

BIRD STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

2021 DEVOTIONALS

ISSUE 2: VOL. 2: Issue 2

FOCUS

ON THE

SON

IN

2021



2021 DEVOTIONALS

- ✚ A Wednesday Dinner w/ Bro. Booker
- ✚ The DEVOTIONALS

TEMPORARY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES DUE TO COVID19:

11:00 AM - **SUNDAY** MORNING WORSHIP-
IN-PERSON SERVICES FOLLOWING STRICT
COVID19 PROTOCOLS, I.E. MASK REQUIRED -
VIRTUAL (FB AND CONFERENCE CALL)

SERVICES UPLOADED TO YOUTUBE@BIRD ST.
COC

7:00 PM - **TUESDAY** DEVOTIONAL AND PRAYER
CONFERENCE CALL

7:00 ** PM - **WEDNESDAY** NIGHT BIBLE STUDY
** CHANGED FROM 6 W/DST

11:00 AM TUESDAY AND 7:00 PM THURSDAY
LADIES DEVOTIONAL CALL

STAY CONNECTED!

MISSION STATEMENT:

WE, The FAMILY of GOD's
people at 428 Bird Street are:
**PASSIONATE IN WORSHIP,
COMPASSIONATE IN
SERVICE,
AGGRESSIVE IN WITNESS,
STRONG IN FELLOWSHIP,
AND
COMMITTED TO
DISCIPLESHIP!**

¹⁹ GO therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in²⁰ the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I AM with you always, to the end of the age.:

Whom have I in heaven *but You?* And *there is none* upon earth *that* I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail; *But God is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever. PSALM 73/25-26



BRO. ELL T. BIGGERS

BRO. KEITH CHUNN

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MINISTER:

BRO. ANTHONY BOOKER



Wednesday Night Dinner with ANTHONY BOOKER

Psalm 144 ¹Blessed be the Lord my strength which *teacheth my hands to war*, and *my fingers to fight*. ² *My goodness*, and *my fortress*, *my high tower*, and *my deliverer, my shield*, and *he in whom I trust*; who *subdueth my people under me*. ³Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! ⁴Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away. ⁵Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. ⁶Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them. ⁷Send thine hand from above; *rid me, and deliver me* out of great waters, from the hand of strange children; ⁸Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood. ⁹I will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee. ¹⁰It is *he that giveth salvation* unto kings: *who delivereth David* his servant from the hurtful sword. ¹¹*Rid me, and deliver me* from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood: ¹²That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace: ¹³That our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: ¹⁴That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets. ¹⁵Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.

We have GOD's protection – this is a Warrior Psalm - Similar to Psalms 2 and 18 GOD alone is the preparer for war!

2 Samuel 22/35 ³⁵He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Warfare is Spiritual and we are all soldiers in the army of GOD.

The Psalmist calls our attention to 10 characteristics of GOD

GOD is: *My Teacher of Warfare - My Strength - My Goodness - My Fortress - My High Tower - My Deliverer - My Shield - My Trust - My Conqueror - My Salvation*

My Rock – Strong Foundation that which is SOLID Ends Sermon on the Mount. Wise builds on ROCK - But foolish does not and when the storms of life come – IT Will STAND! David realized that in the storm GOD is the ROCK and GOD IS OUR ROCK. We often sing the song, “On CHRIST the Solid ROCK I Stand – all other ground is sinking sand”!

Oath – Covenant – Blood – our SOLID ROCK under the pressures of life!

My Goodness vs. My loving Ally Loving kindness mercy steadfast love faithful love and kind one)

High Tower – faithful one Nothing catches GOD off-guard or by surprise - in looking at any situation GOD sees all knows all as our Fortress Rock High Tower Strength and Deliverer meaning GOD is a buffer protector defender and guardian and shield

Ephesians 6 ⁶Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

Trust to make stable conviction it is whatever GOD decides to do and whatever GOD does is RIGHT

Trust in whatever situation Be at Peace with whatever situation. When we try to work it out on our own we usually make it worse.

