



08.10.25 Devotional: Week 1 – The First Step

Opening question: On a scale of 1 – 10, meaning 1 is “I trust no one or nothing until proven otherwise” or 10 meaning “I will give you a chance”...how trusting are you?

I would hazard to guess we all fall in the middle. We don't want to say that everyone or everything is out to get us. We also don't want to be blindly following something or someone that is not proven trustworthy.

Let's Talk About This:

* How much do you need to know before you trust the path?

I relate this to Google Maps. You have somewhere to go but you are unfamiliar with the exact or most accurate way to get there.

* Do you “plug in the location” and drive?

* Do you look ahead to see if you trust the route?

When you are on the trip and the road is taking you a way you have never been, do you allow it to take you or go back to what you think is right.... aka, back roads you think are short cuts.?

Scripture:

Hebrews 11:1, 8-9 ~ Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

Discussion:

Abraham was called by God to trust Him. God called him to leave behind everything that was familiar to him and GO. Genesis 12:1 says: “The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.'”



08.10.25 Devotional: Week 1 – The First Step

How many of us would do that? Leave the security of what we know, to travel, taking your family with you, to a place that is foreign?

Main Idea: Faith begins with trusting God, even when we can't see the full picture.

* How do we do that? How do we trust God with the whole picture when we are given a small piece of puzzle?

It is all about a relationship. When we are little, we take our mom or dad's hand and allow them to lead us. We can't see the road, but they can. That comes from having a loving relationship that gives us the confidence to be led. God has the vantage point.

Key Takeaway: You don't have to have all the answers to take the first step.

- * What do you need to trust God without the full "game plan"?
- * In what areas of your life do you struggle with taking the next step?
- * What can you do to deepen your relationship with Jesus?

Challenge: Take one small, faithful risk this week.

Closing prayer: Father God, I pray to find ways to trust You more. I pray to seek Your wisdom in my decisions and not try to do things my way. I pray you shine Your light on that first step so that I know it is of You. Amen.

"Faith is not just about being faithful; it's also about trusting in God's faithfulness."

John D. Barry



08.17.25 Devotional: Week 2 – Faith That Follows

Opening question: Would you rather give instructions and be totally responsible for the outcome or receive instructions and someone else is in charge?

This question speaks into those that like to be in control. The old adage of “if you want something done right, then do it yourself” is our fall back. If I want the outcome to fall in line with my vision, then I need to “go it” alone. The hitch in this plan is that we don’t trust others with our plans. We become rigid and unbending.

Let’s Talk About This:

* What makes you skeptical about obedience?

Our resistance to obeying is rooted in our trust. Human beings have let us down. Over the years, we have been misled. If a plan is going to fail, we would rather have it fail because of “us” instead of failing because the source was unreliable.

* What keeps you from being obedient to God?

As much as we would like to say we are obedient to God, we need to be honest. We can brush it off by saying, “I can take care of this minor detail” or “I don’t want to bother Him with this” etc., etc. It all comes down to our relationship with God.

* How often do you seek God’s guidance?

* When you know God is guiding you, but it goes against your comfort zone, what do you do?

Scripture:

Matthew 4:18-22

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Discussion:

Faith requires trust in “something” we can not see. YIKES! It is the unknown. Think about this situation: it has been said that Peter was the only disciple that was married. He has responsibilities beyond himself. He was in the family business, something he had done all his



08.17.25 Devotional: Week 2 – Faith That Follows

life. Along comes Jesus...someone they were not familiar with....asking them to literally drop their nets and follow Him. Honestly, who of you could have done that without hesitation? Leave your source of income behind to follow? Say yes without checking with your spouse first?

Main Idea: Real faith responds with obedience—even when it means leaving our comfort zones.

* What does it take to have that sort of obedience?

We gain a lot of wisdom simply by looking backwards. Samuel had an amazing object lesson to the Israelites by setting the Ebenezer stone.... challenging the crowd in front of him, stating "thus far the Lord has brought us." (1 Samuel 7:12) If we pause long enough to reflect backwards on God's faithfulness, we realize He has never failed us.

Key Takeaway: Following Jesus always requires letting go of something.

* Looking back in your life, in what ways did God come through for you?

* What do you need to do to be able to trust Him without knowing the answers?

* In what area of your life do you struggle giving up control?

Challenge: Identify what's holding you back from following Jesus more fully.

Closing prayer: Father God, I pray to drop all the hindrances that keep me from trusting You fully. I pray to be reminded of Your faithfulness to me this far in my life so that I can boldly follow You into the future. Amen.

"Don't worry when you meet opposition for obeying God. Worry when you don't have opposition, because you're probably not obeying God."

Charles Stanley



08.24.25 Devotional: Week 3 – When Faith Feels Risky

Opening question: What are some risks you feel safe taking?

Safe risks. That term should be an oxymoron. They contradict each other. A risk means you are taking a chance of losing something. Safe means you are not putting yourself out there.

Let's Talk About This:

* What is the biggest risk you have ever taken?

