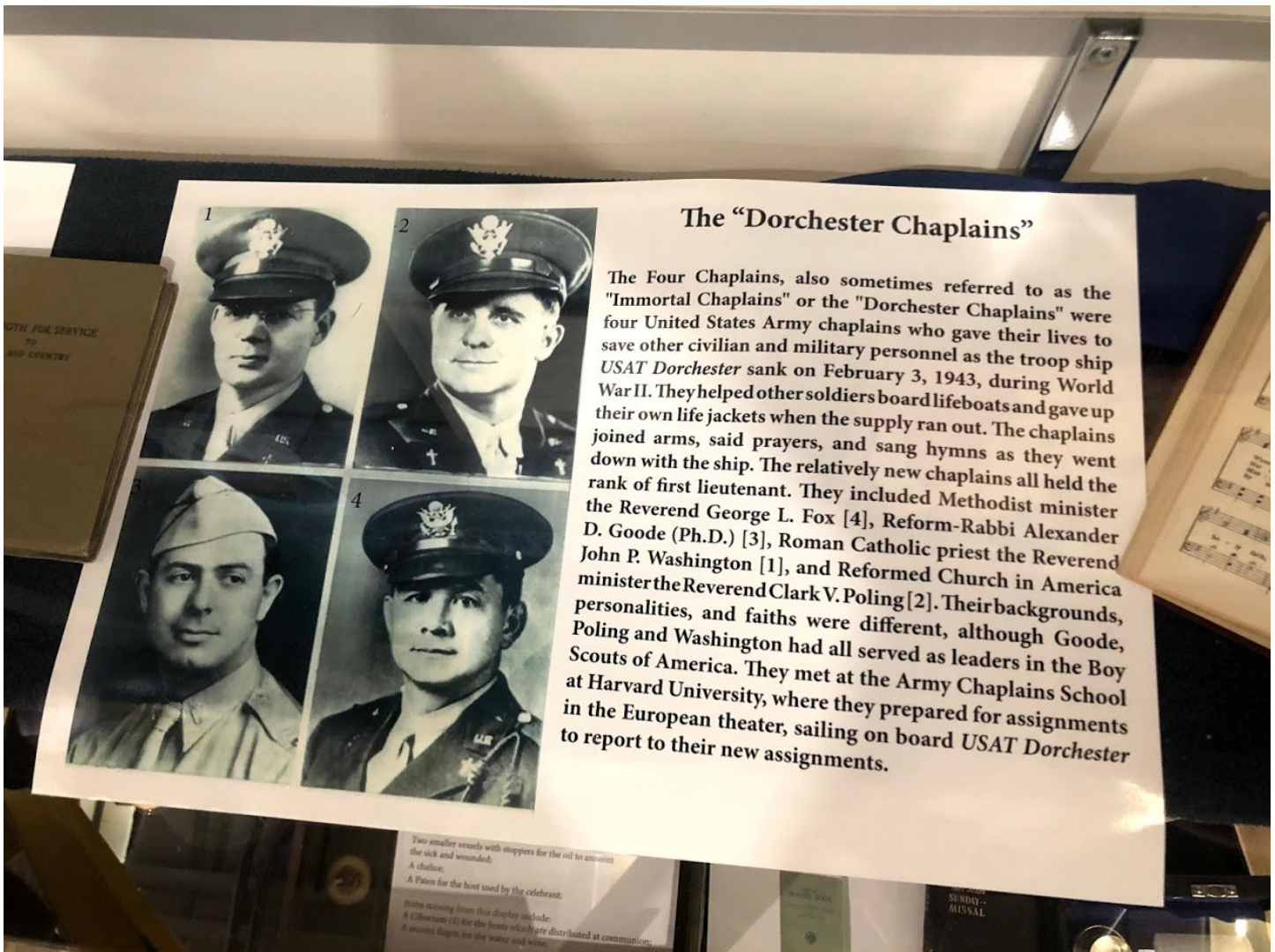


Making the Most of Wednesday, September 2

"Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" — 2 Tim. 2:3

BETWEEN 6:00-9:00 AM: On a scorching July day, I visited the Palm Springs Air Museum with my son and father-in-law and read about the "Dorchester Chaplains." They inspired me. Please read the text from the display case.