Exodus 17/8-16 ⁸Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. ⁹And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. ¹⁰So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹²But Moses hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. ¹³And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. ¹⁴And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. ¹⁵And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH NISSI: ¹⁶For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Psalms 102 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. ²Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily. ³For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. ⁴My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.⁵ By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin ⁶I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. ⁷I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top. ⁸Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. ⁹For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. ¹⁰Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down. ¹¹My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. ¹²But thou, O Lord, shall endure forever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. ¹³Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. ¹⁴For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.¹⁵ So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. ¹⁶When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. ¹⁷He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. ¹⁸This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord. ¹⁹For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; ²⁰To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;²¹ To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;²² When the people are together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord. ²³He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. ²⁴I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. ²⁵Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. ²⁶They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: ²⁷But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. ²⁸The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

Psalms 109/23 ²³I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. ²⁴My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness. ²⁵I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads. ²⁶Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy: ²⁷That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, hast done it. ²⁸Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice. ²⁹Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle. ³⁰I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude. ³¹For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

James 4/14. ¹⁴ Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. ¹⁵ For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. ¹⁶ But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Devotional from TONY BOOKER

Tearing Down Partition Walls

Classrooms sometimes are separated by a partition – it creates space and decreases disturbance

We fight against satan who tries to establish his stronghold in our minds by inserting a partition – and block or communication of knowledge with GOD and corrupt our thinking.

Crippling our spirituality are emotionally charged issues such as the death of a loved one, issues on/losing our jobs, divorce or issues in our marriage and family and other forms of negativity such as decisions we make because of anger or envy of others! When we allow ourselves to dwell on these issues we can block GOD's spiritual truth and be paralyzed by our circumstances.

These emotional strongholds that can include be manifested in worry, fear, doubt and hate which are satan's strongholds/partitions which block our ability to see, understand and live out GOD's truth in our lives.

We were crucified, buried and resurrected with CHRIST – We are therefore New Creatures and even if literally new creatures GOD took what happened to JESUS and made our life in HIM a spiritual reality. We walk in HIM and have victory over sin and death. We can be encouraged by 2nd Corinthians 10/3-5 as new creatures the old man and his sins died on that cross with JESUS.

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: ⁴ (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but ***mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;***) ⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and ***bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;***

GOD's truth is filtered or blocked because of satan's partitions; however, we must trust and recognize the truth of GOD. We have been buried with the resurrected CHRIST. As such, we are part of spiritual royalty.

The partitions try to keep us from overcoming worry resisting old habits or depression – we have to stop believing satan's lies in order to overcome. We are new creatures! We must apply the truth of HIS WORD to break down the partitions – satan's work to tear down is gradual not all at once. Remember from previous devo...his most valuable tool is that worn-down pick-like tool that gets used over and over. GOD has given us Power over partitions(satan's strongholds) – Partitions fall by applying the TRUTH of GOD's WORD!

ELIJAH: IN Crisis – IN Weakness – Learning Dependence

Elijah was very independent – He was strong – had taken care of himself – had many accomplishments – very confident in himself and his ability to get things done.

GOD needed Elijah to understand where the source of his success really was in. IN GOD!!! GOD will teach in a way that makes it clear to the learner by stripping the learning down to the most basic level or more so the level of can't see anyway to make it. With Elijah GOD took Everything away even the ability to eat or drink on his own. Elijah ends up at the Cherith brook which had a meaning in Hebrew of the place he was in not just the physical location but his physical body. "***Cherith***" means to cut down! GOD cut down his place in the world, removed strength, removed the capacity for Elijah in every way regarding independence. GOD did this to teach Elijah that it was time to be DEPENDENT and understand DEPENDENCE (ON GOD).

HE breaks us down to the bare minimum to build us back up for HIS use. When GOD gets ready to use us – he may start with

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, ***there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*** ⁸ ***For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.***

⁹ Each time he said, "MY Grace is all you need. MY Power works best in weakness. "So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. (NLT)

¹⁰Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Typically we would not easily boast about being financially weak/poor – occasionally weak/unemployed – or relationally weak/alone. However Paul knew that GOD's miracles and blessings and GLORY are to be found in our weaknesses not our strengths. Rejoice because in our strengths we are likely to forget GOD.

