

**A Purpose Worth Living For**  
**“A Relentless Tenacity”**  
**Part 4**

**Intro:** One of the most important spiritual qualities we all need to possess is an absolute refusal to quit. What do I mean? That no matter what is going on in my life, I will never stop following Jesus. We have a spiritual tenacity in us that clings to Jesus and His ways no matter what. In fact, this is what the word “tenacity mean”.

*“the quality or fact of being able to grip something firmly...and not let go.”*

Why is this quality so important?

- It takes a relentless tenacity to discover and maintain a purpose worth living for. Everything in this world will fight against you in discovering your purpose and living out your purpose. Without a relentless tenacity, we will quit. We will quit when the obstacles get too big / the stress gets too intense / the sacrifice seems too high / the pain gets too much.
- There has been seasons in my life over the past 30 plus years in ministry where this question has crossed my mind. Is it worth it? Is the struggle, the sacrifice, being misunderstood, the fatigue worth it? There were times I couldn't even answer those questions. I only knew one thing: I will not quit. “Jesus, I will keep following you.”
- Relentless tenacity is commonly called “Grit”. Grit is sustained passion and perseverance that allows you to accomplish long term goals. For example: Foothills reaching 1000s of unchurched people is a long term goal. That is going to take some grit to accomplish. Your purpose worth living for will require grit as well.
- This quality is essential for individuals and churches. It is this very quality that the Apostle Paul talks about in Phil. 3.

*Phil. 3:12-14 “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to **take hold** of that for which Christ Jesus **took hold** of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” (NLT) Relentless tenacity! He’s not going to quit.*

- Jesus is relentlessly tenacious as He pursues us. He will never let you go! We in turn follow Jesus with a relentless tenacity. We will not let go of Him or the purpose to which He calls us. This is His story and it’s all about His glory!
- If we want to discover a purpose worth living for it will require a relentless tenacity on our part stay on His narrative. Today, we are going understand what this looks like and how we follow Jesus with a tenacity that refuses to quit.

## **1. A relentless tenacity embraces Godly purpose**

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*“I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me”*

- Jesus took hold of your life for purpose
  - Jesus took hold of your life for 2 reasons. Relational and Missional. First, Jesus wants a relationship with you. This is why He came. Secondly, He calls us into a missional lifestyle following Him. He uses our lives to make a difference in this world.
  - Jesus “took hold” of you for this reason. Jesus was tenacious in His pursuit of you for relationship and mission. Now, we need to take hold of the reason Jesus took hold of us. We must be tenacious taking hold of this relationship and the purpose we are called to accomplish.
  - The struggle I see with so many people is they acknowledge the relationship part, but ignore the purpose part. It requires some tenacity to discover your purpose worth living for.
  - WHY? Because your purpose requires you to discover who He made you to be...which is what call SHAPE. Then, it requires you to explore ways to use your SHAPE in the unique manner He made you for. This simply requires some tenacity. It requires effort. You need some grit. It requires you to take hold of it.
  - This is quite frankly a life-long tenacious pursuit of purpose.

What is true for the individual is also true for a church.

- Jesus took hold of Foothills for purpose
  - Jesus started Foothills in 1998 for these same two reasons – Relationship and Mission. Jesus showed us our unique missional contribution to His Kingdom and this requires us to take hold of it. In other words, be relentlessly tenacious in pursuing Jesus and the mission.
    - Our sign on the wall is relational and missional.
  - We continue taking hold of that for which Jesus took hold of us. This is why even our building must reflect relationship and mission. We’ve been called to this.
  - Now we have finished up our space for children and students, it is time to make our current space more in line with our purpose. It’s time for us to focus on creating relational space. EXPLAIN – We cannot become a large impersonal church.

Share the reasons for it.

- “Creating space to love people better”
  - Space to connect
  - Space to give value
  - Space to enjoy one another
  - Space to get to know each other
  - Space to serve one another (pray / laugh)
  - Space that is welcoming to new people
  - Space to have relational activities

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- “God moments” often happen organically in unstructured, relational environments.
- All we have are hallways. Hallways imply movement not relationships. Hallways are environments that get you from one place to another. Hallways are for travel not connecting. Our current space is not consistent with our purpose. Therefore, we are tenacious enough to change it.
  - Share pics and details of next building phase. Here is the next part of HIS story.
  - As exciting as all this is it will require perseverance and passion to accomplish. It will require Grit. It will require a relentless tenacity.

