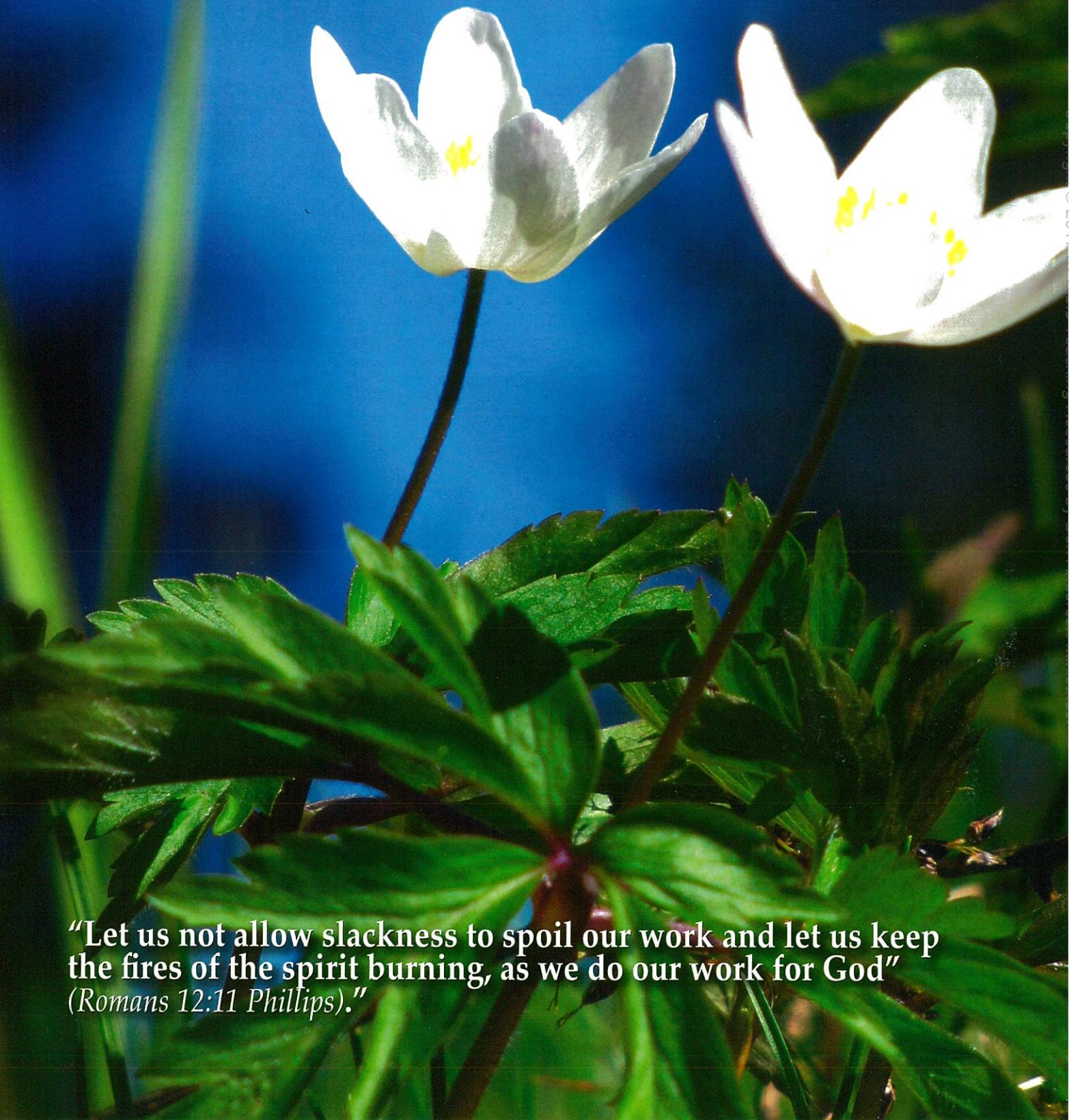


SUMMER 2012

# GRAPEVINE

BIBLE TEACHING RESOURCES by DON ANDERSON MINISTRIES



**"Let us not allow slackness to spoil our work and let us keep the fires of the spirit burning, as we do our work for God"**

*(Romans 12:11 Phillips.)*

# Persevering and Pressing on

I ran across the following anonymous saying in the paper the other day: "If it's really that important to you, then make a decision and stick with it!"

Ruth 1:16-17: "But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me'" (NIV).

