Week 2

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Devotional Book



**Devotions from FaithPoint Members**

**Megan Sirek**

**Sowing Seeds of Hope**

**“Faith, it does not make things easy, it makes them possible” Luke 1:37**

Hope: A feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.

As Christians, we base our faith on hope. The hope of eternal life is given to us by Christ Jesus. We can have this hope because it has been promised to us. Sometimes I feel we forget about the promise part. However, a quick look at scripture serves as a great reminder.

“For God so loved the world he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 From there we are given the choice of what to do with that knowledge. Do we pursue a relationship with the one who has given us this gift and desires to know us or turn away? It may not seem like a difficult choice until you try to live it out. Luckily, the Lord of the Universe is on our side to grant us and remind us of our hope.

“When it is more than a God wink it is a God shimmy” this is a quote from my sister in Christ Chloe. This came up during a discussion if coincidences exist. Now I’m not sure, and I definitely don’t want to get into that debate here. However, what I do know for certain is that some things are in no way a coincidence.

My transition to college life was not a smooth one. As with many new students, all the changes all at once were overwhelming. Not only that, the Covid-19 pandemic meant ten to fourteen-day quarantines before going home to protect my high-risk family members. Even though I was attending college only four hours away I was stuck on campus until school break. During this time, I had a particularly bad depressive episode. I found no joy in anything I was doing. I would laugh but feel no happiness. The only time this cloud was lifted was when I was listening to worship music. That was the moment I realized that a large part of this episode was that God was missing in my life. I began to address the negative habits I had picked up. I formed a two-person bible study with my boyfriend Nick. I also renewed my efforts to find a church and a Christian family on campus.

You see in my final years of being a part of the FaithPoint Youth group my faith was transformed. Marco and Rachel Griffith are two of the most passionate Christians I have ever met. God worked through them to show me what living a Christian life looks like. What it looks like to love God as much as humanly possible. It was through working with them and the youth group I grew in my knowledge of the scriptures and began to actively pursue a relationship with God. I refocused my life on being a Christian.

In the transition to college, I began to lose sight of all I had learned. The fire that had been lit began to dim, as fires do when they are not tended. When I began to find joy again it was only through things directly related to my faith. I believe it was a reminder from God of all the progress I had made. He called me back to him.

Since then I have faltered over and over again. It is the human thing to do after all. However, my Savior is always there to catch me and remind me of what is important and that I am loved. This is why I decided to share my confirmation verse at the beginning of this devotional with you all.

God has given me a new Christian family with the campus ministry CRU. I have found a church where people tell me “welcome home.” I have tried to install good habits of reading my bible and journaling each day. I have started discipleship to help me grow further and stay accountable. I won’t say it is easy. That would be a lie, but my strength, joy, and hope lie with my Heavenly Father.

**Faith Step:** Think of those God moments in your life. Where have you seen God today? Megan referred to them as winks or shimmies from above. They are gifts from God, gifts of love, but most important gifts of hope. That hope is powerful and it is what our faith stands on. Grab ahold of the God-given hope in your life and don’t let go.

**Adam Volek**

**Sowing Seeds of Hope**

**Luke 13:18-19**

**Then Jesus said, “What is the Kingdom of God like? How can I illustrate it? It is like a tiny mustard seed that a man planted in a garden, it grows and becomes a tree and the birds make nests in its branches.”**

Several years ago, my sister Sara, wrote a devotion that fits so well with our theme. I share it with all of you with her permission.

*A Cultivated Heart*

*I grew up a “farmer’s daughter”. As a child, our social calendar revolved around the seasons. Not fall, winter, spring and summer, but planting season and harvest season. I can remember riding with my dad in his big tractor pulling his “planter.” He would talk about all the work that goes into preparing for seed planting. He first needed to work the land, getting out anything in the soil that would become a problem for the sees to grow and flourish. He told me the importance of rows – that seeds needed space to grow. Dad always took what seemed like an exorbitant amount of time applying the fertilizer.*

*As a child I wondered why he spent so much time on fertilizer when he had already prepared the land and planted the seeds? Did the fertilizer really matter? As my dad explained the importance of fertilizer, I began to understand. My father fertilized the ground to keep the nutrients in the ground. The growing process from seed to harvest takes from the ground but the fertilizer replenishes. Faith is like our fertilizer. When we are fertilized in faith small beginnings lead to bountiful harvests.*

*When we allow God to do His work in our life. He begins to fertilize us. He prepares and sets us up to grow in all situations and circumstances through time in the Word and prayer. He then plants us in the local church – a crop of fertilized, activated faith – to bring truth, encouragement, and love. Being a co-laborer in Christ in a flourishing church brings me back to the seasons – planting and the harvest. Fertilize me Lord, help me flourish in faith and plant me in the good soil of a local church. Use me to put the nutrients of Your Word back into the ground on this earth.*

I see the seeds of faith and hope here at FaithPoint from the ways that God has taken us from a simple beginning, through Him equipping us, to bring us to this place we are today. God gives us a hope for the future.

**Faith Step:** Write this adapted prayer from the prayer Adam’s sister shared above on a piece of paper and post it on your refrigerator or another prominent place this week.

Fertilize me Lord,

help me flourish in faith,

and plant me in the good soil at FaithPoint.

**Scripture Readings for Sowing the Seeds of Hope Week**

**Scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation**

**Monday, March 15**

**Jeremiah 29:11 - 13**  For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

**Tuesday, March 16**

**Hebrews 10:23**   Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise.

**Wednesday, March 17**

**Romans 12:12 - 13**Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble and keep on praying. When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

**Thursday, March 18**

**Isaiah 40:31** But those who trust (hope) in the Lord will find new strength.  They will soar on wings like eagles; They will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint.

**Friday, March 19**

**Romans 15:13**  I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him.  Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.