## 2. A relentless tenacity does not live in the past

*“Forgetting what is behind”*

Two ways we allow the past to hinder us

- We let past failures hinder progress
  - I see a lot of people let their past hinder their future. They are weighed down by guilt and shame over past regrets / mistakes / or failures. BUT, the beautiful thing about Jesus is He makes all things new and His forgiveness is comprehensive.
  - The Apostle Paul who wrote these words experienced this first hand. If there was anyone who could have allowed his past to hinder his future it was Paul – **explain.**
  - God has a future and a hope for you that is worth your pursuit but you must not allow your past failures to hinder your future purpose.
- We let past success hinder progress
  - We must be very careful to not allow past success to hinder our continual faith journey with Jesus. His story is not finished here in Molalla and the surrounding area. What He is doing through the people of Foothills is not done!
  - Many churches fall into this error. They develop a complacency because of past success. A pride begins to develop. They start behaving more like a cruise ship rather than a battleship. The life of the church becomes about comfort not mission.
  - This is why it is essential we begin the next phase of improvements. This is why we keep being tenacious in moving ahead, This is why we need another opportunity to trust / risk / ask Jesus for things that are beyond us.
    - Yes, I know it is expensive. Yet this gives us another opportunity to experience God’s Kingdom resources. For some of you this will be a new step of growth for you. For others, we can’t wait to see God come through again!
  - The day we stop persevering following Jesus is the day the blessing of God will be removed from this place. He blesses dependency and tenacity not complacency. As wonderful as our past history has been, it should simply serve as a motivation to keep being tenacious following Jesus in the present.

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### 3. A relentless tenacity presses towards the goal

*“straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal”*

- Relentless tenacity is focused energy – there is a goal.
  - We are not tenacious just to be tenacious. We focus this energy towards a godly goal. We press on toward the goal!
  - Jesus called us to join Him in reaching the 1000s of unchurched people in our geographic area. We’ve defined this to mean approximately a ten mile radius around Molalla. BUT, it is not limited to this.
  - As Foothills has grown in influence over the years we have seen Jesus expanding these boundaries. We see people focusing their energies wherever they go and whatever city they are from or work in.
  - Our energies are focused on reaching and loving unchurched people. This is simply defined as people who don’t go to church. Some have never attended a church before. Some have quit going because of painful experience or a lack of relevancy.
  - Either way, we focus our energy on helping them connect with Jesus in a life-changing way.
  - This is why we ask you to invite people to come to church with you. By doing this you are embracing the goal that Jesus gave to this church.
  
- Relentless tenacity is sacrificial – *“straining”*
  - It is the goal that makes the straining worth it. Without this goal...without a prize waiting at the end, it will feel too hard. Great accomplishments are never easy. Great stories are great because the characters in that story overcame the odds, the obstacles, the overwhelming circumstances.
  - Even the goal of getting a building done really isn’t the goal. The real goal is to get the building done so we can help people connect with Jesus. It’s what happens in the building that is the goal. People are the goal and they are worth sacrificing for.
  - This next part of the building project is worth the sacrifice. People’s lives will be altered for eternity in this new space. Guaranteed! Even I look forward to space to get to know the people of Foothills better. We need this space to better love people.
  - Believe me when I tell you that during the journey, there have been times I have wondered if all the sacrifice is worth it. We all will at some time.
    - Here is a truth: Behind every successful ministry that is making a genuine impact in the lives of people there is pain involved. It’s not easy making a difference.
    - The fascinating thing about tenacity or grit is they have studied this quality. Angela Duckworth who is a professor at the University of Pennsylvania was one of the speakers at our GLS conference – Their

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research indicates that grit (tenacity) and life happiness go hand in hand. The “straining” Paul talks about is worth it.

- Foothills is no exception to this truth. If we make the ministry of Foothills look easy to many of you, it’s because of Jesus. The reality is this is the hardest thing I have ever attempted. Those who work at Foothills chasing this purpose will agree with me.
- I will not lie to you. Sacrifice even for worthy, godly, Kingdom goals is hard. But there are some things worth fighting for folks! His story...His glory is worth fighting for.
- (Lord of the Rings clip) This trilogy is one the best examples of relentless tenacity towards a goal. This scene captures the heart of sacrifice.
  - Play clip
- Jesus has called us to participate in His story. He has called us to be instruments of good in this world for His glory. AND it is worth fighting for. It is worth all the tenacity...all the grit we can muster.
- Now is not the time to quit. Now is the time to press on.

Prayer time.

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