Ruth Myers's last book was a devotional called *31 Days of Encouragement*. What a treasure! The title for day 23 is "Beware the Golden Idol":

Getting older, it's easy to tell ourselves, "I've worked



hard. I've done my part, and now I deserve to just look after *me* during this closing chapter of life. I deserve to go after all the rewards life has denied me before. I'm finally free to do my thing. I've done my part—now I'll have fun!" We tend to have lots of excuses for being self-centered as the years fly by.

So we set up our little idol—"My Golden Years."

We assume we have the right at last to do our own thing, to enjoy to the full whatever benefits we've laid up. *I deserve it*, we think. *It's not selfish; it's simply fair. And it's what everyone else does*. We go after worthless things and end up empty.<sup>1</sup>

I am reminded of the message from the Lord in Jeremiah 2:13: "For my people have done two evil things: They have forsaken me—the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all!" (NLT).

Once you have made your commitment and set your course, the tough days are ahead. Jesus said it in Luke 9:23: "And He was saying to them all, 'If anyone wishes to



## Running the Race—Hebrews 12:1-2

The main message of the book of Hebrews is a challenge to accept the call of the cross, to manifest the quality of perseverance when it comes to the matter of faith.

The argument of the author is that others stayed by the stuff, hung in there in difficult circumstances, continued to believe and trust in God, and were faithful to finish.

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, since we are having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us be running with perseverance the race lying before us."

We also have a great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us. The people in Hebrews 11, the great hall of faith, made it. So can we.

The word "since" points to our obligation and responsibility. It's tough to find a legitimate excuse for not making it!

2 Corinthians 7:1: "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (NASB).

Failure to prepare is preparation for failure.

Our text goes on to say: "Let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us."

To what exactly is the apostle referring here? To those in the book of Hebrews and to us as well, "the sin which so easily entangles" us is the sin of unbelief. We fail to trust. Faith seems not worth it. We can't make it. It's too hard.

Psalm 22:12: "Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me" (NIV).

Two pictures hang in my office from my marathon days. One of them says: "We drench ourselves with the grace of exhaustion and the ecstasy of knowing we are worthy to receive it." The other says: "The runner who puts the last ounce of effort into the race feels the glorious satisfaction of having given everything to the moment."

We are commanded first to "lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us." Then, positively, we are commanded to "be running with perseverance the race lying before us."

The Greek word for race is *agon*, from which we get the word agony. Literally, perseverance implies persevering through the agony. That's the great definition of ministry.

Hebrews 12:2: "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of faith, who for the joy lying before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

"Lay[ing] aside" is the key to training for the race. "Run[ning] with perseverance" describes the actual contest. "Fixing our eyes on Jesus" is the goal. "Fixing" conveys the idea of focused attention. Jesus is the source and goal of faith. Whereas we have human models behind us, the divine model is in front of us.

Jesus endured the cross "the joy lying before him." What is this joy? It is the anticipation of what is ahead, although things may be rough right now. It might be gory now, but there will be glory. There may be sacrifice now,

but satisfaction will come at a future time. For now there is the cross, but the crown is coming.

"The joy lying before Him" is the joy set before us, characterized by three *Fs*: faithfulness, finishing, and fruitfulness.

Because of "the joy lying before Him," three events occurred for our Lord.

1) "[He] endured the cross." Matthew 26:39: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

2) "[He is] despising the shame." It was not easy to be made an open spectacle before mankind. Dying in the public eye, Jesus, "despising the shame," continued through to victory.

3) "Has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus never stopped running until He could sit down. He finished a course that was set before Him. He hung in there, He stayed with it until He had completed the race.

Psalm 16:11: "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

## Finishing the Course—2 Timothy 4:2

The apostle Paul sends his final message to young Timothy and soon will finish the race himself. 2 Timothy 4:1-8 contains the final farewell from the apostle. The key verse is 2 Timothy 4:2: "Preach the word, hold yourself in readiness when it is convenient and when it is inconvenient, reprove, rebuke, exhort with unlimited patience and teaching."

Paul is basically saying, "Lord, pleasing You is my ruling passion."

Kristin Armstrong puts it well, "Pray for clarity and consistency."

