

WEEK OF September 15

'OUTRO' ~ Finish Strong/Start Renewed

Hebrews 12:1-3/ 2 Timothy 4:1-8

Day 1:

Depending on how you feel, the end of a season can go three ways.

~You may be optimistic, excited even, if there's new things ahead.

~Or, you may be tentative, a bit sad, overwhelmed with the endless "*what ifs*" running rampant; essential uncertainty in the unknown.

~the third; you're indifferent, time is always moving, so dwelling on what was, or is yet to be, is irrelevant; keep rollin!

The goal with this **Summer Devo Series** was to lend structure, when our daily routines suddenly leave us hanging.

It was laid out with the hope that, perhaps it would start conversations, and encourage Christ-filtered fellowship amongst those who dove in.

Whether those efforts were met is irrelevant. If even one person looked through any of the offerings that were shared, and spent time with the Lord over the last 16 weeks, success was written!

~16 Weeks of drawing closer to the Lord!

~11 different writers. And as each week passed, the content continued to evolve and grow bigger, deeper, and more encouraging.

~Hours and hours of time with the Lord; not only for the writers, but for each individual who said, *I want more this summer*, and then looked through these pages to find MORE JESUS!

PRAYER:

Oh, LORD, may our efforts be pleasing to You. May each hand that picked up these offerings, and each heart and mind that have yet to read, and those who have completed these words, be drawn closer to You, Who You Are, and be spurred on to extend their own offerings to Your Kingdom as the new season begins.

May we not be slow in our pursuit of You, Lord. Spur us on in search of You, Jesus.

Thank you for the way You've touched our hearts. Thank you for each person who accepted the challenge to step outside their comfort zone, to answer the call to contribute. OH, Lord Jesus, bless them, and encourage each of them to continue to pursue You in deeper ways, as they did while they spent time and learned about You, through each weekly topic.

Thank you, Lord, in advance, for what you will do here, in this church and our community.

And, as we move forward into new routines and programming, continue to bring to mind the specifics of what we learned this summer. Help us to become more like You, Jesus, in our actions, our choices, our thoughts, and how we love those around us.

We love you, Jesus, Amen.

CHALLENGE:

Spend some time today thanking the Lord for how He has drawn you into His Word this season.

Thank Him for what you've learned, how you've been challenged, and for opening your mind to His ways that may have encouraged you to step out in faith, obedience, or surrender to what the Lord has been calling you to.

Praise Him.

He Is GOOD, All The Time!

Day 2:

There were 4 distinct categories that gave our weeks together a vague sense of theme.

Intro	What do you KNOW? Wonder!
Faith	A Child like Faith
Prayer	Character of God
Seeking/Evangelism	Worship
The WORD	Jesus
Old Testament	The Lord
New Testament	Holy Spirit
The Church	Outro - End Strong/Start Renewed

Did one Theme challenge you more than the others?

Did a specific topic push your buttons? Make you think, or step out and make some changes?

We have the ability to never stop learning, and You are the Greatest Teacher, Lord! Maybe one of the coolest things is that if you picked up this same series next summer, you'd be in a different place, and your answers would be different.

Isn't God so cool and gracious to us that this is the case?

CHALLENGE:

For the rest of your time today, go back and revisit one of these themes, and see if anything you've been challenged to think through, or apply to your life, has continued to be an active part of your days!

Record your questions, and send them to the church; you never know when, or if, your questions may be addressed in a coming series, study, or conversation.

Day 3:

Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

What a passage!

There is so much going on here.

Statements.

Encouragements.

Challenges.

TRUTH.

Let's dissect this a little more closely:

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses,

~We are not alone. There is a war going on in the heavenlies.

Church, we can't see it, but

if we pay attention we can feel it. It matters how we engage in battle.

This is a Truth Statement.

There is a battle going on for our souls, at this moment; you are fighting this fight, whether you truly engage or not.

*let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles,
and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

~Where is your focus?

Are you pursuing the Lord?

Confession and Repentance are key to following Jesus. *Repent* is, after all, the first command Jesus gives us before He says, "*Come, follow me,*" (Matthew 4:17 & 19 NIV)

*²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus,
the author and perfecter of our faith,
who for the joy set before him endured the cross,
scorning its shame,
and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

~He went to the cross for us.

Fix your eyes on Jesus.

*³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men,
so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

~Focus on Him. Consider Him. Keep your eyes on Him.

