

YOUR LIFE DESCRIBED

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Hebrews 12:1-3

1. I have found it helpful to use words that start with the same letter when trying to retain or remind myself of some spiritual truth or practice.
 2. For instance when I pray for missionaries I have a series of words that all begin with the letter P that help to guide my prayer.
 3. Years ago I read a sermon by Vance Havner based on the account of God telling Elijah the prophet to go to the brook Cherith during the time of famine that would follow Elijah's prophecy that there would be neither dew nor rain except by his word.
 4. God told Elijah that he could drink from the brook and that He (God) had commanded the ravens to provide for him **there**.
 5. **There**, the brook Cherith, was the place of God's **purpose** for Elijah at that time, and being the place of God's purpose it was also the place of God's **protection, provision and power**. (The points Havner made in His message.)
 6. So when I pray for missionaries I sometimes pray using the following words as keys.
 - a. Purpose.
 - b. Power.
 - c. Protection.
 - d. Provision.
 - e. Presence. (for God to manifest His presence)
 - f. Peace. (the peace of Christ)
 - g. Purity. (that they might manifest God's holiness)
 - h. Perseverance (that they might persevere regardless of difficulties and obstacles)
 7. I am sure that with a little thought we could add some other words that begin with P that would also be applicable.
 8. This morning I want to discuss some traits or characteristics that should be true in our lives if we are going to grow in our likeness and usefulness to Christ.
 9. To help us remember these traits or characteristics I have chosen words that all begin with the letter F.
- NOTE: Remember the qualities we discussed last week related to Nehemiah who cared enough to check, to cry, to call, to confess, to contend, and to commit.
10. Before we look at those words I want to ask a question:
What descriptive words or adjectives would the people who know you best use to honestly describe you?
 11. Well, let's look at a series of words that should be descriptive of every Christian here this morning.

I. Focused.

- A. Having illustrated real faith in chapter 11 the writer of Hebrews called on his readers to identify with and be like the examples of faith that he had just given.
- B. He told them to lay aside every **encumbrance** and the sin that **entangles** and to run with **endurance** the race that God had set before them.
- C. They were to fix (focus) their eyes on Jesus the author (originator) and perfecter of faith.

- D. The Devil works hard to distract us from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. (II Corinthians 11:3)
- E. When I was a boy I learned a lot from my Grandfather Roberts simply by hanging around with him, talking to him, watching him, and doing the things he gave me to do.
- F. The Christian life is a lot simpler than many make it out to be.
- G. I would suggest that we need to relate to Jesus like I related to my grandfather—spend time with Him, talk to Him, learn all you can about Him, and do the things He tells you to do.
- H. Another word for focused could be mindset which brings several passages to mind.
1. Romans 12:1-2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
 2. Colossians 3:1-4

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.** 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

II. Fervent.

- A. Note the words written by the Apostle Paul in Titus 2:11-14
- 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, **zealous for good deeds.**
- B. What things are you passionate about?
- C. I would lovingly suggest that some Christians are more fervent about their earthly pursuits and interests than they are about pursuing their relationship with Jesus Christ.
- D. Others are fervent about the things of Christ but not Christ Himself. Revelation 2:1-7
- "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: 2 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you **cannot tolerate** evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; 3 and you **have perseverance and have endured** for My name's sake, and have **not grown weary.** 4 '**But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.** 5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent. 6 'Yet this you do have, that **you hate the deeds** of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.' **NOTE: Our fervency must be the byproduct of our fervent love for Jesus Christ.**

III. Faithful.

A. Paul understood that as Christians we have been entrusted with great responsibilities and things of great value. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy (faithful).

B. We will one day have to give an account.

1. Romans 14:12

12 So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

2. 2 Corinthians 5:10

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

IV. Fearless.

A. There are many forces arrayed against us.

B. God's word contains many passages that should help and encourage us, but for the sake of time I will just read one. Romans 8:31-39

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." 37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

V. Fruitful.

A. Here the words of our Lord provide us encouragement and direction.

1. John 15:4-8

4 " Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

2. John 15:16-17

16 " You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. 17 "This I command you, that you love one another.

B. We will be fruitful if we are focused, fervent, faithful and fearless in relationship to Christ and to running the race that has been set before us.

APPLICATION:

1. The question is to what degree do these words describe us?

NOTE: Sadly there are many who are focused, fervent, faithful, and even fearless, but not in relationship to following Jesus Christ.

2. So, to be more specific, to what degree do these words describe our walk with and relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ?

3. Are we running with endurance the race that is set before us by God, or are we running along a path of our own choosing?