Whatever you do, the later it gets in the game, the more intense should be your passion and participation. In the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "Alone you stood before God when he called you; alone you had to answer that call; alone you had to struggle and pray; and alone you will die and give an account to God."<sup>2</sup>

Paul's charge in 2 Timothy comes forth in five rapid-fire commands: "Preach the word, hold yourself in readiness when it is convenient and when it is

*continued on page 7*



*A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.*

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# Celebrating 40 Years

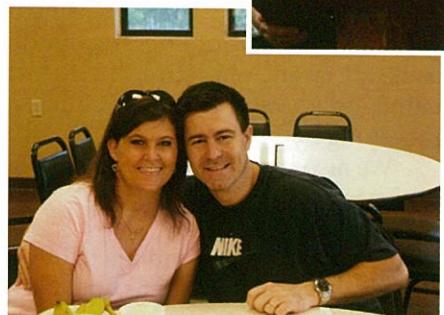
BTR's summer long 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary festivities began with a bang May 4-6 with the Lakeview Couples Conference. In addition to thrilling music by Russell Newport (*pictured at right*) and Larry Kent, Don taught on interpersonal relationships as depicted in the parables of Jesus. Twenty couples attended, enjoying ample free time and wonderful treats prepared by Genevieve Martin. Videos of the conference will soon be available.



Two events remain to celebrate BTR's 40<sup>th</sup>... it's not too late to sign up, although spaces are limited. Won't you join your friends and c'mon along with us?

Alaska Cruise (July 6-13)  
Colorado Family Camp at Trail West  
(August 13-18)

We would love to see you! Visit our website [www.bibleteachingresources.org](http://www.bibleteachingresources.org) and download a registration form or call our office at 1.877.326.7729 to register.



# Gleanings from my Devotional Readings

by Pearl Anderson



I want to share bits of lessons, comfort, warnings, and advice from the following authors who study, live, and teach the word of God.

"If we walk in the light as He is in the light"  
(1 John 1:7).

"For many of us, walking in the light means walking according to the standard we have set for another person."

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, March 16

"Trekking the trail in shoes of settled issues gives us great stability and footing from which to wage war."  
(unknown)

"Let's choose what we want to fill today with. Is it with regrets? With haunting memories? With negligence that will feed tomorrow's distress? With complaints and disgruntledness? With wishful thinking? Surely not."

Ruth Myers, *31 Days of Encouragement*, 17

"But be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. Lay aside personal differences and work together for the advancement of God's kingdom"  
(Phil. 2:4b NLT).

"Gossip ends at a wise person's ears."

"Be careful of your thoughts—they may become words at any time."

"God...guides our minds as we think things out in His presence."

J.I. Packer

"Our greatest privilege is to enjoy God's presence."  
*Our Daily Bread*, April 5, 2011

"We must learn to live in the ordinary "gray" day according to what we saw on the mountain."

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost For His Highest*, April 16

"Let Me control your mind. The mind is the most restless, unruly part of mankind. Long after you have learned the discipline of holding your tongue, your thoughts defy your will and set themselves up against Me."

Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling*, 116

"Everybody, sooner or later, sits down to a banquet of consequences."

Robert Louis Stevenson

"There's nothing more basic to meeting our basic needs than the Word of God."

David Jeremiah, *The Greatest Gift*, 32

"There's no man who can overthrow God's purposes. There's no committee that can thwart God's work in the church of Jesus Christ."

David Jeremiah, *The Greatest Gift*, 34

"Lord, more and more make me aware of thought patterns that pull me down, and hinder relationships, and rob me of faith and joy—especially negative or fearful thoughts about the future."

Ruth Meyers, *31 Days of Encouragement*, 35-36

"There is a spiritual light imparted to the soul by God, which is different from anything that is obtained by natural means. This light reaches the bottom of the heart and changes the nature."

Richard Rushing (editor), *Voices of the Past*, 134

"Keep your soul properly conditioned to manifest the life of the Son of God. Never live on your memories of past experiences, but let the Word of God always be living and active in you."

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost For His Highest*, May 14

"A secret to growth is to never lose sight of the quiet place within you, the silent harbor of the Lord's presence. Enjoy your memories from the days of old, but prize nothing more than the Lord and the value He places on each day."

Ruth Myers, *31 Days of Encouragement*, 20

And from the greatest source of all:

"You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4 NASB).

"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6 NASB).

"Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass" (1 Thess. 5:24 NASB).

A request from 1 Thessalonians 5:25 for BTR:  
"Brethren pray for us."

A prayer from 1 Thessalonians 5:28 for you: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!"

# Bookshelf

*Who Is the Antichrist?: Answering the Question Everyone Is Asking* by Mark Hitchcock (Harvest House)

I have used this book in my Granbury classes on Revelation. Hitchcock has done a great job laying out the prophetic parameters of the man of sin, the anti-Christ. Hitchcock's words on page 102 say it well: "As my friend Dr. Harold Willmington has said, 'There's been a lot of sick, sick, sick, about six, six, six.'"

