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## Deep roots

I'm very blessed this morning to be writing in the middle of a beautiful park and I praise and thank God for the beauty He has created is unbelievable and I can't imagine His power and His love for me that He would create such great beauty. One thing that has always amazed me is the theory of evolution is missing one key component... why is there such beauty on the earth? Everywhere I look I see something that has come about from God's love, so much more than just the necessity erroneously supposed by the theory of evolution. This morning as we enter day 26 of the 30 day challenge let us simply take the time to thank God for the wonderful beauty He has created in our lives. I don't think its possible to go a single day without seeing His power and great love for us... perhaps one of my favorite things here in this park is the beautiful, mighty, old trees. The trees are mighty and their roots are huge, growing deep into the ground, securing them, providing for them, and it is after seeing them that I am reminded that we must allow the roots of our faith to grow deep in the word, we must allow our faith to grow deep in God's grace as we seek to know Him and serve Him more!

I am reminded of the beautiful parable that Christ has spoken: **Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. (Luke Chapter 6 verse 47-48 KJV)** – today I wonder, how is your foundation? It is completely possible and likely that in life our foundation will be shaken, it will be relentlessly pounded on as we live our lives for Christ, the storms of life will come and they will go, our foundation may become cracked, the roots of this mighty tree may become damaged, but it is when we accept the damage has taken place and seek to fully allow Christ to restore us that we know we will never crumble. This tree has lived decades, possibly hundreds of years and every year when the weather gets cold the leaves change colors and then fall off, each year the tree remains strong but the cycle of life continues. This day let us repent of any evil in our lives, let us trust that Christ can refresh us, let us know that all things are made new in Christ: **Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians Chapter 5 verse 17-18 KJV).**

## Daily Devotional

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

### A Heart to Pray

***This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8)***

The United States of America has drifted away from the core values that made us successful as a nation. We were once a nation that was founded on God and His principles. We have become a nation that is focused on everything ungodly and we have told the godly to sit down and be quite. What has caused our problem? The homes of America are no longer homes where God is the focus of everything. We have become so busy that we don't have time for God. For America to return to being the great nation that God intended us to be, we must turn back to God, and make Him the focus of our homes.

We can talk about many ways to put God back first in our homes, but until we get back to having a daily family time with God, we will never return. Families need to spend time reading God's Word and praying together. When the nation of Israel was moving into the Promised Land, God said that His Word had to be at the center of everything they did. Following His Word was their ticket to being successful. Will you make a commitment today to invite God daily into your home?

## Food for thought

by: Daniel Higginbotham ([dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com](mailto:dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com))

Keeping Christ at the center is perhaps one of life's greatest challenges, but the most rewarding experience, the most powerful relationship, and certainly the best way that we can ensure our lives are lived in the joy of our salvation. Keeping Christ at the center is not always easy and sometimes it is down right hard to get on your knees and pray and thank God for your blessings when the pain has blinded you so much about all the wonderful blessings in your life... satan is a coward and is truly at work against every believer, we are at war with not only our own sinful desires but also the world that serves this father of lies. Keep in your heart always that we already know who wins this battle, if you've read the book of Revelation it will put your soul at ease knowing that God has, is, and will always fulfill His every word even when it seems impossible. **And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. (Luke Chapter 18 verse 27 KJV)** – never forget that Jesus Christ makes all things new, He is capable and willing of pouring out His mercy and grace upon you and your family... if you would only seek it!

It is critical that we understand how exactly to put Christ at the center, how can we put God above everything? By working tirelessly to ensure He is worshiped, praised, trusted, and welcomed in to our homes. It all starts with prayer... prayer is our direct connection to God through the Holy Spirit by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ: **And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (John Chapter 14 verse 16-18 KJV)** – the Holy Spirit is perhaps one of the hardest things to understand about God but what you must understand is the Holy Spirit dwells with-in every born again child of God, the Holy Spirit gives us comfort, wisdom, power, and the direction of God in our lives and in our homes. Through our relationship with Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to understand, obey, and walk faithfully with the Lord. It is imperative that we be sensitive to the Spirit as He is the direct link that God uses to lead and direct us! The Holy Spirit is that still small voice that gives us the guidance that we have all so desperately lost and if we continue to deny the Spirit... how can we hope to know God's will and desire for us?

