

## Strength for the Journey

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

By Daniel Mark

Arguably, this year is one that we all hope, or wish, would end quietly and be forgotten about or be consigned to some type of oblivion. Unless you have been living under a rock, 2020 has been all the rage across the globe, the talk of the town anywhere on the planet. Much that could unsettle any life has occurred to all of us in some way or to some degree. The obvious inability of humans to get through this independent form of rescue outside of ourselves stares us in starkly in the face.

It is at just such a time people grope for what is there for our survival and conquest. Lately, as I have continued to delve into God's word, the Apostle Paul's commands and exhortations to the Thessalonians jumped off the page and hit me with a renewed appreciation of a few simple but profound truths. Towards the end of his first epistle to the church in Thessalonica, the Apostle gave these lovely commands, under inspiration, of course. *"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."* (1Thessalonians 5:16-18) Taken together, these three powerful precepts will fortify us against any assaults brought on by adversity, this pandemic being a pronounced example. We would, therefore, do well to meditate a little upon each instruction with no pretense at attempting an exegetical examination of the passage.

**Rejoice Evermore!**  
1Thessalonians 5:16

At first blush, it does not strike us as a serious command at all. Why would we be told to do something that appears to be so personal? Perhaps it's because God's concern gets down to the nitty-gritty as well as those aspects that

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## Harvest Party



## “Strength for the Journey,” continued...

we would dismiss as trivial. It's a refreshing realization that God wants us to make joy or rejoicing integral to our very existence! More interestingly, we are not given options here. The Apostle comes out emphatically with the Spirit's authority and instructs us with an imperative: rejoice! That God wants us to rejoice goes beyond having an emotional high or simply being happy, although these may attend our rejoicing sometime. Rejoicing that takes its cue from who God is and what He does is a certain spiritual demeanor in enduring and triumphing over adversity. We sin, therefore, when we substitute fear and dismay for a God-given joy.

### ***Pray Without Ceasing*** 1Thessalonians 5:17

This one is a straightforward command that's almost perfectly self-explanatory. Our Lord Jesus Himself made unceasing prayer vital to our lives. He taught us that men ought always to pray and not to faint. (Luke 18:1) This incredible grace of prayer from the Lord is assurance enough of God's intention to answer, however long the answer would be in coming. The One who so inspires the courage of continued and persistent petitions is the He who has all it takes to lift us up to the next level of his foreordained phase for our lives.

### ***In all things give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you*** 1Thessalonians 5:18

This one ties in neatly with the command to persevere in prayer. True prayer must always be a composite of worship, praise, and thanksgiving, with all our petitions following these priorities. It's also a passage that in substance equates with that famous verse of Romans 8:28: “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*” Thanksgiving and praise are two of the most potent weapons in the believer's arsenal of spiritual resources. God's word tells us to give thanks in all things, even if those things don't seem to make sense.

The hardships we have all had to endure certainly won't be our last, but our God will use all this to prime us to be far better disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. As for our temporal concerns, God has them all in His hand just as well.

## Restoring Hearts Ministries

By Steve Bassett

Windsor Chapel is partnering with Restoring Hearts Ministries of



Trenton (RHM) to minister to those in need. This wonderful ministry provides food, clothing, and

other important necessities to people struggling with homelessness and extreme poverty. In the

winter months their Code Blue Outreaches ensure that people are fed as they hand out coffee, hot chocolate, tea, soup, hot breakfast sandwiches, hotdogs, and healthy snacks. In addition to praying and talking with the people, masks, hats, gloves, clothes, blankets, sleeping bags and toiletries are distributed.



Windsor Chapel members may watch their outreach video at <https://youtu.be/fPSEcYWe-8U>, and welcome to join RHM on future Saturday events.