*Middle East Burning* by Mark Hitchcock (Harvest House)

I have also used this book to update myself on all the traumatic happenings in the Middle East which have occurred recently. According to the author:

What we are witnessing could well be the embryonic, emerging Islamic caliphate that jihadists want. The tide of revolution could eventually usher into power states with radical leaders who want to establish sharia law the same way it was implanted in Iran after the revolution in 1979. These developments could light the fuse to the Middle East powder keg and trigger the military conflict predicted in Ezekiel 38-39. (16)

After you have read Mark Hitchcock's books, take a fresh look heavenward and you may find yourself saying, "Even so, come Lord Jesus!"

*The Tehran Initiative* by Joel C. Rosenberg (Tyndale House)

This is the second in a series of books that Joel Rosenberg is currently writing. Although fictional accounts, his books illuminate events in biblical prophecy. Following *The Twelfth Imam*, reviewed in a previous *Grapevine*, *The Tehran Initiative* picks up the story and carries it to the point where the United States and Israel are taking military action against Iran's nuclear plans. If you've not read a Joel Rosenberg book, you should! Every one of his books is well researched, and each is a real page-turner.

*The Twelfth Imam* by Joel Rosenberg (Tyndale House)

Rosenberg's name is a household word these days. Many consider him a contemporary prophet because so much of what he writes concerns prophetic themes—the end times. This book, though a fictional account, makes you walk away believing that the last days may might happen the way Rosenberg suggests in this novel. I must warn you, this is the first in another fictional series and you will be left hanging when you finish the book. He has done a fantastic job in presenting the "what ifs." This is another must-read!

## RECIPE CORNER

### Donna's Delights

Here's a delicious treat just right for summer company or everyday breakfasts. You can even keep the mix in the fridge for a few days and bake fresh muffins for your guests.

#### ABILENE COUNTRY CLUB MUFFINS

3 lbs. brown sugar  
12 eggs  
1 1/2 lbs. chopped walnuts  
1 tsp. salt  
2 tsps. vanilla  
4 3/4 cups flour  
2/3 cup melted margarine

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, cream the eggs and brown sugar. Add vanilla, melted margarine, and nuts. Add flour and salt. Mix well. Bake in small muffin pans, well-greased, for 15-20 minutes. The mix keeps well in refrigerator.

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## Clipboard *continued from page 3*

inconvenient, reprove, rebuke, exhort with unlimited patience and teaching."

Life's answers are in God's word! Therefore, let this be your passion. Let this be your purpose. "Preach the word"!

The word *passion* connotes intense emotion.

J. Vernon McGee said: "This phrase is sort of a rallying cry, a motto that people respond to. You remember that we had such a thing during World War II: 'Remember Pearl Harbor.' Back in the Spanish-American War, it was 'Remember the Maine.' This is our rallying cry today: 'Preach the Word.'<sup>3</sup>

For all of us in Texas it is "Remember the Alamo!" Now we can say after 9-11, "Remember the Twin Towers!"

Paul knows his condition is terminal. There is a sense of urgency.

(1) "Preach the word."

(2) "Hold yourself in readiness when it is convenient and when it is inconvenient." Be alert and ready. Either take or make your opportunity.

(3) "Reprove" error.

(4) "Rebuke" sin.

(5) "Exhort with unlimited patience and teaching."

The word "readiness" means to stand by, be ready, be on hand, keep a sense of urgency. The word "passion" suggests love, joy, hatred, anger, intense enthusiasm for something. The whole passage indicates that Timothy must crank it up a notch—that he must be intense, eager, and excited about the charge he has been given.

Charles Jones writes the following about urgency: There is nothing that can make you more excited about your work than a sense of its importance and urgency. *I believe that the fires of inspiration and greatness in our hearts can be kept burning only by developing this sense of urgency and importance in our work*—not the work I'm going to do, not the work I wish I could do, but the work I am doing now.

A sense of urgency in your work informs you that yesterday is gone forever and tomorrow may never come, but today is in your hands. It lets you know that shirking today's work will add to tomorrow's burden; it helps you accomplish the tasks that today sets before you.<sup>4</sup>

Romans 12:11: "keep the fire of the spirit burning as we do our work for the Lord" (Phillips). The Greek word for fire means to be fervent, to boil, to be hot. Keep your water boiling! Another translation is "to maintain the spiritual glow."

What a tragedy it is to see people who are chronologically challenged begin to cool off, to back down, to shut it down, to let the passions die, and to surrender their kingdom work to others.

