

**NBC Devotional**  
**March 3, 2021**  
**“Your Work is Not in Vain”**  
**1 Corinthians 15:58**

I love Nazarene Bible College.

So very proud of our students!

So deeply impressed by our staff faculty!

Truly grateful for our cabinet and our amazing President!

I feel deeply privileged to be called upon to share in today’s devotional and especially to share together with you in a time of prayer today.

In recent days my heart has been drawn to 1 Corinthians 15:58 which reads:

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

Three phrases from this verse are underlined in my notes:

“... my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you.”

- “Stand firm -- let nothing move you!”
- We are often called to action. But we are also called to steadfastness.
- Stay focused! God has given you marching orders, and until he gives you new orders, stay focused on his plan.
- In a season of shifting values, shifting norms, shifting crises, when Christ lives in you, the hope of glory, you have discovered a firm foundation. “On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand!”

“...Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord ...”

Always ... look it up ... it means ... “always”

At All times

In All manners

With All efforts

Choosing Without fail

There are no asterisks that give an exception during a pandemic.

Always surely includes good times of prosperity and challenging scarcity.

Always means always.

Give yourself fully

A magnificent surrender

Wholly available to God

“...because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

Your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

- Have you had a challenging year?
- Has the work at times been difficult?
- Has it been difficult to see the reward?
- Just what is our labor in the Lord?
  - There is the labor we do for Jesus’ purposes.
  - There is the work we do in life that Jesus honors.
- Our labor for Jesus’ purposes is where I want to focus. We are to: make disciples; baptize them; and teach them to obey. Our work is also prayer. Like the famous Oswald Chambers who is largely quoted as saying, “Prayer is not preparation for the greater work, prayer is the greater work.”
- One of the most important works we do is the work of prayer.
- In recent months, I have had the privilege of serving as interim pastor in various places. Helping a church pray together has become the key ingredient during these interims. We focus on prayer, and by discovery, seek the renewal of the “corporate prayer meeting.”
- We prayed together for 45 minutes around these themes: Mission/Outreach, Laborers/Workers, Revival & Renewal, Wisdom & Discernment, Healing & Deliverance. It was intentional, hard work, but a work blessed by God bringing unity and healing. To illustrate: In one church we went from no children to 8 children in attendance during the space of our eight weeks of people praying together.
- The greater work is always prayer.

David Bryant made this liberating statement:

“Leaders must be released from the idea that they must be great prayer warriors before they can begin to call others to prayer.”

I am learning to speak and preach and lead in Spanish. I’ve learned several phrases, and this one I love: “vale la pena.” It could be translated, “It’s worth it!” but that would not capture the beauty of “vale la pena!” The word pena includes in it the remarkable idea of sacrifice, of sorrow, of pain, and is the same root word from which we have the English word “penalty.”

“All vital praying makes a drain on a man's [sic] vitality. True intercession is a sacrifice, a bleeding sacrifice.” — J.H. Jowett

We have about 30 days before some very important meetings of the Board of Trustees, so in my role as Board Chair, I’m calling the NBC Community to 30 days of prayer.

Dr. Phillip Fuller, Chairman of the NBC Board of Trustees, District Superintendent of the Virginia District