Elijah lost his job – could not provide for himself - GOD Provide All he needed. First GOD had a fowl deliver him food and water. When the brook no longer sustained by multiplying bread and water! The Greatest need – brings GOD's Greatest Glory in the Provision – The Greatest Display of GOD's Power! Boasting in our strength is not what is important – With our weaknesses showcased we can boast in the strength, righteousness, provision and security that we have in JESUS.

1 Corinthians 24-30(1/27) .²⁴ But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles,^[f] Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.

²⁶ Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy^[g] when God called you.²⁷ **Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful.** ²⁸ **God chose things despised by the world,^[h] things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important.** ²⁹ As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

³⁰ God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin. ³¹ Therefore, as the Scriptures say, **“If you want to boast, boast only about the Lord.”** (NLT)

Learn DEPENDENCE [on GOD] – Rejoice in WEAKNESS – TRUST GOD THROUGH IT!

Devotional from RICK MORGAN

JOB 19/23-25; 26-29.

²³ Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! ²⁴ That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! ²⁵ **For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:**

²⁶ And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD: ²⁷ Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. ²⁸ But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me? ²⁹ Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.

Issues – Battles – Tragedy is often romanticized! Job had a Faith Level of 10 but it was really a developing Faith. He is speaking with his friends who really do not understand faith or Job's faith. The goal for us is to understand that in the midst of issues, battles, loss, pain, tragedy is to KNOW that the REDEEMER LIVES.

Where we have been challenged or experienced loss – everything we faced and came through was because of our relationship with the REDEEMER. The REDEEMER brings us out of bondage to a place of comfort. We needed to be

restored and the REDEEMER Brought Us Back! We could not walk but the REDEEMER Brought Us Back! Envy thought he had you but the REDEEMER Brought Us Back! Relationships were on the rocks but the REDEEMER Brought Us Back!

For the REDEEMER To Bring Us Back; however, there has to be an intimate relationship with the REDEEMER! THE REDEEMER liveth and continueth – HE is Active – HE IS NOT GOING ANYWHERE (NEVER leaves us or FORSAKES Us)!

Even though we see, walk, talk in the world about politics, racial issues and the craftiness of people of the world – OUR REDEEMER is ABOVE All of those issues.

Doubt gets into our minds especially when we are trying to do things right and makes us think the enemy is winning. That is because we see the issue and we have to see GOD in the issue. GOD sees the bigger picture – GOD does not want us to see the issue – HE wants us to SEE HIM! We SEE HIM by walking in FAITH and Not by Sight.

Story: When a teacher gives a test, the teacher will walk around the room. The teacher is there but the teacher will not entertain questions from the test taker. Sometimes GOD does the same thing. HE will be right there but he will not answer our questions, desires or even wants because HE is testing us. But like the teacher, GOD has prepared us with HIS word – So by FAITH we should pass the test even if we don't get the benefit of asking questions with an immediate answer from GOD during the test. OUR REDEEMER LIVES and HE is Right There Always!

Devotional from Brother KEVIN RHODES:

Fasting from Fear and Worry

In Mark 9, we read about Jesus healing a boy who had a spirit that made him unable to speak and gave him seizures, slamming him to the ground and causing him to foam at the mouth. The disciples were unable to heal him, and Christ stepped in.

Verses 21-24 read, *“And He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to kill him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!” But Jesus said to him, “If You can?” All things are possible for the one who believes.*” Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, *“I do believe; help my unbelief!”*

Right now, I'm crying out, *“I do believe; help my unbelief!”* I am 8 days into a fast. The goal of this fast is to let go of worry, fear, and anxiety. So, I'm crying out, *“help my unbelief!”* I'm fervently praying, trying to notice when my heart slips into fear and worry and saying to God, *“if it's Your Will, please take this from me,”* and saying to myself, *“I'm not doing that today.”* Rest assured worry and anxiety creeps back in . . . seeps in the cracks . . . when and where you least expect it. If we continue to feed it our undivided attention, it begins to grow and fester within us. In the midst of it, I'm still going to be crying out, *“I do believe; help my unbelief!”*

One of our best weapons against fear and worry is the undiluted Word of God. I find myself constantly looking to God's Word for help and encouragement in those moments when dread rears its ugly head.