Job 32:19: "inside I am like bottled-up wine, like new wineskins ready to burst."

Kristin Armstrong, in daily devotional *Happily Ever After*, uses Hebrews 12:1 in her meditation: "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

## Pace Yourself

I belong to a women's running group, and we often run pacing workouts on the local high school track. After warming up we begin a series of 5 one-mile repeats. Each mile is four laps around the track. The goal is to remain at a consistent speed or run a negative split, which means to run faster at the end than when you started.

It's tempting to start too fast in the false exuberance of fresh legs and be unable to complete the work. It's easy to be inconsistent, speeding up or slowing down depending on who is running nearby, or whether the coach is watching.

I love the metaphor of the track as I apply it to my life. We are called spiritually to run our own race, to persevere, to be nourished, to be consistent, to set goals, to remain focused, and to push our limits.

I want to mature in my faith to a state of tenacity and sinew. I want to know my pace and to gain the experience, endurance, and wisdom to run a lifetime negative split.<sup>5</sup>

Our youngest daughter, Julea, has become a health training coach and used Pearl and me as what she called her "guinea pigs" for six months. This involved an accountability structure. We set goals and are endeavoring to turn the big ship around and get it going in a new direction. We concluded our six months and this is Julea's summary:

Hi Dad!

I have a list of 43 victories that you had over the last 6 months. That is so impressive! That is what we will remember and focus on when we think of these past months.

As for the work yet to do, here is a list of goals that you made for yourself to accomplish this next year.

- 1.) Drink water.
- 2.) Continue weight loss through exercise.
- 3.) Be consistent in your eating breakfast with Mom.

*Thank You, Lord, that I am 79 and still going. You are an awesome God. My single, passionate purpose is to please You and finish strong.*

1. *31 Days of Encouragement: as We Grow Older* by Ruth Myers. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. Copyright—Ruth Myers, 2011. pp. 111-12.
2. *Seize the Day with Dietrich Bonhoeffer* by Charles Ringman. Colorado Springs, CO: Pinon Press. Copyright, Charles Ringman, 2000. March 10.
3. *Through the Bible with J. Vernon McGee: Volume V* by J. Vernon McGee. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. Copyright – J. Vernon McGee, 1983. p. 475.
4. *Life is Tremendous* by Charles Jones. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, Copyright – Charles E. Jones, 1968. p. 25.
5. *Happily Ever After* by Kristin Armstrong. New York, NY: FaithWords. Copyright – Kristin Armstrong, 2007. p. 114.

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## **And They Call It Puppy Love**

by Donna Anderson Skorheim

Vinetta recently relocated to Tyler, Texas, from Oregon, where she had lived with her beloved husband and much loved pet dog. After her husband passed away, health problems of her own forced Vinetta to make the move to Tyler to be near family. Vinetta's son Bill and his wife, Dana, flew to Oregon to bring Vinetta to Texas. Unfortunately, the pet dog, Missy, blind and in ill health, could not make the trip, so they had to put her to sleep before the move. Vinetta moved into a care facility in Tyler. She had lost so much within a short time: her husband, her dog, her Oregon home. It was traumatic, to say the least.

In my role as chaplain, I visited Vinetta recently. She told me about Missy and showed me a picture. In turn, I pulled out a photo of my dog, Pappi. As Vinetta "made over" Pappi's picture, I told her about my dog's background. Before my husband, Mark, and I acquired Pappi, she had lived in Oregon with my sister Becky. Hearing this, Vinetta perked up and



exclaimed, "Oh, an Oregonian dog!" I continued Pappi's story. My sister had passed away and Pappi had flown from Oregon to Tyler to be with family. Vinetta commented, "Pappi is just like me."

I asked the management at the care center if I could bring Pappi to meet Vinetta, and found they actually encourage bringing pets to visit. So I took Oregon-now-Tyler resident Pappi to meet Oregon-now-Tyler resident Vinetta! Instant love. Pappi curled up on her bed right next to her and put his head on her arm. You see, Pappi had learned from the time my sister became so sick exactly what to do. Only God could have brought all this together! My husband now calls Pappi, "Pastor Puppy Pappi." When I left, Vinetta called out, "That was such a special treat, thank you. Goodbye Pappi, come back soon."

Wait a minute—she didn't say goodbye to me!

*This piece has been adapted from an article originally appearing in the Tyler Morning Telegraph. Donna Anderson Skorheim serves as a chaplain with Marketplace Chaplains USA.*