**What is one thing you can do today to align your heart,
mind, and spirit with Him?**
the author and perfecter of our faith,

LISTEN TO:

Jesus Paid It All ~ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Htiuq1xe4v8&pp=ygUhamVzdXMgcGFpZCBpdCBhbGwgc2hhbmUgYW5kIHNoYW5l)

[v=Htiuq1xe4v8&pp=ygUhamVzdXMgcGFpZCBpdCBhbGwgc2hhbmUgYW5kIHNoYW5l](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Htiuq1xe4v8&pp=ygUhamVzdXMgcGFpZCBpdCBhbGwgc2hhbmUgYW5kIHNoYW5l)

Day 4: Outro-End Strong/Start Renewed

If you're reading this, it's unlikely that you've thrown in the towel on your faith.
Praise The LORD!

There are always new ways to understand our faith, and The WORD.

Again, PRAISE THE LORD!

We've looked back at what we've covered these past 16 weeks, and hopefully, you can pinpoint more than one area that challenged you.

For today's purpose, let's look at one concept, one verse, one topic title that you want to learn more about.

Have you got one in mind?

What do you do now?

Write it down, as well as a list of questions you'd like to pursue.

Maybe you send these questions to church.

Maybe you bring them to your ministry leader to work through.

Check out a book from the library.

Resources are in endless supply these days.

Don't stop your pursuit of The Lord.

That is what chasing Jesus looks like.

You ask. He answers.

Also, just FYI, there are no bad questions.

Ask.

Seek.

Knock.

Sound familiar?

REFLECTION:

Spend the rest of your time today talking to Him.

Asking for guidance.

Reading through the passages that stumped you, or challenged, or encouraged you.

Write down your thoughts, questions, and prayers.

Day 5:

Remember this from way back in early June?

PRAYER & FASTING

Monday~ PRAYER AND FASTING (Corporate: THE CHURCH) (fast and ask the Lord to show you how to pray for these young people, our families, our church, and our community)

Tuesday~ Marriages/Families at EFC

Wednesday~ Seniors

Thursday~ Youth/Young Adults

Friday~ community/country

Saturday/Sunday ~ Sabbath: pray as led

If you choose, do a short 1 meal fast today.

Spend your time with the Lord today, praying through these 4 (Tuesday-Friday).

Everybody needs prayer.

But this prayer focus is less about personal circumstance and need, and more about spiritual growth and wholeness.

Take your time today to talk with Jesus about these areas of concern, and the direction our church is leading in these ministries.

Day 6:

*1In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,
who will judge the living and the dead,
and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:*

²Preach the Word;

Be prepared in season and out of season;

correct, rebuke and encourage –

with great patience and careful instruction.

³For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine.

*Instead, to suit their own desires they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say
what their itching ears want to hear.*

⁴They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

***⁵But you, keep your head in all situations,
endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist,
discharge all the duties of your ministry.***

*⁶For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my
departure.*

⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

*⁸Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous Judge,
will award to me on that day – and not only to me,
but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

2 Timothy 4:1-8 (NIV)

This may be Paul's charge to Timothy, but it is still relevant for us; and, as it says in the previous chapter, only 2 verses before:

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

***¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking,
correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly
equipped for every good work.***

The man of God? That's you.

Who needs teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, and thorough equipping? Still you!

We are in a battle, church.

We are running a race.

It may seem long, and require periods of rest.

But those rest stops DO NOT mean STOP.

We prepare – EQUIP, TEACH, REBUKE, CORRECT AND TRAIN IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

We take up our cross.

We follow Him.

EVERY DAY.

FULL STOP.

So, as we pass the baton, from one season to the next, from easy-breezy, sometimes willy-nilly, summer commitment, to the intense race that September brings.

Train hard.

Show up to practice.

Surround yourself with other believers who help you on your journey.

Spend more time in The Word.

Volunteer somewhere in the Church.

Build up those reserves for whatever has yet to come.

We are never truly in an “off-season”.

It’s always harder to get back into shape, than to have stayed the course.

So church, take up this mantle and run well:

*1In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,
who will judge the living and the dead,
and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:*

2Preach the Word;

Be prepared in season and out of season;

correct, rebuke and encourage –

with great patience and careful instruction.

3For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine.

*Instead, to suit their own desires they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say
what their itching ears want to hear.*

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