Deuteronomy 31:6 say, *“Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or in dread of them, for the Lord your God is the One who is going with you. He will not desert you or abandon you.”* Again, in **Psalm 27:1**, *“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom should I dread?”* In those moments I'm leaning on **JEHOVAH-NISSI**, which TRANSLATES TO THE LORD MY BANNER! In my life, I've tried to fight this battle on my own for so long to no avail. It is only when I've turned it all over to God and pled with Him to fight my battles that I have been victorious. I don't know if it's human nature or because I'm a man . . . but I've been stubborn vowing that I can do it on my own. I can't . . . and why should I when I've got God on my side?

Psalm 118:6 reminds us, *“The Lord is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”* We've got the One who knows no defeat fighting for us . . . the **One Isaiah speaks about in Chapter 41, verse 10** saying, *“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will also help you, I will also uphold you with My righteous right hand.”*

One of the wisest men to ever walk the earth, King Solomon, spoke several times about fear and worry. In **Proverbs 3:25-26**, he stated, *“Do not be afraid of sudden danger, nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes; for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.”* Again, in **Proverbs 29:25** he said, *“The fear of man brings a snare, but one who trusts in the Lord will be protected.”* Solomon was telling us where our trust and hope should lie . . . in the Lord. When that is where we run to . . . Who we turn to . . . what chance do fear, worry, and anxiety have? We must be so rooted in who and Whose we are that we can face whatever this old world throws at us. We must equip ourselves with the Word of God daily in order to be able face the challenges as they arise. In **Proverbs 12:25**, Solomon states, *“Anxiety in a person’s heart weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.”* This is oh so true, but I’m taking that one step farther and saying . . . anxiety in a person’s heart weighs it down, but The Good Word makes it glad!

Christ gave us some of the most direct advice about worry, fear, and anxiety. In fact, in **Matthew 6:25-34**, He gave us the cure for anxiety saying, *“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather crops into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more important than they? And which of you by worrying can add a single day to his life’s span? And why are you worried about clothing? Notice how the lilies of the field grow; they do not labor nor do they spin thread for cloth, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”* We hear this, but still we struggle. However, I don’t think we should beat ourselves up because we hear but can’t immediately do. It is a process that we must begin, though. Even the disciples who walked with Jesus and actually heard Him say all of this struggled with the concept. Even after seeing and taking part in Jesus feeding the 5,000, among other miracles they had witnessed, the disciples struggled. **Matthew 14:26-31** states, *“When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, ‘It is a ghost!’ And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.’ Peter responded and said to Him, ‘Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.’ And He said, ‘Come!’ And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and when he began to sink, he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ Immediately Jesus reached out with His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, ‘You of little faith, why did you doubt?’”* Christ did not leave Peter in the water. He admonished him for doubting but He also reached down and saved him. He will do the same thing for us. When we see ourselves struggling and sinking beneath the waves of worry and fear, all we have to do is cry out, “Lord, save me” and Christ will reach down and pull us up. Trusting in Him will give us the power to step out of the boat into the unknown.

Anxiety is a normal part of life, not to be feared or avoided but to be dealt with. We have been given the best medicine in the world to deal with it in God’s Word. Though, at times we cling to that worry and fear . . . it is our gut reaction to go into that manic fight or flight mode . . . we must not allow that fear to become the driving force in our lives. It is destructive and can turn from mental suffering to even more real physical suffering if allowed to go so far. We’re reminded of not allowing that fear to take such a hold on us in **I John 4:18**, which says, *“There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.”* Paul reminded Timothy of a very similar notion in **II Timothy 1:7** saying, *“God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.”* We have to be disciplined daily equipping ourselves with God’s Word. We must acknowledge His presence in our lives. We must allow God’s perfect love to take up residence in our hearts. When we do that . . . as big as God’s love is for us . . . there is no room for all of that fear and worry.

