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Too weak to stand

Sometimes we are too weak to stand, the weight of the world, the worries and struggles of life weigh down on us and we tend to forget the wonderful, eternal joy we have in Christ Jesus! **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John Chapter 3 verse 16 KJV)** – as we put Christ at the center of our life one must really ponder: what is eternal life? Is the struggle of following Jesus worth the promise? Is the harassment, is the pain, is the constant struggle against the world, and against our flesh really worth enduring the pain and hardships? As we put Christ at the center and above every other we must remember why we are doing it: **And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. (Revelation Chapter 21 verse 3-5 KJV)** – our minds cannot even begin to understand the eternal life that awaits those redeemed by the blood of Christ but as I read through those 3 verses of scripture I desperately know that is somewhere I want to be!

As you enter day 24 of the 30 day challenge its time to start really understanding: this is a war. When I get weary and angry, when I tire of the constant barrage of attacks from the devil, when I am tired of fighting the good fight I forget that even know its hard for us to understand when we chose to follow Christ we are joining the army of God. We become a target, our family becomes a target, and the devil relentlessly tries to destroy our walk with the Lord. It is when you understand the promise of Jesus that you begin to understand: **Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. (John Chapter 15 verse 20 KJV)** – today as you seek to continue to make Christ the center of your life, making Him your first priority, it is important to both understand who you serve, why you serve Him, and what the cost of that service is, as well as what the promised inheritance after this fight is done. Is it worth it? I pray you would understand that even in our pain the answer is: it is worth everything and anything! Amen.

Daily Devotional

by: Pastor Richard Webster (abcpastor@bellsouth.net)

Too Much Rubbish

And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. (Nehemiah 4:10)

Every house has one, a room or area that seems to collect all of the junk. At our house it is the garage. When we get through using something and need a place to store it, we put it in the garage. The problem is that before long we can put so much junk in our garage that it is not able to serve its purpose, and that is, to be a place where you park cars. When our garage gets too full, we have to have a day to clean out the garage. I have to admit, I don't like cleaning out the garage. It just has way too much junk, but for it to function it has to be done. On those difficult days of cleaning, I wish that I had kept it clean.

Many times in our marriage, we get too much rubbish. When we do, we get discouraged like Judah did in our scripture. If our marriage is going to be successful, we need to keep the junk from building up. If we don't keep things from building up, then we are going to have to do some in-depth cleaning for our marriage to work the way it should. We need to remember that it is easier to keep our marriages clean than it is to have to clean things that build up. I challenge you to keep your marriage clean of rubbish. When you think about putting off a situation for another day, remember that it is easier to keep clean than it is to clean up.

Food for thought

by: Daniel Higginbotham (dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com)

“OK Daniel, I'm following Jesus, why isn't my marriage healing!?” Far to long I have seen brothers and sisters who allow their spouse to badly damage their walk with the Lord. It is something that we struggle with when we first find the Lord and is one that sometimes brothers and sisters in Christ can fight for a lifetime. Have you given your life, your marriage, and your family over to the Lord but there still seems to be a relentless struggle for control? This should not come of any surprise and I need you to understand the scripture is clear: **Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. (Matthew Chapter 10 verse 34-36 KJV)** – I know I once shared that scripture with someone I desperately love and I can remember they didn't understand it at the time and where a bit turned off by the strong language of the Lord Jesus. I share it with you for one purpose, we are called to put Christ above EVERYTHING. Your spouse may not like it, your family may not understand it, your friends may make fun of you, you may not even be able to always understand why but the truth is when we are called to put Jesus Christ above everything we are only following His example!

