



Relentless



Relentless

re·lent·less | ri-'lent-ləs
*showing or promising no abatement of severity,
 intensity, strength, or pace*

GOD RELENTLESSLY PURSUES YOU (yes you)

It's been a long day, but we're here! You've had a chance to meet your crews, and you've learned where, who, and how you'll be serving this week. Now that you have a moment to stop and reflect on the day...

What's been the biggest surprise for you today?

Name one thing you're unsure or worried about this week.

Name something you're excited about happening this week.

Let's take a moment to acknowledge and thank God for how far God has brought us, getting us here for this week. Each night we'll meet here to discuss the day, share how we've seen God at work, and have a final thought on the daily theme. Today's theme is "God Relentlessly Pursues You," and

we see that in the life of David. Although David's story is in the Old Testament of the Bible, the New Testament writers are still talking about him—roughly a thousand years later! Think about how famous he must've been. And what did people say about David?

"I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart." - Acts 13:22

Those aren't just anybody's words; those are God's words—not just because they're in the Bible but because God actually speaks them! God says those words about David before he ever becomes a king. How many of you know the story of King David? If you do, tell me something that happens during his life.

Before David does all these things, the Bible tells us God begins to RELENTLESSLY PURSUE David.

...the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people." - 1 Samuel 13:14

The same thing is true for you. God is RELENTLESSLY PURSUING you. You may feel you don't deserve it. You may feel you haven't earned it. And you're probably asking, "Why me?" Like David, God sees something special in you and knows what can happen through you.

Imagine if people are still telling your story a thousand years from now. In a millennium (that's a big word for a thousand years), what if someone describes your life in a single statement:

"(insert your name here) was someone after God's own heart!"

HAKUNA MATATA

This week, we are going to make connections between the life of David and the journey of Simba from the Lion King. The film journeys to the African savanna where a future king is born. Simba idolizes his father, King Mufasa, and takes to heart his own royal destiny. But not everyone in the kingdom celebrates the new cub's arrival. Scar, Mufasa's brother—and former heir to the throne—has plans of his own. The battle for Pride Rock is ravaged with betrayal, tragedy and drama, ultimately resulting in Simba's exile. With help from a curious pair of newfound friends, Simba will have to figure out how to grow up and take back what is rightfully his.

Let's pray together now, thanking God for getting us here safely and for his RELENTLESS PURSUIT of us all. Who would like to volunteer to pray?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

July 7, 2019 **SUNDAY**

GOD CHOOSES YOU (period)



How are you all feeling after your first day at workcamp? Any concerns you need to share? Questions?

Of the choices you made this year, which ones did you feel good about? Share one, if you'd like.

Of the choices you made this year, which ones do you wish you could've made differently? Share one, if you feel comfortable doing so.

How does it feel to make a good choice?

When God chooses, God doesn't make mistakes. God has very specific and awesome plans in mind. When we

regret a choice, it's because things don't go according to our own plans or ideas. We are human and sometimes make mistakes. God doesn't make choices according to our standards. God chooses differently.

1 SAMUEL 16:10-12

Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

So he sent for him and had him brought in...Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."

Who here has ever been picked first to play a game with friends or classmates? How did it feel to be picked first? Was the person your friend, or did they just "recognize your qualifications"?

Being picked first feels awesome, but being picked last can feel humiliating and embarrassing. David isn't Jesse's first-choice to be king. He's the last one Jesse thinks will be chosen. Jesse thinks his other seven sons are more qualified to be king than David, but God chooses David, because he has something very special in store for his life.

This week, God has chosen you for a task. It's bigger than your crew role. It's bigger than your worksite or project. You have the opportunity to be involved in something that can have an eternal impact for yourself, for someone on your crew, for someone in this youth group, and for the resident you serve. I hope you've decided to show up and be ready for the moments God has chosen for you this week.

HAKUNA MATATA

In the Pride Lands of Africa, a pride of lions rule over the animal kingdom from Pride Rock. King Mufasa's and

Queen Sarabi's newborn son, Simba, is presented to the gathering animals by Rafiki the baboon, the kingdom's shaman and advisor. Mufasa shows Simba the Pride Lands and explains to him the responsibilities of kingship. He puts great emphasis on the importance of the "circle of life" which connects all living things.

Like David, Simba was destined to be a king. Simba is a prince, and one day, he will be chosen to be king of Pride Rock.