Saying all of this, know that it’s not coming from the perspective of someone who has mastered his fear and worry. It is a struggle that I continue to work on daily. It still creeps in and settles itself in my life . . . but, I’m getting better. I’m getting better at letting go of it all and handing it over to God. Each day is different, and I’m never quite sure what, often, tiny, insignificant thing is going to seep through the cracks in my armor and try to take root in my subconscious . . . fester and grow . . . go from mole hill to a mountain . . . but I’m confident in my God! I’m confident in what Christ told his disciples when they asked why they could not heal the demon possessed boy in **Matthew 17: 19-20**, which says, *“Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’ And He said to them, ‘Because of your meager faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you”* I believe that, through faith in Him, I can catch those mole hills before they become mountains . . . and if faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains . . . what more can total trust and faith in the Lord do to those tiny, insignificant mole hills? My God is a conqueror! There is no battle He cannot win. We just have to have faith and trust in His will. We have to cry out for Him to save us, and He will stretch out His hand to us. And when that faith starts to waiver . . . when we meet a situation that we know we can’t handle on our own . . . we have to dig deep in His Word. We have to cry out, “I do believe; help my unbelief!”

Devotional from RALPH THOMPSON:

Selling out to BUY IN!

IN an effort to Encourage Exhort and Edify each of us in navigating the New Year – we must have a heart to Praise and Glorify GOD. We must look back at 2020 and realize that there is a new culture – one of a Pandemic world – this has changed our personal lives, work lives, worship lives, interactions with others and our thinking. Do we conform to this new culture – we could think about a transformation – a modification – a change and we can ponder and prepare.

The one thing that should be constant for each of us is that we should continue to PRAY – GOD is still in Control and we must Trust HIM Wholly (HOLY)! GOD does not take time in showing us the why but we know all along there are things we cannot see – therefore it is BY FAITH because we know GOD IS ABLE! There is the Mercy of GOD, the Grace of GOD and the exceeding abundant Power of GOD that worketh in us.

Mindset must shift – Mentally – Physically – Spiritually. Sanctification has been given to us through GOD's mercy to man – we must give Glory To GOD because of this Paul exhorts and implores us to understand what we must do in light of GOD's mercy to All.

Romans 12/1-21 beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Victim on altar not as slain sacrifice of the spirit – not conformed to the transformation – to get us to Buy In to the Trust there has to be a transformation of our mind.

To **BUY IN To CHRIST** is to Sellout to the world!

This gives rise to several paradoxes: BUY IN/Sell out – Gain/Lose – Live/Die – Win/Lose – Rise/Fall

James 5/16¹⁶ **Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**

What we must do is use the Implement that we have at our disposal and that is the WORD OF GOD!!! As the Moses was holding his arms up to GOD as he was getting fatigued and his arms would begin to drop the people placed stones to keep his arms in the air up to GOD.

John the Baptist was strong and powerful preacher – preaching and baptizing in the name of Messiah and we see how he is described in Matt. 3 as the one coming before Messiah. He; however, buckled under discouragement when he was placed in prison with the high probability of facing and his eventual death. He was discouraged to the point that he asked the question was Jesus really the Messiah. So we see in this example that sometimes even the strongest believers in JESUS can falter under the discouragement tool.

Jesus did not further discourage, rebuke or scold John but let him know there was no other to look for in a Messiah.

The tools currently are political unrest – racial strife and persecution – the pandemic! Tools worthy to make room for the discouragement tool.

Matthew 10/38-39³⁸ And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. ³⁹ He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Mark 8/35³⁵ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Luke 9/24²⁴ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

JESUS tells us to Come After HIM/Deny Self – Serve in HIS CROSS - Surrender to HIS WAYS

Sell Out OF Pride – Prestige – Prominence – Focus on self
In order to Gain something – Have to Lose Something
The Got to be list: Restart – Renew – Restructure

The rich ruler was not ready to sell out for CHRIST – CHRIST knew his heart and that was why he went right to the heart of what meant more to the man. The man heard CHRIST request and went away sorrowful.
Matthew