Taking risks usually involves doing something that could cost you if it doesn't work out. Losing money on the stock market. Breaking a bone trying snow skiing for the first time. Losing your heart to someone who doesn't care. We weigh the outcome to see if the risk is worth the cost.

* How do you weigh your options before you take a risk?

* Have you ever regretted taking a risk?

Scripture:

Matthew 14: 22-33

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on the mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Discussion:

Talk about risky.... this is life and death risky. Picture this: you and your buddies are out on a boat. Here comes a storm of epic proportion. Let's not forget it's nighttime. Sitting still and



08.24.25 Devotional: Week 3 – When Faith Feels Risky

holding on would seem to be the best choice in this situation. What does Jesus do? Shows up, WALKING on water. At this point, I would not only be holding on for dear life, but I would also be hiding under my cloak. Not Peter. Jesus calls out to his boy...his soon to be rock...and asks him to get out of the boat and come to Him...to walk on water WITH Him. Peter gets an award for his risk-taking as he jumps out of the boat but he does lose points when confronted with the wind and the waves. He takes his eyes off Jesus, which causes him to sink. Mind you, he calls out to Jesus to save him. In his ebb and flow of risk taking, Peter comes out on top.... both figuratively and literally. I wonder if we would be willing to do the same.

Main Idea: Faith sometimes feels like stepping into the unknown, but Jesus meets us there.

* Do you trust Jesus to meet you in the unknown?

We all want sure footing. We like solid reassurance that our next step will be firm beneath our feet. We also want enough light on not only the step ahead but the fifty that follow.

* Do we sell our faith short when we don't move unless we have ideal conditions?

Key Takeaway: Fear fades when we focus on Jesus, not the waves.

* What practices can you put into place to rely on Jesus to provide?

* What do you need to be able to focus on Jesus and not the waves?

* Do you have an accountability person to confide in when you struggle?

Challenge: Try something this week that scares you but requires trusting God.

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, daily living can be tough. We are overcome by our fears of the "what if's" and we lose sight of you. Help us Lord, to focus on You. Call us out onto the waters and reassure us that You have firm footing for us. Amen.

"Putting our faith in Christ is not about trying harder; it means transferring our trust away from ourselves and resting in him. "

Timothy Keller



08.31.25 Devotional: Week 4 – Faith Under Pressure

Opening question: Your house is on fire. The family and pets are outside. You have five minutes to get out. What would be the first thing you would grab?

We are all great armchair quarterbacks. We sit in the peace of our home, watching a sports game, game show, etc., and have our opinion on how it could have been done. The whole situation is different when it is us in the game...under pressure.

Let's Talk About This:

* Do you work well under pressure?

If you said yes, you are among the minority. On our own, we have not and cannot master dealing with pressure. Our minds go a million miles an hour and our heart rate keeps up with that pace.

* How do you deal with pressure?

* Is God your "go to" or your "last resort" ?

Scripture:

Daniel 3:16-28

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, Your Majesty." He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,



08.31.25 Devotional: Week 4 – Faith Under Pressure

servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire, and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

Discussion:

Put yourself into this situation. You have a decision to make and for all intents and purposes, is life or death. Stay true to who you worship and be thrown into the fire...literally.... or deny Him and live. Have you ever found yourself in this sort of situation? We weigh both sides, and we can justify our answers either way. Because of human frailty, we tend to choose the path of least resistance, but that is normally short-term gratification. We lose sight of the end game. I believe we all can take a page out of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's book. They knew the odds. Hello, I am sure they could feel the heat of the furnace in front of them. They would not encounter the fourth person until they entered the flames.

Main Idea: Faith doesn't guarantee escape from trials, but it ensures God's presence in them.

* Would you be willing to enter the flames without seeing Jesus there waiting for you?

There are times that we will need to have faith when we can't see Jesus. He calls us to trust Him. There are times when we won't see the results of our step of faith BUT our decision is still noted by God. He considers our times of utter faith. If we only step out in faith so that we can be guaranteed a view of the fruit, we are doing it for our own good. Instead, our faith needs to be grounded in trusting God to take our meager offerings and add it to His kingdom.

* Would you step out in faith even if you did not see the results?

Key Takeaway: True faith says, "Even if God doesn't..." and still stands firm.

* What scares you the most about stepping out in faith?

* How can you build your assurance that Jesus will meet you in the flames?

* Who do you surround yourself with that can uphold your faith and walk with you?



08.31.25 Devotional: Week 4 – Faith Under Pressure

Challenge: Stay faithful in a pressure-filled area of your life this week.

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, in times when we feel the heat of the fiery furnace in front of us, remind us that You not only stand with us, but You are also in the flames waiting for us to trust You to get us through it. Lord God, help us to trust You no matter the outcome. Amen.

"The ultimate test of faith is not how loudly you praise God in happy times but how deeply you trust him in dark times."

