

Stand Firm in Your Devotion



NOTES

Keith Walker

Keith.Walker@Usask.ca

Minister-at-Large, C & MA, Mid West District

www.KeithDWalker.ca

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A. Song of Devotion with Sandi Patty & Larnelle Harris: *More than Wonderful* (Songwriter: Lanny Wolfe) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRTwUvZG5a0>

He promised us that He would be a counselor, a Mighty God and the Prince of Peace. He promised us that He would be a Father and that He would love us with a love that would not cease. Well, **I tried Him and I found His promises are true; He's everything He said that He would be. The finest words I know could not begin to tell just what Jesus really means to me.**

For He's **more wonderful** than my mind can conceive; He's more wonderful than my heart can believe He goes **beyond my highest hopes** and fondest dreams; He's **everything that my soul ever longed for.** Everything He's promised and so much more; more than amazing, more than marvelous, more than miraculous could ever be; He's more than wonderful, that's **what Jesus is to me.**

I stand amazed when I think that **the King of glory should come to dwell within the heart of man.** I marvel just to know **He really loves me when I think of who He is, and who I am . . .** He's more than wonderful, that's **what Jesus is to me.**

B. Person-Focused Devotion: Exceeding sufficiency of person of Jesus Christ to provide for ALL my longings.

C. Standing Firm in a Manner Worthy of Gospel

Philippians 1: 27: Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you **stand firm** in the one Spirit, **striving together** as one for the faith of the gospel.

D. Particular “whatevers” for Paul: 1. **Political** circumstances: “I am in chains (1:17) 2. **Natural** occurrences: earthquakes (Acts 16:26) 3. **Ideological** tensions: “Watch out for those dogs” (3:2) 4. **Health** issues: “He was ill and almost died (2:27) 5. **Relational** situations: Euodia . . . Syntyche .. agree (4:2) 6. **Financial** challenges: “Not one church shared with me . . .” (4:15) **THEN ADD** shipwrecks, snake bites, getting run out of town, slander, beatings, pain, suffering, and thorns in flesh. **For us:** There are also the “whatevers” of calm waters, lulls, and good times – caution of drifting gently into self-sufficiency!

E. Two Universal Circumstances of “Whatever:” Living and Dying

David’s Declaration of Faith - Psalm 23: 6: Surely Your goodness and love will follow me all the days of **my life**, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD **forever**.

Choice and Providence: *To be or not to be, that is the question: Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune or to take arms against a sea of troubles:* Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (Act 3, Scene 1; deep pain, grieving death of father, etc.)

Philippians 1:20-24: ²⁰I **eagerly expect and hope that I** will in no way be ashamed, but **will have sufficient courage** so **that** now as always **Christ will be exalted** in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹**For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.** ²²If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labour for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³I am **torn between the two:** I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

F. Devotion as that which **actively binds** us to **Jesus as everything our souls long for** – Satisfied and at peace whether remaining or departing.

G. Devotion as our **rejection** of substitutes (idols), distractions, encumbrances, and attachments (Hebrews 12:1, 2)

H. Devotion as our **embrace** of relationship with and worship of the Triune God. Deut 6:4-7 (Lk 10:27; Mt 22:37): **Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength.

I. Devotion as **anchoring** our hope exclusively in person of Jesus Christ – standing firm, holding tight, and looking up.

Essence of message: We are created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Given the particular and universal circumstances (“troubles” and the facts of life and death), we are well to reject idols and embrace His goodness and love in our lives as sufficient. We need to know that in our living that He is absolutely sufficient for us and in our dying He will be present with us and we will be with Him forever.

J. Jesus Christ is *More than Wonderful*

- a. Do you know Him as your personal Lord and Saviour? **If not**, yield your life and death to Him. **If so**, thank Him for His saving love.
- b. Are you able to say you are a fully devoted follower of Jesus? **If not**, let go of sin (anything that is encumbering your looking to Him, alone, as Author of your life) and look full into His wonderful face. **If so**, thank Him for His ongoing sanctifying grace, for His flow of goodness and love, for your abundant life in Him.
- c. **Stand firm in your devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ**, both amidst the storms and in the calms