RHM is supported completely by donations and distributes to those in need without charge. The winter drive for sleeping bags, winter gloves, socks, and jackets is ongoing now. Other provisions are always in need. During a typical outreach day, RHM goes through a large canister of hot chocolate, 100 cups of instant coffee, 10 pounds of sugar, and a canister of creamer. RHM is presently low on those supplies as well as paper products (paper towels and napkins). Would you consider donating some supplies? You can find some of the supplies on their [amazon smile wish list](https://smile.amazon.com/.../KYFAX.../ref=smi_ext_inl_lcl_cl) at: [https://smile.amazon.com/.../KYFAX.../ref=smi\\_ext\\_inl\\_lcl\\_cl](https://smile.amazon.com/.../KYFAX.../ref=smi_ext_inl_lcl_cl) and have them shipped directly to: Steve Bassett, 87 Canal View Drive, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648, or you may ship them to Restoring Hearts Ministries, 30 Iowana Avenue, Ewing, NJ 08638. Donations may also be dropped off at Steve Bassett's address, or they can be left in the coat room of the chapel. Kindly mark them RHM. For additional information, please contact Steve Bassett at 609-346-1127 or [hensoma.onebody@gmail.com](mailto:hensoma.onebody@gmail.com)

## Elders' Corner

By Tom Taylor

Health, oh how we need it. No, I am not writing about how we can fend off the virus, but rather how we can build healthy lives as children of the Most High God. Two areas I would like to focus on are: nutrition and exercise. Spiritual nutrition—not your protein, carbs and vitamins—but what you consume with your spirit and soul. Health food, God's Word:

*“whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise dwell on these things.”* (Philippians 4:8)

Wow! That is only one verse and I am feeling better already. How great is temptation in our day to consume junk food; so much media, so many lies, so many vain philosophies and much pleasure for a season. We must remind ourselves to guard our hearts, minds, and spirits. Yes, we need good from God's Word, from God's people and from God's creation. The psalmist tells us again and again how full of wonder and life God's Word, His law and His presence are to us. He is our Shepherd, Refuge, Deliverer, the Almighty. He hears our cries and our praise. He gives us rest and peace. His people edify us. We have so many helpful, nutritious authors (I highly recommend “Stay Salt,” by Becky Pippert). Why not listen to some Martin Lloyd Jones sermons or drink some refreshing music by Andrew Peterson.

Spiritual exercise is not cardio, not isometrics, not even stretching, but praying, worshipping, meditating, sharing the good news, making disciples and building relationships. One thing we see clearly in Scripture is that our God is all about relationships. He is One but also Three: the Trinity is the essence of beauty and relationship. The family: father, mother and children, the church:

*“from whom the whole body being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”* (Ephesians 4:16)

All of creation was designed to fit together, each living part working together to give pleasure to our Maker. May I encourage you to build and strengthen relationships in your family, in your church, in your neighborhood, in your workplace. Relationships are hard work, but we are built for them. Like any good exercise you start with the basics: loving others, desiring the best, listening, enjoying, sharing yourself, again and again. It is amazing how you can build your relationship muscles, bringing life and truth to those God sends your way. Let us be a people who eat well and exercise fully, and we will be healthy and have what our world needs today.

## Worship Team News

By Don Ober



### ***The Making of a Song***

This month I thought I'd share with you how I decided to write one of our original songs. In case we have never met, I play piano for the team and lead on occasion. I started playing when I was ten years old and played my first paying gig when I was twelve. I've played in bands my whole life and still play for weddings and such, but I was never quite satisfied until I played for the King of Kings. This is my third church serving as a musician, and I'd rather do this than play in any other situation. I was raised by Episcopal parents that forced me to attend church where I just hated singing songs that, quite frankly, bored me. When I received Christ as my Lord and Savior, I also discovered that God just wanted us to make a joyful noise unto Him, and I could do so playing a musical style that suited me better. This discovery completely changed my life. A year or two later my parents joined the church I attended. When my father joined me in the waters of baptism at our new church, I knew for sure worship life had changed for the better.