²¹ Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

²¹ Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

²² And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

²² Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

²³ And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

The reminder to us should be *to NOT be Possessed by Possessions!*

Must live in a non-conformation to the world which one can be informed but it does not help us to be transformed – We must transform and GIVE into CHRIST. Ephesians 4 gives us direction on the transformation.
Lay it on the alter – Surrender to the HOLY to GOD – He will make it alright if we BUY IN to HIS Kingdom and Sell Out to the world

Devotional from CLIFFORD MCCLAIN:

7 QUOTES WE USE ALL OF THE TIME

1. ***I will PRAY for You*** When we are down, sick, ill, Going through something – we will use one or all of these 7 quotes to help us understand or believe that it will work out okay in the situation! But do we really believe that it will when we say – **I will PRAY for You** – that is a request and a statement! Sometimes we ask for prayer and the recipient of the question will state, “I will pray for you”! Brother Clifford lets us know that if someone tells us that they will pray for us that we are expecting them to do just that! Or if someone request prayer from us or our church, we will respond to that request, “I will pray for you” and in that moment, the requester and responder have an expectation that it will be done. AMEN! But we know that occasionally we may accept the request in a well-meaning manner but life steps in and maybe we don’t remember we were supposed to do that until we hear something about the requester or they hear about our situation. Brother Booker gives us direction for this situation – ***At the moment the prayer request or statement is made – Carry out the Action and PRAY right then!!!***

2. **Here Today and Gone Tomorrow.** We act sometimes like we will live forever but tomorrow is not promised! We should live our life knowing that our days are numbered and that we are pilgrims so the goal is not living forever but living in the present for GOD and as Brother Booker has told us in other verses and **Philippians 3/20** ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven—and we also eagerly await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,
3. **JESUS Will Fix It-** At times we will say this but we will quickly try to “fix it” ourselves. We have not really turned it over to GOD to “fix it”! More times than not when we try to “fix it” we end up “messing it up worse”. When you put it in GOD’s very capable – “HE ALONE CAN FIX IT” hands – leave it there. Recalling Brother Antwan’s very graphic sermon of “the Baggage” carrying 20 bags that we leave with GOD....then after feeling the relief of leaving them and their heaviness behind and with GOD – we forget and go pick all those 20 heavy bags back up.....WHY??? Leave it in GOD’s Hands!!!
4. **If HE Brings You To it HE Will Bring You Through It!** In this statement we definitely have great witness to our faith. We are not in doubt and we know that GOD’s grace, mercy and favor will/is/has rested on us abundantly. With this statement we cannot fall into the 2nd guessing GOD or questioning our Faith in HIM. Also we have to take care not to complain in our situation – GOD does not like complaining! GOD may give us some
5. **GOD Does Not Put Any More On Us Than We Can Take!**

6. **We are Old Enough to Know Better!**
 God makes us wise enough to do better – We are richly blessed and we do not have to be a millionaire to be blessed!
Proverbs 15/16 ¹⁶ Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith. **Psalms 37/16**
 The little bit that a godly man owns is better than the wealth of many evil men,¹
 We are wise enough to know that we need to talk to GOD all the time – not just when things go bad but when things are going good as well. We must pray and believe that GOD will answer our prayers in sickness or when our lives are out of whack! Because GOD ALWAYS Answers PRAYERS – not always the way we want – but what is best for us in HIS WILL. GOD never stops being good to us but we sometimes forget to show HIM our gratefulness when all is going well.

7. **Blessings OUTWEIGH our Problems!** We have suffered in the COVID19 Pandemic but GOD is surely blessing us as well. How we live – How we treat our neighbors – go a long way in showing our faith in GOD. GOD is bigger than All our Problems and he can handle anything we throw at HIM and in turn – we have Joy and Peace beyond all understanding in showing the world how GOD works in us and through us to help others even when it seems we are struggling.

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The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for Bird Street Church of Christ. The channel has 36 subscribers and 76 videos. The latest video is titled "The Role of Thanksgiving In The Early Church" and was uploaded 1 day ago. The video thumbnail shows a man speaking at a podium in a church setting, with a large screen behind him displaying the text "PRAY together". The video duration is 1:05:59.

Giving Options:

In Person: Drop By Church on Sunday at Designated Time

Mail: Bird Street COC – P.O. Box 862 – Shelbyville, TN. 37162

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