Rick Warren



09.07.25 Devotional: Week 5 – Faith That Waits

Opening question: Here is your “would you rather” question that will be a sign of your patience level: Would you rather have the ability to see the future or change the past?

I hate to be the one to bust your bubble, but neither are possible. Both involve our desire to control. If I can change my past, then I can live better today. If I can see the future, then I can have the assurance in the decisions I make. The common thread in both statements is the “I” component. Instead we need to trust God with our past and our future.

Let’s Talk About This:

* Is there something that you are waiting for that seems to not be happening?

I think we all have a vision of what we want to see happen, what will bring us joy and security. We look back on our mistakes and see failure. We look into a future that does not seem to be what we envisioned for our lives. What we fail to realize is that God sees both our pasts and futures through a lens that is completely different than ours.

* Have you learned lessons from your past?

* Is your heart willing to trust God with His timing and outcome?

Scripture:

Romans 4:18-21

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Discussion:

Oh Abraham. A man after God’s own heart. He got to hear from God. He was given a promise by God. The Almighty shared a vision with him, one that would make him a father of the nation. Seems like a no-brainer, right? God spoke...Abraham heard it. Now comes the rub...time. Our time versus God’s time. Talk about the ultimate waiting game. Abraham and Sarah won the prize for waiting. I can’t imagine there weren’t days when he hit his knees,



09.07.25 Devotional: Week 5 – Faith That Waits

praying for the fulfillment of the promise. Time was ticking...he and his wife were beyond childbearing years. Isn't it amazing that God is not confined to our timetable?

Main Idea: Faith is not just about action—it's about trusting God's timing.

- * Have you had a time in your life when you thought God was not "acting on your behalf" only to realize His timing was better than yours?
- * Can you "be still" and wait?
- * Will you allow God to alter your course and your expectations?

Key Takeaway: Waiting doesn't mean nothing is happening; God is always working.

- * How long are you willing to wait until you take matters in your own hands?
- * Use this next week to look backwards in your life. In your waiting times, how was God faithful?
- * Can you use your time of waiting to send up prayers of thanksgiving for the many ways God has worked in your life? Can you thank Him for what He is going to do in your life?

Challenge: Trust God with something you've been trying to rush.

Closing Prayer: Dear God, calm our anxious hearts. Remind us that You sit outside of time. You know what is best for us and You have the best timing in mind. Help us Lord, to be still and trust You and only You. Amen.

"I believe that God will give us all the strength we need to help us to resist in all times of distress. But he never gives it in advance, lest we should rely on ourselves and not on him alone."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



09.14.25 Devotional: Week 6 – Try Faith Again

Opening question: This is a “keep it to yourself” question. Looking back in your life, what is one of your failures that you deeply regret?

I don't know for sure when the age of accountability starts but I will say after we step into it, we will always have regrets. Words spoken out of anger. Knee jerk reactions without thinking. Actions we should have taken.... but didn't.

Let's Talk About This:

* Why do we struggle with failure?

I think it is obvious we are not perfect. Mistakes are made all the time. I wonder why we are surprised when we do mess up. From the very beginning, God knew we would make mistakes. He gave us free will. That means freely choosing Him or freely choosing self. Sadly, we choose self....a lot.

* Do you own up to your mistakes easily?

* Do you learn from your mistakes?

Scripture:

John 21:15-19

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.” The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

Discussion:

I love that we finish this series with this section of Peter's faith walk. He is the master of impetuous. Peter, the guy who drops his nets and old life to follow Jesus. Peter, who jumped out of a perfectly good boat, to step out into a storm of epic proportions, eyes on



09.14.25 Devotional: Week 6 – Try Faith Again

Jesus...until he didn't. Peter, who said he would never deny Jesus...until he did...three times. Let's be honest folks. We are all a little bit or a lot like Peter. There is such beauty in the interaction of Jesus and Peter. Peter, in all his failings, stands before Jesus wanting so badly to reconcile what he had done. Jesus makes a point of asking him three times if Peter loved him. Peter seems exasperated at the third time. Jesus is not being callous or cruel. He does not want Peter to beg. He is offering Peter forgiveness for the three times that Peter denied him. Jesus is in the details. Amen to that.

Main Idea: Even when we fail, God invites us to try faith again.

- * Have you ever denied Jesus by your actions or inactions?
- * Do you think we are unredeemable when we fail?
- * Are you willing to have faith in His redemption of you?

Key Takeaway: God isn't finished with you—get back in the game.

- * Can you be open with God in your shortcomings?
- * What would keep you from being honest with God?
- * In what areas do you see God calling you?

Challenge: Where have you quit on faith? Try again—with God's grace.

Closing Prayer: Thank You, God, for never giving up on us. Thank You for sitting with us in our mistakes and providing the path ahead. Your love for us is something that is so hard to comprehend and accept. Help us, Lord, to try, try, again. Amen.

"There's some task which the God of all the universe, the great Creator, your redeemer in Jesus Christ has for you to do, and which will remain undone and incomplete until by faith and obedience you step into the will of God."

Alan Redpath