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**“Worship Team News,” continued...*****Called to the Cross***

When I sat down to write “Called to the Cross,” I was meditating on how the cross seems to draw the Christian towards itself. Christ was drawn towards the cross as a sacrificial example of His ultimate love, which represented pain and torture, that was ahead of Him. Conversely, we are drawn towards the cross like a drowning victim is drawn to a life preserver. It may seem easily evident that the cross cries out over the centuries for the Lord’s people to draw near to it, but why is that? People wear crosses on their necklaces, on tie tacks and even on earrings, but have you ever thought of what we are drawing near and wearing?

If Christ had come during our life span, we could possibly be wearing tiny electric chairs on the lapels of our dress clothes. Or possibly, had Christ arrived during the French revolution, would we be wearing small guillotines? The cross is a terrible instrument of torture and yet, Christ calls us to carry our cross, just as he did.

Then I thought deeply how Christ knew all too well, what was ahead for Him on Calvary. And yet He chose to go on and endure it despite the pain. This was not something merely inflicted upon Him, He chose to do this for us! He said so Himself when He said “No man takes my life from me, I lay it down of my own accord, I can lay it down and I can lift it up again.”

But at times, I must say, it is hard for me to even fathom Him doing this for such a retched group of people such as myself. That is why I say in the song “*You could refuse what was called of you Lord, instead you offered to die for us all.*”

As if this is not enough of a difficult question to ask in song, I then address the greatest mystery of all, the Holy Trinity. It is in this chorus that I express the reasoning I finally came to so many years ago when I accepted Christ’s atoning sacrifice. Our God is outside of our understanding of time and space. He was, is, and always will be! Try as we may, we will never be able to put God in a box of our own understanding. He truly is, as the chorus says

the Alpha, Omega, Father the Creator, the Son and Holy Ghost all wrapped in one.

So finally, when I get to the bridge, I express that same feeling I had some thirty-five years ago when I was saved, in understanding why I was drawn to such an evil instrument as a cross. It represents a sacrifice Christ took willingly upon Himself, as He left the side of His Father in order to do so for us. There was no other means to forgiveness for us. However, He also left the Comforter behind to be there with us through all our trials.

Well, that is why I wrote “Called to the Cross,” and compared our calling towards the cross as a lifeline and Christ’s calling towards it as a sacrifice of love. I hope you get a chance to hear it this month if the band plays it on some Sunday morning.

***Hymn Sing Weekend***

Now that Hymn Sing Weekend is behind us, please take the time and let Ken, me or someone on the team, know how you feel about this event. Should we continue to hold one of these weekends annually? Is there a different way we could do it to make it more enjoyable? We really want to hear from you and appreciate your input in our ministry and how we can improve upon it.

**Happy Birthday!**

Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes.

Alan Ventura	November 2
Olasunkanmi Dada	November 3
Lorraine Brown	November 11
Olivia Bernheisel	November 15
Donald Ritchie	November 18
Toyin Dada	November 25
Susan Seiboth	November 30

## Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in and among us*



By Cindy Bills

### The Doing and Being of Thanksgiving

'Tis the season...to give thanks. Thanksgiving is the time when we are reminded to give thanks, though giving thanks is best practiced as a daily exercise in our lives year round.

Why do we give thanks? In *The Book of Common Prayer*, used by the Episcopal Church, congregants are exhorted to give thanks unto the Lord because *it is meet and right so to do*. King David exhorts his readers throughout his writings to acknowledge the greatness and goodness of the Lord and offer Him praise and thanks. The Apostle Paul instructs his Thessalonian readers to rejoice always and in everything give thanks.

So is giving thanks a duty that we do as a perfunctory matter of obedience? Certainly, there are challenges to gratitude in our world and lives today; we may not feel grateful, may not feel like giving thanks. We are living in a pandemic, with its associated anxiety, grief, and relational and economic pressures. But just as certainly, there were challenges to gratitude last year, before COVID-19 was a thing. King David faced his share of challenges to gratitude as he places complaints and cries of distress right alongside his offerings of praise and thanksgiving. And the Apostle Paul reminds his Corinthian readers that he had been beaten with rods, stoned, and shipwrecked three times. Neither man of God minimizes or denies his hardship and pain. And yet, there is not the slightest hint of obligation in the expressions of gratitude and thanksgiving offered by David and Paul. It very much seems that thanksgiving need not

be particularly dependent on or reflective of our circumstances.

