

## BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”  
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

## PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

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## MISSIONARIES OF THE WEEK



Mexico | Steve & Debbie Poston

After getting the construction started on the orphanage I felt led to make a trip of 500 miles to the city of Guadalajara to visit Cesar Delgado, a pastor friend of ours for more than 25 years who is dying of pancreatic cancer. He asked me to share a 20 minute devotional which I used to encourage those in attendance to keep their focus on Jesus and his mission and not get discouraged when things get difficult. I think there were about 15 people in attendance. Since that time they have seen people saved and have around 30 in attendance. Praise the Lord!

## Exchanging Discouragement For Jesus’ Motivation

There are many things that make us weary on this earth. As a result of sin, we experience trials and hardships that make life difficult. At the same time, Christians have assurance that our difficulties are merely “momentary, light affliction” in light of eternity (2 Corinthians 4:17, NASB). The hope of the believer allows him to persevere and not lose heart even when life is difficult.

Christians face hardships just like everyone else. We can become discouraged and wounded when we experience difficulties. Yet believers have hope that surpasses the temporary hurts we endure. When difficulties come, believers do not need to despair. Our hope in God anchors our souls as we experience life’s ups and downs (Hebrews 6:19). Believers do not lose heart because the resurrection and the “eternal glory” we anticipate far outweigh anything we experience in our afflictions (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Through faith in Christ’s death and resurrection, we are forgiven of our sin and reconciled to God. We have assurance that sin and death are defeated. One day we, too, will be resurrected and spend eternity with God, without sin and death. Although in this life “we are hard pressed on every side,” we are not crushed. Although we are “perplexed,” we are not in despair. We may be “persecuted,” but we are not abandoned. We are “struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8–9). Yes, we experience life’s difficulties, but we are also filled with hope through these difficulties. The salvation of our souls and the hope of eternal life with God allows us to press on and to not lose heart despite life’s circumstances.

Paul was imprisoned, beaten, and whipped for sharing the good news of the gospel. He was shipwrecked and experienced danger at sea and from bandits, fellow Jews, Gentiles, and false believers. He was at times hungry, thirsty, cold, and deprived (2 Corinthians 11:24–27). Yet Paul determined not to lose heart. He would not allow his difficulties to leave him in despair. With hope in Christ, Paul was able to proclaim, “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:37). Paul continued to preach the gospel with fervency despite all the difficulties and suffering he faced.

Jesus told us that a life of following Him would be hard, but He also comforted us with hope: “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Believers do not lose heart because their hope in Christ is greater than any difficulty they will face on this earth.

## KEY VERSE

II Corinthians 4:16 (NKJV)

*“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.”*

## WEEKLY READINGS

**Monday: II Corinthians 4:1-18; I Peter 4:10-11; John 19:30**

**Motivator: Glorious Ministry**

1. This week we will be looking at 5 motivators that can help us exchange our discouragement. What discourages you?
2. What ministry has God given to you? How can focusing on the perseverance of Jesus help you with this ministry?

**Tuesday: II Corinthians 4:5,12,15; Matt. 20:26; Philippians 2:5-7**

**Motivator: Serving People**

3. How can serving people help you to trade in your discouragement?
4. How can focusing on the mind of Jesus in Philippians 2:5-7 help you to serve others?

**Wednesday: II Corinthians 4:8-10; Matt. 26:39; Galatians 2:20**

**Motivator: Christlike Suffering**

5. What is the difference between suffering and Christlike suffering? How can Christlike suffering actually be a positive thing in your life?
6. How can focusing on the suffering and death of Jesus help you to not lose heart when you suffer?

**Thursday: II Corinthians 4:13-14; Psalm 116:10; I Cor. 15:55-58**

**Motivator: Confidant Faith**

7. Give examples of how the Word of God has been true in your life.
8. List some passages that give you confidence in your faith.
9. How can focusing on the resurrection and victory of Jesus give you confident faith?

**Friday: II Corinthians 4:16-17; Hebrews 10:25; Romans 8:18**

**Motivator: Spiritual Renewal**

10. As we get older we see signs that our outward man is perishing. What evidence from your life have you seen that shows you that your inward man is being renewed day by day?
11. How often do you read the Bible? How often do you attend a worship service? How often do you participate in a growth group? How can these activities help you to grow?
12. How can focusing on eternity with Jesus help you to trade in your discouragement?