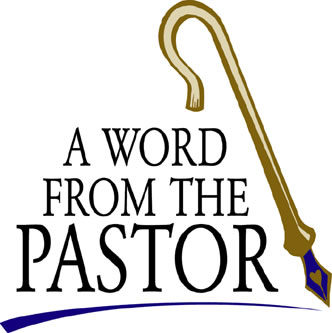
*“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.”* 1 Peter 2.21



When morning breaks we may be committed to living a godly life; one that is fair and gracious, kind and loving. When we are given a brand new day, we may have good intentions, but then life happens. The weather is spiteful, the kids slow to start, clock is ticking, traffic is raging, and the day has hardly even begun. Or worse you get a dreaded phone call or doctor’s diagnosis that spins your world. With so many distractions and true hardships, some that batter us to submission, how can we stand tall as a child of God, much less stay on the special path God has laid out for us? Remember, it will not always be easy, but it will *always* be achievable. In fact the more we strive to follow “in His footsteps,” the easier it will become. Each day will be within your capacity; as sure as the sun rises and sets. My morning devotions are spent with Sarah Young’s, “Jesus Calling,” because she reminds me of these normal (or not) circumstances in which we find ourselves every single day. Her heartfelt anecdote is based on scripture. Sometimes, I concur with her choice of verses and other times, I think of different ones. Scripture speaks to that which we need on that day, in that moment, but we are all on the same pathway. It is the path in which Jesus leads, walking beside us every day holding our hand, and walking before us clearing the way so that we can make good choices. The cost of this freedom and privilege is obvious and should not be taken lightly, for granted or forgotten. Do we feel the need to get our lives in order before we can focus solely on God? Are we so overwhelmed we cannot lift ourselves out of the muck and mire to reach out? How often do we remember to thank God first and foremost before we ask again? We can obsess over “fixing” every little thing, and drown ourselves in that we cannot control, when all we have to do is give our thoughts and concerns over to God. And then move on! Believe that God hears our pleas, every single one of them. Believe that God has already begun to work on our prayerful list. Repeating and begging does not build a better relationship with God. Sarah Young puts it like this: “If we keep on stating our concerns to Jesus, we will live in a state of tension. When we thank Jesus for how He is answering our prayers, our mind-set becomes much more positive.” Well said Sarah. My resolution this year is to beg less and believe more. God has heard and has set in motion all good things for me and for that I am *so very grateful*.

*“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful!”* Colossians 4.2

***Pastor Cheri***