James encourages his readers to *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing*. James reminds his readers—and us—that even trials can be cause for thanksgiving when we remember that our faithful and redemptive Lord will use all things for our great good.

And yet, it seems to me that giving thanks must also reach beyond our circumstances. When we cultivate a grateful heart and persistently exercise our thanksgiving muscles, we are changed, transformed. We become grateful people who reflect the goodness of the living God abiding in us in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis observes that *"We might think that God wanted simply obedience to a set of rules: whereas He really wants people of a particular sort."* As we consider this season of Thanksgiving and holiday celebrations in the midst of pandemic struggles, we may begin to give thanks out of a desire to obey or a sense of duty. But let us not stop there! May we follow the model set by King David and the Apostle Paul and become genuinely and deeply grateful people before the Lord.

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or [cynthialbills@gmail.com](mailto:cynthialbills@gmail.com)) to continue the dialogue....

#### Financial Update

(through September 30, 2020)

*"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."*

Actual Budget

**Income** \$156,611 \$217,500

**Expense** \$199,166 \$217,451

Windsor Chapel has sent \$29,464 to our missionary partners this year. That's 19% of your giving!

## Slow but Steady Progress

By Janet Berrill

Larry and I have lived in our house for twenty-five years. During twenty-four of those twenty-five years, Larry has been responsible for mowing the lawn. Although, when the kids were teenagers, he had them do it. He still oversaw the lawn mowing and made sure it got done—until this year. This spring Larry was having trouble walking on uneven ground due to problems he was having with his ankle. If he was going to continue mowing the lawn, we would have had to spend a couple of thousand dollars to get a ride on mower. The other alternative was to pay someone else to do it. I saw no reason to spend lots of money to get something done that I was perfectly capable of doing, so for the first time ever, I took over mowing the lawn.

Our backyard is probably close to 100 feet wide. When I was mowing the back, I would walk from one end to the other, turn around, and go back again cutting a swath about 2 feet wide with each pass. Sometimes it felt like I was not making any progress, that the amount of lawn I still had to cut was not getting any less. Of course, I knew it had to be less, but it didn't always feel like that, especially on those days when I was looking forward to being done.

It occurred to me that I sometimes feel the same way about prayer. When I pray, I want/expect an answer right away from God. And there are some prayers when God does answer right away. But often that doesn't happen. If I pray for someone who is hurting, I want God to act noticeably right away and if I don't see anything happen, I assume God has said no. But over time I have learned that this is wrong. Just because I don't see progress, it doesn't mean it isn't being made.

I have a friend who was going through a hard time. I suggested she read through the Psalms, and I fervently prayed that God would speak a word specifically to her as she read. I expected God to do this and even told my friend what I had prayed for her. Later in the day I asked her if she had gotten a word from God, and she said she really wanted to tell me she had, but the truth was she hadn't. I didn't understand why God didn't speak to her through His word. I wanted God to do it right away, that day, but He hadn't, at least not in the way I was expecting. I continued to pray for my friend. Several months later when I was speaking with my friend she shared with me some of the spiritual truths she had learned, and I realized that God had spoken to her through His word and answered my prayer. It just wasn't when I expected it.

God is interested in our relationship with Him, and He wants us to stick with Him through the long haul. God tends to operate slowly, like cutting the lawn. When we pray, we can feel like God is not doing anything, like I felt when I was mowing the backyard. Is anything happening? Is any progress being made? But if we persevere and continue praying, trusting in God and in His promises, we will be able to look back and see that God has indeed been working.



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**If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:**

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