

Dover

Daily

DEVOTIONALS

Growing
Together in
God's Word!

Dover Daily Devotional

On Sunday, Dr. Fred Anderson delivered our 250th Homecoming sermon. His message was titled "Something Important Happened (Happens) Here" from Joshua 4:19-24.

Monday - A Pioneer Church

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance." - Psalm 33:12

Devotional:

Dover Baptist Church was established as Dover Meeting House in 1773, making it one of the 34 Virginia churches established in or prior to 1776 and which had a continued ministry since. The church was recognized as a "Pioneer Church" at the November meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia in 1999.

As we reflect on the history of Dover Baptist Church, we are reminded of the profound impact that faith and worship have had on our nation. Through the establishment of churches like Dover, America began with a strong foundation of Christian values and principles. Today, as we navigate a world filled with diverse beliefs and perspectives, it can be challenging to maintain our faith and stay true to our beliefs. But just as our forefathers turned to God for guidance and strength, so too can we find inspiration in passages like Psalm 33:12. Let us remember the blessings of acknowledging God as our leader. Even in our increasingly polarized and secularized world, we ought to strive to live our lives in a way that reflects our faith and values.

Discussion:

1. What does it mean for a nation to acknowledge God as its leader in a world characterized by diverse beliefs and values?
2. How can individuals and communities contribute to making God the LORD of their nation or community?

3. In what ways can we see the blessings of God's leadership in our own lives and the lives of those around us?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we come before you with hearts filled with gratitude for the guidance and blessings you provide. We acknowledge that true prosperity comes when we recognize You as the LORD of our lives and our nations. Help us, Lord, to live in a way that reflects Your love, justice, and mercy in our communities and societies. May we be instruments of peace and unity, following Your divine guidance in all we do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Tuesday - Preaching Through Persecution

"The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah." - Acts 5:41-42

Devotional:

When men and women boldly proclaim the gospel, persecution is never far behind. Dover Baptist Church's founding pastor, William Webber, was arrested and imprisoned in 1770 in Chesterfield County along with another minister, John Anthony, on the charge of "preaching the gospel with no authority but from above." The two men preached through the prison gates with such effectiveness that the jailer left the cell unlocked, trusting that they would escape. Later when urged to escape, they replied, "They have taken us openly, uncondemned, and have cast us into prison; and now do they cast us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out." Webber was arrested again on August 10th, 1771, in Middlesex County while he was in the middle of preaching a sermon on James 2:18. As before, Webber preached every Sunday and Wednesday from the windows of the jail. On August 26th, 1771, they were brought into the County Court of Middlesex, and each was required to give a bond that he would not preach in the county for twelve months. Upon their refusal, they remained in prison, and orders were given that they be fed on only bread and water. During this time, Webber became critically ill, causing John Waller to write to the Urbanna officials on September 20, 1771, to the effect that Webber was "in a very low state of health and without divine interposition, must I think, in a few days, launch off the shores of mortality." A petition was drawn up for Webber's release, and Webber was liberated on September 26th, 1771.

The story of Dover Baptist Church's founding pastor, William Webber, is a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by early believers. Despite facing imprisonment and persecution for preaching the gospel, Webber remained steadfast in his commitment to Christ. His unwavering faith and dedication to spreading the word of God is a shining example that continues to inspire us today. Let us reflect on the courage and conviction of those who have gone before us, and let their example inspire us to stand firm in our own faith journeys. May we always remember that no matter what obstacles we may face, we are never alone, and with God's help, we can overcome anything.

Discussion:

1. How does the story of William Webber and John Anthony's imprisonment for preaching the gospel challenge your perspective on facing challenges and opposition in your own faith journey?
2. Have you ever encountered resistance or persecution for your beliefs or actions as a Christian? How did you respond, and what lessons did you learn from those experiences?
3. In Acts 5:41-42, the apostles rejoiced because they were counted worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus. How can we cultivate a similar attitude of joy and endurance in facing difficulties?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the inspiring example of early believers like the apostles and faithful servants like William Webber and John Anthony. Their unwavering commitment to proclaiming the gospel, even in the face of suffering, challenges us to reexamine our own dedication to you. Lord, grant us the strength and courage to stand firm in our faith, regardless of the obstacles we may encounter. May we, like them, find joy in being counted worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus. In His name, we pray. Amen.