Here's the upshot: we've been conscripted into the Lord's forces. Our detachment? The Valley Church Chaplaincy. The world is rife with demonic conflict. Let's be trained and ready to offer spiritual and physical support to those around us, like George, Alex, John and Clark above. They handed over their life jackets to others and died as a team with prayers and Psalms on their lips (*"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" — John 15:13*). Think of Valley Church services, small groups, Bible studies and Joel Moments like ongoing Chaplain School. The fight is on. Let's use truthful speech about Jesus and sacrificial acts of service to our families, neighbors and co-workers. But first, pray that the faith of your fellow Chaplains won't fail in the battle.

BETWEEN 9:00—12:00 PM: Soldier, let's give attention to our Commanding Officer through his Chief Lieutenant, the Apostle Paul. With pen, pencil or highlighter, mark the words or phrases that move you. I believe he'll give you an angle that he won't give anyone else. Then share your insight when we get to Joel Moment Part 2 at 4:00 PM.

1 *You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus,*

2 *and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

3 *Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*

4 *No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him...*

7 *Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything — 2 Tim. 2:1-4, 7.*

Questions:

1. Who are you influencing towards Jesus (“...what you have heard...entrust to faithful men...”)?

2. Where are you feeling discomfort because you serve Christ (“Share in suffering”)?

3. What distractions can you eliminate for increased spiritual focus during this crisis (“entangled in civilian pursuits”)? Think and listen to God.

BETWEEN 12:00 PM—3:00 PM: I studied this Chaplain's Kit in the museum. Here's what the text display said:

Each chaplain is issued a chaplain kit when they complete their initial military training. Over the years they have been called by various names to include chaplain kits, field kits, field altars, etc., and have ranged from the very bulky and heavy to the very portable. Perhaps the most well-known portrayal of a chaplain and his kit can be seen in the movie, 'The Longest Day' when on D-Day a chaplain is seen searching in the water for his heavy, non-floating, field kit. The chaplain portrayed in this scene, or from whose story it is inspired (Chaplain Sampson), went on to become the Army Deputy Chief of Chaplains and directed that a more lightweight and portable chaplain kit be developed.

The kit in the picture on the lid is another WWII kit that was USED on D-Day. The chaplain's linens are blood stained from the minister going from soldier to soldier on the beach, praying and giving the communion elements.



Valley Church Chaplain, what's in your Chaplain's Kit? I'd suggest the following checklist of invisible items:

- Be Father-filled at all times by focusing on his Son's personal love for you (Eph. 3:19; 5:18).
- Be a Jesus Injector by mentioning some aspect of Jesus' life and ministry with every single interaction you have with a nonbeliever. Who cares if people think you're crazy. By the way, they won't think you're crazy.
- Be Holy-Spirit Sensitive by offering to pray for their needs and inviting them to a "Church on the Grass" service at Valley Church THIS Sunday at 9:00 AM, 10:45 AM or 5:00 PM. You can help them sign-up by visiting valleychurch.org and clicking on "Church on the Grass."

I found myself stopped behind this fancy car last Thursday. Notice the mournful color, doleful license plate and masked driver. Most of the world feels sulky and gloomy because of the various traumas of 2020. In contrast, Pastor Glen just gave our staff a devotional on joy, reminding us from Oswald Chambers that “the first thing that will hinder this joy is the captious irritation of thinking out circumstances.” So, if you’re choking in the exhaust circumstances, give that “car” the slip by singing “O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus” a cappella (see the lyrics below). Or if you don’t know it, find it on Google and breathe in the free air of God’s love.



*Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free
Rolling as a mighty ocean
In its fullness over me*

*Underneath me, all around me
Is the current of your love
Leading onward, leading homeward
To your glorious rest above*

*Oh, the deep, deep love of Jesus
'Tis heaven of heavens to me
And it lifts me up to glory
For it lifts me up to thee*

*Oh, the deep, deep love of Jesus
Spread his praise from shore to shore
How he loves us, ever loves us,
Changes never, nevermore*

BETWEEN 3:00—4:00 PM: Join the **Joel Moment Prayer Gathering**. Go to [Zoom.com](https://zoom.us) and enter Meeting ID and Password.