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

July 8, 2019

MONDAY

GOD IS WITH YOU (always)



How was your day? Any concerns you need to share? Questions? God Sightings?

Let's go back to the story of David. The entire Israelite army is afraid of Goliath, but David is confident because God has seen him through previous tense encounters. While the king and all the other soldiers see Goliath as too big to hit, David sees the giant as too big to miss.

1 SAMUEL 17:37

"The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."

David reasons that if God can keep him safe from dangerous predators, then that same God will be with him as he faces Goliath. David not only believes that; he also tells someone about it. David knows he won't be facing Goliath alone.

HAKUNA MATATA

Mufasa's younger brother, Scar, covets the throne and plots to eliminate Mufasa and Simba, so he may become king. He tricks Simba and his best friend Nala (to whom Simba is betrothed) into exploring a forbidden elephants' graveyard, where they are attacked by three spotted hyenas, Shenzi,

Banzai, and Ed, who are in league with Scar. Mufasa is alerted about the incident by his majordomo, the hornbill Zazu, and rescues the cubs. Though upset with Simba, Mufasa forgives him and explains that the great kings of the past watch over them from the night sky, from which he will one day watch over Simba. It gives Simba strength to know that one day, his father will be watching over him.

A few minutes ago, you had the opportunity to express how you've seen God this week. When we share what God is doing, it not only shows our faith, it also can give someone else's faith a huge boost.

How has God shown up for you in your life?

By a show of hands, how many of you were encouraged by the God Sighting you heard a few minutes ago?

Would any of you like to share why?

Hearing what God is doing changes our focus. Hearing how Jesus changes our lives encourages us. The giants we face become just gnats. Challenges and struggles from this week and from back home become opportunities to see God at work.

Would you be willing to share a challenge you're facing?

Now that you've shared with each other, let's pray together that God can give us the strength to face these challenges. Would someone be willing to pray?

ANNOUNCEMENTS



GOD WANTS YOU TO HAVE RELATIONSHIPS

How was your day? Any concerns you need to share? Questions? God Sightings?

HAKUNA MATATA

Scar sets a trap for his brother and nephew, luring Simba into a gorge and having the hyenas drive a large herd of wildebeest into a stampede that will trample him. He informs Mufasa of Simba's peril, knowing that the king will rush to save his son. Mufasa saves Simba but ends up hanging perilously from the gorge's edge. Scar refuses to help Mufasa, instead sending him falling to his death. He then convinces Simba that the tragedy was Simba's

fault and advises him to leave the kingdom and never return. He orders the hyenas to kill the cub, but Simba escapes. Scar tells the pride that both Mufasa and Simba were killed in the stampede and steps forward as the new king, allowing the large pack of previously exiled hyenas to live in the Pride Lands. Scar used violence to achieve power and broke relationships to suit himself. He broke the circle of life, which led to drought, starvation, and tragedy for the animals of Pride Rock.

God wants us to care for our relationships with one another. Tonight, we're going to do something different. We'll sit in a circle and take turns sitting in the middle. When you're in the middle, you aren't allowed to talk. Instead,

you'll listen as three or four group members and at least one adult leader names some qualities you have that make you a good friend.

Jesus says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" - John 13:35

Hopefully tonight you've realized that people see Jesus' love through your actions. It can be uncomfortable yet encouraging to hear people compliment us. But we need to hear it! We need to recognize how Jesus is shining his light through us. It's important to know that our friendship is valuable. That may even spur us to work harder at being better friends!

Today you've been challenged to think about your friendships here and back home. Let's pray for our relationships and that Jesus' love will be evident in them. Let's pray silently for our relationships then I'll close in prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TUESDAY

July 9, 2019

WEDNESDAY

July 10, 2019



GOD FORGIVES YOU (for everything)

How was your day? Any concerns you need to share? Questions? God Sightings?

Welcome back, everyone! Tonight we looked at a story from David's life where he messes up—big time! David goes all-in with some major sins and mistakes, but the story doesn't end there. Sometime later, God sends his prophet Nathan to confront David. Nathan tells David a story about a rich man and a poor man. The rich man has a farm with many herds of animals, while the poor man has only one lamb for his entire family. When the rich man has an out-of-town visitor, instead of taking an animal from his own farm he takes the poor man's lamb, has it killed, and serves it to his guests for dinner.