**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)** – I know its hard sometimes to pray, I have found myself with the still small voice begging me to get on my knees and trust the Lord, I have had the Spirit of God telling me to stop what I am doing and sneak away to pray... when I listen to that voice God reveals His plan and His desire and leads me down the path that shows me His power and foresight. When I refuse... I fall, I commit sin, I have fights and arguments, I walk down the path that God was trying to help me avoid... it is not God's plan for us to experience an abundance of pain and suffering but I believe that when we refuse to listen to the Holy Spirit, when we refuse to trust God, when we go our own way... it can be the only result. As you enter day 26 of the 30 day challenge can you think of a time where looking back God was calling you not to do or to do something? How did it feel knowing you didn't listen to Him and the results were awful? God's

plan is always the best plan. I have been grieved to hear people begin to say “Jesus Christ is A way to God...” as if there are many... Jesus Christ makes plain and I need you to put away anything else you have ever heard for this is the truth out of the mouth of our savior: **Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John Chapter 14 verse 6 KJV).**

Notice and understand, Jesus Christ never spoke a single idle word... understand His words: I am the WAY, “my way is the WAY, the ONLY way, my WAY is the ONLY way you will find peace and joy”, I am the TRUTH, “anything that is not me and is not my word IS NOT TRUE”, I am the LIFE, “without me there is only death, hell, and judgment”. Today I am curious... have you been trying to get to heaven a different way? Have you been trying to solve all your own problems? Have you been trying to “do” for His kingdom? Know this, only by Him, through Him, and for Him are we able to do anything profitable. Without Him there is only emptiness and hopelessness. Have you been walking your own way? Have you been thinking “I don't believe everything you believe and that's OK?” There is no other way. Jesus Christ is the way. His word is the Holy Bible, do not be misled and do not allow yourself to be misguided by any man or woman. Jesus Christ is not A WAY, He **alone** is THE WAY. Have you been seeking the way? Have you been walking in the way? What do you need to do to give Christ the control He deserves? Its time to surrender...

## 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).**

It's funny, some people think that Jesus Christ is a magic "fix all" pill that they can take and suddenly all the worries and struggles of life disappear... I must admit that since I have begun to walk with Christ my life has become a war, everyday I war against my sinful desires, I war against the fruits of the flesh, I war against the world, I war against satan. My life has not become any "easier" per say but my comfort and joy in knowing that regardless of the trials and tribulations that I am saved and redeemed by the blood of Christ has given me peace. When I accepted Christ I never knew it would be as hard as it has been and I truly think that the reason there are so many people who "know of" Christ but don't have a personal relationship is because their hearts were not ready for the commitment.

Over the past year I have fallen to many times to count, I have had many victories when I have trusted in Christ, I have only failed and fallen when I forget my strength is not my own... my strength comes from the Lord. God has taken me from a 25 year old who has hopelessly lost and on the way to eternal damnation and blessed me to totally start a new life. The journey has been a long one and I know that the rest of my life will not be any different, don't ever confuse "long" with unhappy, the joy I have has been so refreshing that I cannot even remember what I did before waking up every morning thanking God for keeping me safe through the night. Its funny how I never noticed the beauty and promises of God until He saved me, and even sitting here now I can smell the wonderful smells, see the wonderful sights, hear the birds, feel the coolness of the day and I can only think... God has made this all for me?! What kind of love is that? Can you understand with me this day that God has noticed every little detail? He has planned for every path, and He is there walking by our side...

After becoming born again and fighting through the first few months of struggles the hardships have not ceased, they have increased. It seems like the devil is putting as much pressure as he can on my family and I know that it is only by the grace and mercy of the Lord that I am capable of standing against the violent storm. Satan tries to remind me everyday of how unworthy I am... you know what? He doesn't have to remind me... I know, but I also know that my God is a God of mercy and hope, that through Jesus Christ I am made new and I know satan has no power over me. The more I understand that, the more I live that, the more I rejoice in the freedom I have found in Christ the more lies and hardships the coward of lies tries to introduce in my life. Are you hurting? Every time I find myself hurting and in pain it is because somewhere along the way I have stepped off the straight and narrow... God will correct you and I praise the Lord that He is not like me... I would have already given up hope and yet He forgives me, corrects me, teaches me, and reminds me everyday that I am His!

## 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 open your eyes and heart to the beauty He has created for you**
- **God to continue to show you the power of prayer and give you the strength and wisdom of how to pray**
- **God to give you strength to pray in good times and bad, always remaining faithful knowing He is in control**
- **God to continue healing in your family and marriage**
- **God to give you strength to live your life more fully for Him and continue to put Him back at the center**

## 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).**