BETWEEN 5:00-9:00 PM: Paul saw his life as one long sequence of skirmishes in a cosmic war that God had already won through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of his Son Jesus the Messiah. What’s more, by God’s sustaining power, Paul also claimed personal victory in the last chapter of his last letter with three compact statements uttered in the past tense.

^{ESV} **2 Timothy 4:7** *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

Think about how you want to finish, because if you’re reading this, your course goes on. A wise friend named Dan Cole once told a bunch of campers and staff at Camp Hammer that “What we’re choosing day by day is what we are becoming.” I never forgot that. And I’d add that what we’re choosing day by day is how we’re likely to finish.

So, were your choices today closer to “I fought, I finished, I kept”? Or did they veer towards “I gave in, I gave up and I dropped out.” If today was less than you wanted it to be, take heart, tomorrow is a new day. But who knows how many tomorrows we have. For that matter, who knows how many *tonights* we have. Let’s make this one worthwhile, because eventide on September 2 is all we have. Enjoy and help those you live with. Expose yourself to books, music or film that are truly honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable and excellent (Phil. 4:8). And as Villette encouraged us last week, “*Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you*” (Jm. 4:7).



FRANK CHEN [You'll hear the story of a man who is training for full-time ministry.]

Jot down insights from God through Frank:

MICHAEL LEOTTA [You'll hear Scripture from a man whose been faithful to King Jesus despite many hardships. By the way, we saw an intimidating view of the glorified Jesus last week. In this passage that Michael will read, we'll see our Lord in blazing glory, but with a tender touch and words that are also spoken to us. By the way, this passage anticipates more discussion about the long squeeze that we've been talking about. Next week we'll talk about what Matthew 24 teaches us about the long squeeze as we meet up with Every Pilgrim again, our paradigmatic Christian.]

ESV **Revelation 1:9-18** *I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ¹¹ saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last," ¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*

Jot down insights from God through Michael:



ANDY DRAKE [Fellow Solider, here's a worship song to strengthen you for the good fight.]

Until you stop breathing
 Until you stop bleeding
 Until your heart stops kick-drum beating
 When it's hard times
 When it's long days
 And the enemy is right up in your face
 When your back's against the ropes and you're feeling
 all alone

 Keep fighting the good fight (Never give up, never give
 up)
 Keep letting your light shine (Holding it high as long as
 you live)
 'Cause I'm never gonna leave you
 Always gonna see you through to the other side
 Keep fighting the good fight, fighting the good
 fighting the good fight, good fight

 Even in the road blocks (yeah)
 Even through the rough spots
 When you're feeling you've given all that you've got
 I'm with you in the next step
 Giving you in the next breath
 I'll be the voice saying "You're gonna make it"
 When you're out there on your own
 You are never alone

 Keep fighting the good fight (Keep fighting the good
 fight)
 (Never give up, never give up)

Keep letting your light shine (Keep letting your light
 shine)
 (Holding it high as long as you live)
 'Cause I'm never gonna leave you
 Always gonna see you through to the other side
 Keep fighting the good fight, fighting the good
 fighting the good fight, good fight

 Just keep on singing (Keep on singing)
 And keep on dancing (Just keep on dancing)
 Joy will be your banner
 And My love will be your anthem
 And you may never know what your tomorrow holds
 But you can know that I am holding your tomorrow

 Keep fighting the good fight
 Keep letting your light shine
 Keep fighting the good fight (Keep fighting the good
 fight)
 (Never give up, never give up)
 Keep letting your light shine (Keep letting your light
 shine)
 (Holding it high as long as you live)
 'Cause I'm never gonna leave you
 Always gonna see you through to the other side
 Keep fighting the good fight, fighting the good,
 fighting the good fight, good fight

GROUP PRAYER PROMPTS:

- 7 min.** Let's utter God's many qualities and attributes, just to honor him like he deserves.
- 7 min.** Let's utter our gratitude, telling him about particular times he's helped us in the past.
- 7 min.** Let's utter our world's desperation, which needs rescue from disbelief, COVID, violence and fires.
- 7 min.** Let's utter our bodily needs, pleading for wisdom, healing, provision and guidance.