

Day #1—Understanding and Growing in Our Faith

Key Thought #1	<i>Faith is foundational to everything in this life.</i>
Scripture	Hebrews 11:1-6
Bible Study	When you think of someone who has great faith, who comes to mind and why? How would you define faith? Read the Scripture. How is faith defined there? What three examples of faith are given in these verses?
Prayer	“Lord, show me whether or not I have saving faith.”
Quote	“My assurance of eternal life with God in Heaven is not based on anything I do. It is not based on my ability to make it through this life. It is not about coming to the end of my life and seeing if my good works outweigh the bad. No, our eternal destiny is based on what Jesus Christ has done for us and whether or not we have appropriated His forgiveness for our sins.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 11.
Action Step	If you are not familiar with the stories of Cain, Abel, and Enoch then read about them in Genesis chapters 4 and 5.
Key Thought #2	<i>Our faith should always be growing.</i>
Scripture	Matthew 8:5-13; 23-27
Bible Study	What do you notice about the Roman military officer? Why did Jesus say he had such great faith? Why did Jesus say that the disciples had little faith? (verses 23-26) Both the centurion and the disciples had faith. What was the difference between the two? Wouldn't you think that the men who walked with Christ would have had greater faith than someone who just met Jesus? How could this be?
Prayer	“Lord, grow my faith. Never let me take you for granted or become complacent in my spiritual growth.”
Quote	“Most Christians...are bumping along, feeling their way through life, trying to make it to what they think is the finish line. What they don't realize is that God has so much more for them than they are experiencing. They may be growing incrementally in their faith...but they are not fully engaged in the Kingdom.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 12.
Action Step	List one thing you can do today to begin to grow your faith—then do it!

Day #2—Deepening Our Relationship with God

Key Thought #1	<i>God desires an intimate and vibrant relationship with us but there are obstacles that can get in the way.</i>
Scripture	Psalm 24:3-10
Bible Study	<p>What are four requirements for approaching God that are given in verse 4? What are some possible idols in our lives and how might we tend to exalt them over God? What is the promise to those who appropriately seek God? (verse 5) Verses 7-10 use the analogy of a city opening its gates to welcome its king returning victorious from battle. Are there any “gates” or obstacles in your life that is keeping the Lord Almighty from being glorified in your life?</p>
Prayer	“Lord, I pray that my actions, affections, and attentions would be pleasing to you. Cause me to shun lying and speak with accuracy. Show me if there are any obstacles in my life that are hindering our relationship and keeping you from showing your glory through me.”
Quote	“When we give in to sin, our thinking is clouded. We begin to lose our sense of moral direction as we quench the Holy Spirit’s conviction. It is like putting a magnet next to a compass: we no longer can find true north.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 104.
Action Step	If in the Bible study you identified barriers or obstacles in your relationship with God, write them down. Then prayerfully decide what steps you can begin to take today to remove those barriers.
Key Thought #2	<i>God’s Word is critically important to our everyday life.</i>
Scripture	Psalm 119:1-16
Bible Study	<p>What do we learn about God through the Bible that we can’t learn anywhere else? (Verse 4) What affect does God’s Word have on our relationship with God? (verse 7) What is the secret to living a moral life? (Verse 9) What does it mean to hide God’s word in your heart and what benefit does that have? (Verse 11)</p>
Prayer	“God, cause me to grow in my love, understanding and appreciate of your Word. Cause me to prioritize the Bible so that I spend some time in it every day.”
Quote	“Stay in the Word. There is an old saying that goes, ‘the Bible will keep you from sin and sin will keep you from the Bible.’...God’s Word will show us right from wrong. God’s Word will keep us from succumbing to temptation.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 104.
Action Step	Memorize Psalm 119:11