Wednesday - "A Place of Divine Worship Forever"

"One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple." - Psalm 27:4

Devotional:

Psalm 27:4 speaks to the deep longing in King David's heart – a longing to be in the Lord's presence always. He wants to stay connected with God's house, gaze upon His beauty, and seek His presence in His holy sanctuary. This verse invites us to reflect on our own yearning for an unshakeable connection with our Heavenly Father.

Did you know that the Dover Meeting House wasn't officially established until 1773, with just 45 original members? The original meeting house was a simple, one-room log structure that stood on Matthew Woodson's land for 73 years until 1846, when it was officially given over to the Dover Baptist Church as a "place of divine worship forever" by Matthew's son, Philip Woodson.

King David's desire to dwell in God's house and seek His presence is something we can all relate to. We should strive to cultivate an unbroken relationship with our Heavenly Father. The story of the Dover Meeting House reminds us of the significance of dedicating a place of worship to God. Let us be thankful to have a house of worship where we, as a church family, can gather regularly for worship. It is a privilege and an honor we should not take for granted.

Discussion:

1. What does it mean for you to "dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of your life"? How can you cultivate a continual awareness of God's presence in your daily life, not just within the walls of a physical church building?

2. Consider the history of the "Dover Meeting House" and its transformation into a place of divine worship forever. How does this story inspire your commitment to God's house and the importance of preserving sacred spaces for future generations?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the beautiful promise in Psalm 27:4—a promise of dwelling in Your presence all the days of our lives. We acknowledge that Your house is not just a physical structure but a sanctuary we carry within us, where Your Spirit resides. As we reflect on the history of the "Dover Meeting House" and its dedication as a place of divine worship, we are reminded of the importance of preserving sacred spaces for worship and fellowship. Lord, grant us the wisdom and commitment to honor Your house and to create spaces where future generations can encounter You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Thursday - \$0.29 and Faith

"He replied, 'Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.'" - Matthew 17:20

Devotional:

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus uses the analogy of a mustard seed to illustrate the incredible power of even a small amount of faith. He reminds us that our faith, regardless of its size, has the potential to move mountains and accomplish the seemingly impossible. This concept is beautifully exemplified in the story of the Dover Baptist Church in 1855.

Imagine the treasurer of the Dover Baptist Church in 1855, looking at a balance of only \$0.29 in the church's funds. From a human perspective, it would have seemed impossible to raise the necessary resources to build a new church. The odds were overwhelmingly against them, and their faith appeared as small as that mustard seed Jesus spoke of.

Yet, in just a few months, against all odds, the new Dover Baptist Church was dedicated. This remarkable transformation is a testament to the power of faith and the unfailing providence of God. It reminds us that God often works in ways that defy human understanding. He takes our meager resources, our doubts, and our seemingly insurmountable challenges and turns them into opportunities for His glory.

Discussion:

1. Can you think of a time when you faced a seemingly insurmountable challenge, and your faith, though small, played a significant role in overcoming it?
2. What are some practical ways you can nurture and grow your faith, even when it feels as small as a mustard seed?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, We come before you today with hearts filled with gratitude for the gift of faith, as small as a mustard seed. We thank you for reminding us through your Word that even the tiniest measure of faith can lead to extraordinary outcomes. Help us, Lord, to trust in you more deeply and to cultivate our faith daily. As we reflect on the story of Dover Baptist Church and the miraculous work you accomplished through their small faith, may we be encouraged to face our own mountains with confidence. Strengthen our faith, Lord, and grant us the wisdom to seek your will in all things. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Friday - Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

"Therefore, 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, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." - Hebrews 12:1-2

Devotional:

Did you know that Pastor Crowder is the 49th pastor called to Dover Baptist Church? Dover has a rich history of Godly preaching, teaching, and leadership, but a church is much more than its pastors. We are grateful for the countless faithful church members of Dover who have served the Lord, their church, and their community in both spectacular and unseen ways for 250 years.

