

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Matthew 11:29 (ESV)

Dispensers of God's Grace, Despite Horrible Circumstances

Most of us can share numerous stories of how we strongly desire to faithfully minister in the roles God has assigned to us. We can also convey many times how this ministry was complicated by unexpected interruptions and even by seemingly unnecessary difficulties. But... we can look to our great example, the apostle Paul, to help reassure us of the value of persevering.

In this short passage from 2 Corinthians, written during the third missionary journey, Paul details the struggles that he and his comrades endured along the way. His letter seems to be ensuring the Corinthian believers recognize full-well that his was a not-so-simple and not-so-easy journey while being a strong Gospel herald.

First, Paul labels himself and his teammates as "servants of God" whose main purpose is to dispense grace to believers entrusted to them by God. This short passage details the very difficult and discouraging journey Paul had endured prior to writing this letter. One cannot help but recognize the breadth of struggles as well as the plurality or frequency of them (they didn't occur just once!). With great endurance, Paul persevered through: afflictions, hardships, shipwrecks,, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, and hunger.

In verse 8, Paul even seems to allow a peek into his own emotions when he describes being treated sometimes with honor and at other times with dishonor. He had to regularly work through both praise and slander. At times, he was treated as a true minister of the Gospel, while at other times, he and his co-workers were viewed as impostors. He mentions being well known to all yet often treated as a complete stranger. Though very much alive, he was treated as though he was dying and would be out of the picture soon. He was regularly punished, but never killed. His team rejoiced at all times, but they were still very sorrowful because of the circumstances in which they found themselves. Most considered him poor, literally possessing nothing temporal, but by faithfully investing in others, he counted himself as rich with eternal treasures.

Despite all these contrasts, Paul provides a list of the ways he maintained his endurance through the Holy Spirit and the power of God. Purity, knowledge, patience, kindness,

genuine love, truthful speech, and righteousness all became hallmarks of his character, despite the onslaught of agony he navigated.

Many of us have been blessed to walk a similarly difficult journey. Though our struggles likely don't match Paul's, they can often feel just as devastating. Broken relationships, health misfortunes, financial disasters, and unforeseen career twists can acutely cause us great personal isolation and sorrow. A sense that we are impostors can become very real. Our mindset can easily shift to a focus on pity and the accumulation of hardships. This process often leads to self-talk that can result in a pervasive excuse to give up.

But like Paul, we need to remember two key principles: our purpose (the "why") and our source of strength (the "how"). God Himself, through the Holy Spirit, gives us overflowing resources to not just endure, but to successfully fulfill the calling He has on our lives. Remembering to pause and ask our great God for His strength is critical. Regularly recalling why we were entrusted with another day causes us, like Paul, to faithfully dispense God's grace into the lives of those entrusted to our care.

Despite the never-ending speed bumps of life, I am personally reminded of my great need to daily recall why I exist and how I will successfully fulfill the calling placed on my life. Will you, like me, commit to beginning each day rejoicing in the great responsibility God has entrusted to us, asking Him to give us the strength and encouragement we need to serve well, even when – especially when – life seems unbearable?

Dr. Jeffrey A. Bates, Dean, CPFI Board Member
Yellow Springs, OH

Prayer Wall | Outreach Opportunities | Student Newsletter - Summer/Fall 2022



APhA 2023 Annual Meeting & Exposition CPFI Prayer Breakfast

"A Humble, Limping, Servant-Leader or Something Less"

Sunday, March 26, 2023

7:30 AM to 8:45 AM (GMT)

Cost \$25.

Convention Center, Room 131C

Speaker: Dr. Jeffrey A. Bates, Dean ([Bio](#))

Cedarville University School of Pharmacy

Tickets may be purchased when registering on the APhA website. A small quantity of tickets will be sold at the door.

Register: <https://aphameeting.pharmacist.com/>

Visit www.cpfi.org for updates on the prayer breakfast.

2023 CPFI Annual Conference &



National Student Retreat Lake Junaluska Conference & Retreat Center

91 N Lakeshore Dr., Lake Junaluska, NC 28745

National Student Retreat May 24 to 28

Annual Conference May 25 to 28

<https://lakejunaluska.com/>

Registration opens January 16, 2023

Early Registration Ends March 13, 2023

Registration Closes April 17, 2023

[Schedule-at-a-glance](#)

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Promo Video (4 mins.)



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Are you a pharmacist interested in Emergency Medical Response?

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See the most recent field hospital in Ukraine in [this video](#), and [learn more](#) and apply on the website.

CPFI Prayer Ministry's 3-year Anniverary!



Join us Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 5:00 PM ET

The CPFI Past Presidents Committee was asked to implement a prayer ministry on behalf of CPFI. In March 2020, we started a weekly Prayer Meeting on Sunday evening at 5 p.m. ET, initially to pray about Covid-19 needs. We are meeting monthly now. If you would like an invitation, e-mail Nena Lindrose at Office@cpfi.org. She will send a reminder e-mail with instructions on how to join and some suggested prayer concerns during the week prior to the meeting. We hope you will join us **Sunday, March 19, 2023**, for our next session. By signing up you are only committing to participate when able and praying out loud is voluntary.
Fred Eckel, Board Member

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