When Nathan asks David what should be done, David basically says the rich guy should pay the poor man four times as much as the lamb is worth. What he did is awful! We should throw the book at him. Maybe he should even pay with his life! Then comes the big "reveal."

2 SAMUEL 12:7-9, 13-14

Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you all Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more.

Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? ... Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord, the son born to you will die."

Today you confronted your mistakes, failures, and immorality; today you confronted your sin. Now, as a forgiven child of God, it's time to embrace God's forgiveness, restoring power, and grace.

Why is it sometimes tough to accept God's forgiveness of our sins?

Why might God's forgiveness seem too good to be true?

HAKUNA MATATA

Simba collapses in a desert and is rescued by Timon and Pumbaa, a meerkat and warthog, who are fellow outcasts. Simba grows up in the jungle with his two new friends, living a carefree life under the motto "hakuna matata" ("no worries" in Swahili). As a young adult, Simba rescues Timon and Pumbaa from a hungry lioness, who turns out to be Nala. She and Simba reunite and fall in love, and she urges him to return home, telling him that Pride Lands have become a drought-stricken wasteland under Scar's reign. Feeling guilty

over his father's death, Simba refuses and storms off. He then encounters Rafiki, who tells him that Mufasa's spirit lives on in Simba. Simba is visited by the ghost of Mufasa in the night sky, who tells him that he must take his rightful place as king. Realizing that he can no longer run from his past, Simba decides to forgive himself and return to the Pride Lands.

It can be difficult to understand why God forgives. We simply need to believe that he does. God forgives you, and not just for the small things. God forgives all of it! And when God forgives, he forgives so completely it's like getting a fresh start. It's hard to imagine a love that is so wide and so deep, but that's how it is with God's love. For us, is it sometimes hard to forgive if we have experienced pain or suffered because of someone else's mistake. God doesn't think like us. God forgives us over and over again. David knows God can do this. That's why he writes these words:

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. - Psalm 51:10

Tonight the paper with your sin disappeared. So now isn't a time for sorrow; it's a time for celebration. When we receive God's forgiveness, we receive new life in Jesus Christ.

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENT

July 11, 2019

THURSDAY

GOD WANTS US TO PURSUE HIM (everyday)



How was your day? Any concerns you need to share? Questions?

Hey, everyone! This is our last night here, so let's begin by sharing the memories we'll take with us. **Share a moment from this week that you'll never forget.**

This week we've learned about God's RELENTLESS love for each of us, and we've had the privilege to serve some local residents here in Rushville, Indiana. Along this journey, we've seen God show up in unexpected ways.

Would anyone like to share a God Sighting from this week that has meant something special to you?

One of the awesome things about mission trips is that we come home changed. This week we've been challenged to RELENTLESSLY pursue Jesus every day. We've been challenged to become like David. Listen again to what God says about him: "I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart." - Acts 13:22

HAKUNA MATATA

Aided by his friends, Simba sneaks past the hyenas at Pride Rock and confronts Scar, who had just struck Sarabi. Scar taunts Simba over his role in Mufasa's death and backs him to the edge of the rock, where he reveals to him that he murdered Mufasa. Enraged, Simba pins Scar to the ground and forces him to reveal the truth to the rest of the pride. Timon, Pumbaa, Rafiki, Zazu, and the lionesses fend off the hyenas while Scar,



attempting to escape, is cornered by Simba at the top of Pride Rock. Scar begs for mercy and blames the hyenas for his actions; Simba spares his life, but orders him to leave the Pride Lands forever. Scar attacks his nephew, but Simba manages to toss him from the top of the rock. Scar survives the fall, but is attacked and killed by the hyenas, who overheard his attempt to betray them. Afterwards, Simba takes over the kingship as rain begins to fall. He also makes Nala his queen. Later, with Pride Rock restored to its usual state, Rafiki presents Simba and Nala's newborn cub to the assembled animals, continuing the circle of life.

After this experience, what will be different about your relationship with Jesus?

How will you RELENTLESSLY pursue Jesus when you get home?

As a group, what can we do to RELENTLESSLY pursue Jesus together?

CLOSING PRAYER

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Rushville, Indiana

Rushville is a small Midwestern town located between Indianapolis and Cincinnati. Always an agricultural hub, the manufacturing facilities that once brought a booming economy have disappeared. Those who choose to stay struggle to find work or accept what few low-paying jobs remain. In fact, 20 percent of this aging community's families depend upon various food assistance programs to survive from one month to the next.