We love him, because he first loved us. (1 John Chapter 4 verse 19 KJV) – we love Jesus Christ, why? Its not something profound or something that takes a doctorate degree to understand, we love Him because He loved us first, we serve Him for He served us first, we follow Him for He first lead us... we put Him at the center and above all things in our life because He put us above His own happiness, His own comfort, and even His own life! When I tell you to put the Lord above all things I know that many won't be able to do this instantly and it may take much time, but its when you realize the sacrifice, the healing, the power, the love, mercy and grace that Jesus Christ has poured out on our families that you are able to accept His words: **He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (Matthew Chapter 10 verse 37 KJV)** – notice the words in red? I have no doubt that everyone reading them know those are the words from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ. “Those who love anything more than me are not worthy of me”, we put Christ at the center and above all things in our life because He did for us, we do it because He is the only one who will never fail or leave us, we do it because we are commanded to, we do it because once we do... everything else will begin to fall in to place! Once you put Christ above all things and love Him more than all things and all persons won't you obey Him? Won't you be more likely to give your life in service to Him? After all once you give Him your life... it isn't yours anymore!

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians Chapter 6 verse 19-20 KJV) – I pray that you would begin to understand... Jesus Christ has paid your ransom... He freed you from a eternal hell fire and paid in blood, in full, eternally, and because of this He has given you something your spouse can't give you, something your vices can't give you, something NO ONE can give you... eternal life full and free! As you enter day 24 of the 30 day challenge I wonder... do you realize how precious to God you are? Do

you understand the great gift He has given you? Do you understand why He would command you not to put anyone or anything above Him? Do you understand your actions speak louder than words? Saying you love Jesus and loving Jesus are two separate things. Walking the walk is so much more important than talking the talk...

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (Revelation Chapter 1 verse 8 KJV) – God knows you, He sees you, He hears you, He sees your thoughts, He knows your heart, He understands completely and without end. The scripture says “there is no searching the depth of His understanding” and I pray that this day you would take a sober look at your relationship with the Lord. Repent fully of any evil in your heart and in your life, fully turn to the Lord and pray He would give you strength to put Him above all things, at the center of all things, and that you would glorify Him in all you do! Amen.

Meet the family

Over the next 7 days we will be looking at God's wonderful grace and mercy as He has demonstrated in my life and my marriage and I pray that as God has blessed me to share with you the powerful works He has done in my life you would understand the only reason I am here now proclaiming the truth with you is because of His love and mercy. God's grace has saved me from countless darkness and evil and I pray you would know and accept the truth as God has demonstrated in my life: **Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians Chapter 5 verse 17 KJV).**

Its funny how one moment in a persons life can totally change them and forever influence everything in their life. That's what happened in September of 2011 as I lay in my guest bedroom in my basement. A few years before, my high school sweetheart and I got back together after being separated for years, in a strange twist of events in which I have no doubt God was answering a prayer my dad ended up being admitted to ICU where my wife was finishing her nursing clinicals. As it turned out even know she had never met my dad when we were together she saw my name written in his emergency contact board in his room and sent me a message on MySpace asking how he was, how I was, and just being the wonderful, loving, amazing woman God has made her. Its funny how some of the most painful moments in your life can also be the happiest.

Throughout the month of January of the year he passed away I would find myself many times praying to God on the floor of the men's room in the ICU waiting room just begging God "please take some of my life and give it to him, I need him", my dad who was a brother in the faith all of my life had given me precious wisdom and demonstrated to me how God loved me again and again. I have no shame in telling you that God used my dad to save me from committing suicide and always my dad had a way of putting things just the way I needed. "For God so loved Daniel Higginbotham, He gave His only begotten Son", I will never forget the last conversation my dad and I had a few weeks before He went in to ICU as we were going fishing he reminded me of God's great love for me. Writing this now it brings tears to my eyes knowing that he would lose his life and go to be with the Lord, even through the pain God not only heard my prayer for him to have some of my life but answered it. My son Kasen Higginbotham was born in the same year of my dad's passing and as I looked in to my son's big blue beautiful eyes low and behold God gave me a part of my dad that I am blessed to see everyday!