Day #3—The Christian Life is a Journey

Key Thought #1	<i>I must give attention to my spiritual growth.</i>
Scripture	Philippians 2:12-13
Bible Study	<p>What is the most interesting journey or trip you have ever taken? How is the Christian life like a journey or trip? Paul, speaking to believers, says that we are to “work out” our salvation. How is that different than working “for” our salvation? What should our attitude be as we work out our salvation? (verse 13) What is God’s role in our journey as we work out our salvation?</p>
Prayer	“God, I thank you today that you are at work in my life to enable my will and my actions to align with your desires for my life. Please give me the determination and a sense of urgency to see my spiritual life grow as it should.”
Quote	“Personal spiritual development is something to take seriously, and it is not something that happens by accident. You have to work at it.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 28.
Action Step	Memorize Philippians 2:12-13
Key Thought #2	<i>We should identify and strive for what is really important in life, those things that will outlast this life.</i>
Scripture	1 Corinthians 3:10-15
Bible Study	<p>What illustration does Paul use here for living the Christian life? (vv10-11) What are our options when it comes to “building materials”? (verses 12-13) What are some things that we might do that won’t stand God’s test? Notice that verses 14-15 make it clear that these verses are talking about our rewards not earning eternal life. What must one do to receive a reward by God?</p>
Prayer	“God cause me to seek the greater gold in my life—those things that truly honor you and will last for an eternity.”
Quote	“Search for the greater gold is a powerful message that there is more to life than gold medals or a successful career. The greater gold can only be found in a life that belongs to Christ.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 119.
Action Step	Take a sheet of paper. On the top left write “wood.” On the top right write “greater gold.” Now underneath each of those list 3-5 things in your life right now that would fit that category. Looking at your entire list (6-10 items) number the items by their priority in your life right now. So, give a “1” to that item which gets the greatest amount of your attention, passion, and resources (time, money, etc.) then “2” to the second most and so on. Now look at your list and reflect on whether your life emphasizes “wood, hay, straw” or the greater gold. What changes do you need to make to get more emphases on the greater gold?

Day 4—Spiritual Warfare

Key Thought #1	<i>We must properly prepare for the spiritual battles that we will face.</i>
Scripture	Ephesians 6:10-18
Bible Study	How is it possible for us to withstand Satanic attacks on our lives? (verse 10-11) What is taking place around us that we may not be able see? (verse 12) List the six pieces that make up the “armor” of God? (verses 14-17) In addition to using our armor, what else should we do? (verse 18)
Prayer	“God, cause me to stand in your power in the face of evil and the demonic schemes designed to defeat me. Show me where I am vulnerable to the evil one, and empower me to utilize the tools that you have provided for me.”
Quote	“As long as there is sin in the world, there will always be a pagan society seeking to sweep us away. As long as there are people without Christ, there will be pressure to move away from the Lord... The good news is that we can be victorious... We can swim against the stream.” Frank Banfill, <i>Maxpoint</i> , page 111.
Action Step	Of the six items that make up God’s armor, identify which one is your weakest area. Which tool are you least proficient in using? Next, ask God to show you what you can begin to do today to strengthen this area—then do it.
Key Thought #2	<i>There are biblical principles we can follow to become victorious in stressful times.</i>
Scripture	2 Corinthians 4:7-18
Bible Study	What are some life issues that can create stress or pressure on us? What four situations or feelings does Paul describe in verses 8-9? Although these four situations are difficult they don’t have to be destructive. What hope does he offer for each one? Why does God allow us to go through the pressures of life? (verses 10-12) What is the secret to excelling in stressful times? (verses 16-18)
Prayer	“Lord, cause me to fix my eyes on you and to rest in the assurance of your love and care. Cause me to remember that what I am facing right now is temporary. Enable me to make good decisions.”
Action Step	Write out the biggest problem you are facing in your life right now. Now list the 2 or 3 things that caused that problem. What ideas do you have about addressing those causes? Are there some practical steps that you could begin to take to deal with those? Pray now and ask God for wisdom. Not every problem can or should be solved, but many can when we honestly face the root issues and seek God’s wisdom to design a plan of action.