

FOCUSED LIVING PRAYER Jul - Aug 2017

By Rob Buck, longtime FLM Board Member

A few years ago a friend of mine shared a secret he had learned during miles of cycling. "Don't worry about the miles per hour," Rick said. "It's the cadence that matters. If you keep the cadence above 70 or 80 rpm (rotations per minute), no matter how steep the hills, your miles per hour will take care of itself."

What Rick told me turned out to be true. I had my bicycle computer set to always show me the Miles Per Hour. I would strain, sometimes in very hard gears, to maintain my speed even on monster hills. But eventually my legs would wear out.

However, when I changed the computer to show my cadence, I paid attention only to how many times I pedaled in a minute. If it was at least 70 times, shifting gears as needed to accommodate changes in the gradient, my miles per hour worked out better at the end of the ride. It's the key to endurance cycling.

As I think about how watching my cadence led to cycling success, I wonder if there's a cadence I can focus on that will assist me in life. I want to be able to turn the computer of my life to a cadence which can be maintained during the ups and downs of life the way Rick's suggestion kept me steady even during steep inclines in the road.

I think of **Matthew 22:37-40**, where Jesus gives us a focus for our lives, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*

Love. The Beatles had it right. All we need is **Love**. **Love** is to be the focus of our lives. Jesus says it summarizes the entire Bible, forming a filter for our every word and deed. But how?

As I ask the question, I get my answer.

I John 4:19: *"We love because He first loved us."*

God's love is the only true love. I can grind out a human love by straining at the pedals of life, but my love will wear out.

My cadence is to be His love flowing through me, as Rivers of Living Water flowing from my innermost being. (John 7:38) **Receiving His love and giving it away.** In spite of life's difficulties, I'm to love God first and then my neighbor, but with His love, not mine. And Jesus tells me how to do this in John 15:9-12.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:9-12

- **Know** how much Jesus loves me. Verse 9 says He loves me as much as God loves Him. The essence of this truth is beyond my understanding, yet Jesus tells me it's true.
- **Remain** in His great love. Verse 10 commands me to stay, tarry, abide in God's great love for me, not moving from where God has placed me in the love of Christ.
- **Love as I have loved you.** Verses 10 and 12 tell me how to remain in His love. I'm to be caught up in the cadence of loving others as He has loved me, allowing His love to flow through me to others.
- **My joy is completed.** Jesus says when I **know** his love, **remain** in it and **love others as He has loved me**, I will have His joy, fulfilling all my inner longings.

Receiving His love and giving it away.

Lord, thank you for showing me the great focus of my life, knowing your great love, remaining in it and loving others with it. I need you to maintain this as my focus. I so easily shift into a mode of worrying about all that has to be done.

Yet, I know now that by receiving your love and giving away it away, all you need me to accomplish will get done. I believe this, yet I forget it so easily. Please help me live out this cadence of love moment by moment and day by day. Amen.



Rob

Rick

Ministry Prayer & Praise

FORUMS Praise that we have had an unprecedented number of men involved in the forums this summer! Over 150 men! Pray that God would use the topics and scripture in the book, *No More Excuses* by Tony Evans, to inspire and challenge those who come. Pray for Perry as he studies and prepares lessons for the fall forums centered around spiritual warfare (Eph 6, Joshua, Nehemiah). **Aug 8th** will be the Forum "Owners" meeting to prepare for the fall season. Forums kick off the latter part of **August**.

DISCIPLESHIP Our pre-season leader training, called Vise GRIP gathering, was on **June 26th**. Pray that God would give each man a heart and vision for spearheading a discipleship group with guys from their church or their forum. Pray that each GRIP crew would have a strong sense of "we're in this together." **Aug 28st** is the kick off large gathering for GRIP this fall.

DAYBREAK After 8 years of spearheading the male mentor ministry at Daybreak, Perry has passed the reigns onto Ashton Wine. Pray for the continued godly trajectory of this local ministry and for the genuine relational connections that Ashton and his team of men can make with the guys who come through the doors.

FINANCES Our monthly donations YTD through May have trailed our expenses by about 21%. We thank God for the cash reserves from prior year's donations that are making up for this current year deficit. Pray with us for our wise stewardship of what God has and is providing.

CORE Pray for wisdom for the current FLM Core as we think and pray about expanding the Core.

CALENDAR

Sundays German Wright preaches at Daily Living Ministries (DLM).

July 8-15 Bill Manley and Derek Gowdy (from Focused Living) lead a team of 24 to Guatemala

July 16 David Preaches at Crossroads

July 31 GRIP Gathering

Aug 8 Forum owners training

Aug 13 FLM Core Meeting

Aug 13 Perry preaches at Columbia's Chinese church with Kunming Su

Aug 21-31 Staggered start on the forums fall season

Bowers' Family Prayer

Perry – Good time to study in order to prepare for the Forums kicking off in August. The theme this year will be "Principles of War" as we discover God's principles of spiritual warfare from Ephesians, Joshua and Nehemiah. Healing from dry eye issues which required a procedure with needles to stimulate deeper tissue healing. The procedure thus far has not worked. Pacing himself and humble dependence on the Father.

Janet – Commitment to exercise and quiet time this summer amidst various ladies to encourage. Wisdom in one specific mentoring relationship.

Joy & Eddie – Thanking God for the gift of a family trip to Paraguay for 10 days. Travel mercies with kids who have never flown before. Bonding with the Centurion extended family. Consistency in parenting.

Megan & Marc – Safety and good family time in summer travels. Marcs research starts for his dissertation which is due May 2018. In new parenting stage with kids. Thankful for Megan job transition next fall.

Andes' Family Prayer

David and Katherine– Summer is a time when we have a good number of family "shared experiences" as well as recalibrating the family for the fall. Remember David's parents in prayer: For Ruth as she lives in the memory care and for Clem's endurance as he daily spends time with mom and for his physical health. Also remember Katherine's parents in prayer as they navigate decisions related to self-care.

Austin(19) – We ask for continued prayer for a breakthrough with Austin. Our hearts are sad and we are open to whatever means God would be pleased to use to restore him to his delightful self. He's withdrawn into a white noise

world, mostly non-verbal, with angry outbursts. He is starting a new school in the fall and we would love for his new teachers and friends to not have his current state as their only reference.

Cameron(14) – Continue to pray that we would have godly patience as we experience “labor pains” until maturity is birthed in Cameron. Praise for his involvement in the SC Philharmonic Youth orchestra this fall. Continue to join us in praying for a few close friends for him.

Wright Family Prayer

Requests:

- Balance, boundaries, priorities, protection for the home and family.
- Breaking cycles of being overwhelmed that breaks structures and stewardship.
- Health and healing - Sandra's healing Epiphrenic Esophageal Diverticulum.
- Favor and direction for Caleb's job search.
- Consistent assistance and support in ministry - particularly corporate prayer time.

Praises:

- Thank God for His faithfulness for our 30 years of marriage and for orchestrating our connection!
- Thank God for His faithfulness for Caleb's successful completion of 4 years at Liberty University to include the tuition, his senior thesis film production, the car he needed, and academic achievement of Dean's List 4 out of 8 semesters - once per year!!