Looking back on my life I desperately wish I could have done things in a Christ honoring way, but living my life for 25 years before He revealed Himself to me that wonderful September night I made many sinful decisions. My son and my wife are the most wonderful blessing I could have possibly hoped for after only my salvation and I do not regret them but have long since repented of the sin in my life before Christ saved me. In September of 2011 as my wife and son lay sleeping in the room upstairs I knew that it was over... my wife and I were about to get a divorce, I hated my job, I hated my self, I couldn't control the sexual urges that had become a porn addiction that had taken the reigns in my life. As I lay in the darkness of my guest bedroom knowing that I was losing everything and that I was totally unable to control myself, I burst in to tears thinking "its over"... I had no idea how right but also how wrong I truly was, and O' halleluiah Jesus Christ has reminded me everyday since

just how much it was over but how everyday my life is made new by His grace and mercy!

Prayer Suggestions

Today before you pray I would like you to understand the beautiful promise the Lord gives us about our prayer: **Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (Matthew Chapter 7 verse 7-8 KJV)** – today God is giving you the opportunity to demonstrate His power and grace... while you take it? Bow your head, humble yourself before Him, open your heart and your mouth in prayer!

Today pray for:

- **God to continue to do a mighty and powerful work in your heart and in your marriage**
- **God to remind you of His precious gift and that He may give you strength to do all you do for His glory**
- **God to show you your freedom in Christ and remind you that you are no longer a prisoner to anything**
- **God to pour out His mercy and grace upon you and your marriage and family**
- **God to draw you closer to Him and give you the strength and courage to put Him before and above all things**

About

The My Emanuel 30 day challenge came about through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and we pray that God would be glorified and praised as a direct result of this program. It is the deepest desire of all those involved with this program that the healing grace of Jesus Christ would be abundantly felt throughout the families with a member participating in the challenge. The program is a direct result of the power of the Lord and a demonstration of His wisdom and foresight in bringing both the paths of Pastor Richard Webster, myself, and all those who have helped with the program together in a way to use us and our individual talents to profess the wonderful Good News of His salvation and wonderful grace, mercy, and abundant love.

Throughout our lives we have seen and directly felt the chaos and tragedy caused in the destruction of divorce. In interacting with brothers and sisters from all walks of life we have seen again and again the damage caused by the wedge the enemy drives in between a man and wife. It has been our greatest displeasure to see the tragedy, pain, suffering, and grief caused by the life altering decision in which so many couples make out of anger only to realize later that not only was it not what they wanted but so far from what they needed they couldn't even remember what they were separating for. It is our desire for all couples to understand the truth, God desires marriage to be a life long commitment and made us for this exact purpose: **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis Chapter 2 verse 24 KJV)** – to become one flesh as we will examine later on through the program is a physical alteration that to reverse would be a mutilation and a physical destruction of ones own flesh and is the furthest thing from God's desire for any family. It is our dearest hope that God will reveal His glory and that Jesus Christ will pour out His grace upon all those who participate in this program regardless of the purpose. The truth is that Jesus Christ is not “a hope” He is the ONLY HOPE and the only way for families to make it through the stress and destruction of today's society is through keeping Him always at the center.

Pastor Richard Webster is the Pastor of Adairsville Baptist Church in Adairsville, Georgia. Brother Richard has been a powerful influence in my own walk with the Lord and I pray that as God has used this brother for His glory and has shared much wisdom to me through him that you would pay special attention to the message God has blessed this brother to share. Pastor Webster is both a husband, a father, a brother, a son, a friend, and a pastor who is determined to serve the Lord and bring glory and honor to our Savior. I pray that you would understand that this brother has seen first hand the destruction of divorce, the pain and suffering that comes at the hands of the evil of the enemy as satan tries to relentlessly destroy families. Know that the daily devotionals are the ultimate inspiration of Jesus Christ and may the Lord be seen through every word.

It feels strange even now trying to write about myself, my name is Daniel Higginbotham and simply put I am a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is my desire and hope that the Lord God Jehovah would make His presence known and that you would feel the Holy Spirit interacting and interceding in your life. I thank God for this opportunity and I will pray for you and your family over this next 30 days that God would reveal the beautiful truth to you as He has me: **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John Chapter 8 verse 36 KJV).**