Hebrews 12:1-2 reminds us that we are surrounded by a "great cloud of witnesses." These witnesses are not just spectators but a testament to the enduring power of faith. They are the generations of believers who have gone before us, leaving a trail of faithfulness and perseverance. As we reflect on Dover Baptist Church's 250-year history we are reminded that we are part of a broader narrative of faith, hope, and love.

The author of Hebrews urges us to "throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles." Just as a runner sheds unnecessary weight to run faster, we too should cast off the burdens that hinder our spiritual journey. However, the key to enduring in this race is found in the latter part of the verse: "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." Just as generations before us have fixed their gaze on Christ, we are called to do the same. He is the source and sustainer of our faith. As we look to Him, we find the inspiration, strength, and guidance needed to persevere.

Dover Baptist Church's legacy of faith is a testament to what can be accomplished when a community of believers fixes their eyes on Jesus. The faith of those who came before us has paved the way for the ministry and impact of this church. We are beneficiaries of their faithfulness, and it is our responsibility to continue this legacy.

Discussion:

1. Consider the "great cloud of witnesses" mentioned in Hebrews 12:1. Who are the faithful individuals in your life or in the history of your church who have inspired and encouraged you in your faith journey?
2. Hebrews 12:1 encourages us to "throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles." What are some things in your life that may be hindering your spiritual growth and need to be set aside? How can you begin to do this?
3. The verse speaks of running with perseverance and fixing our eyes on Jesus. What practical steps can you take to maintain focus on Christ in your daily life and spiritual journey?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, We thank You for the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us, leaving us a legacy of faith and dedication. Help us, Lord, to honor their memory by living lives of faithfulness and perseverance. Give us the strength to throw off the hindrances in our lives and to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. May we run the race marked out for us with endurance, knowing that You are with us every step of the way. Bless our church, our community, and our world through the testimony of our faith. May we continue to pass on the legacy of faith to the next generation, that Your name may be glorified in all we do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Saturday: The Best Is Yet To Come!

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." - Matthew 24:14

"After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'" - Revelation 7:9-10

Devotional:

Jesus gave us a calling to play our part in his great mission to seek and save the lost. Matthew 24:14, Jesus shares an optimistic message about a future where the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations. These words carry a profound sense of purpose and urgency. They remind us that our mission as believers is to spread the good news of God's kingdom to every corner of the earth - including our own neighborhood. Revelation 7:9-10 also provides a breathtaking glimpse of the fulfillment of this mission. John's vision describes a vast multitude, too numerous to count, gathered from every nation, tribe, people, and language. They stand before the throne of God, dressed in white robes and holding palm branches, rejoicing in unison, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

As members of Dover Baptist Church, we have inherited a legacy of faith and a history of sharing the gospel. Yet, we also have the privilege and responsibility to continue this work as we look ahead to the

future with gospel hope. Our hope lies in the promise of a brighter tomorrow—a future where the gospel continues to reach every nation and people group, leading them to salvation in Christ!

Discussion:

1. How can we, as individuals and as a church community, actively participate in fulfilling the mission Jesus outlined in Matthew 24:14?
2. How can we celebrate and build upon the legacy of faith and service that our church has inherited, while also embracing the call to create a brighter future for the gospel?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we are grateful for the mission You have entrusted to us—the mission of sharing the gospel with all nations. Help us to be diligent and passionate in fulfilling this calling. May we never lose sight of the promise revealed in Revelation 7:9-10, where people from every nation and language stand before Your throne, worshiping You. Lord, empower us as a church to continue the legacy of faith we've received and to look forward to a future filled with hope, knowing that Your kingdom will be proclaimed to the ends of the earth. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.