunity to have a relationship with you. Please forgive me for choosing sin and trying to hide it from you. Today, I confess my sin to you and ask you to renew my heart and my spirit. Place in my life people who will hold me accountable and lead me back to a relationship with you. You are good in every way and I thank you for forgiveness and eternal life. Let the world see Jesus in me.