

Fear Less/Hear More Before-or-After-Dinner Devotions ("B.U.R.P. Time")

Week 2 || March 29 - April 4, 2020

There are 7 B.U.R.P. Times, one for each day of the week. This is intended to take 10 minutes or less each night, preferably before everyone gets up from the table (That's a really long burp...! Maybe a world record...!). Or it can be done just before the meal, but don't let your food get cold (unless it's cold pizza, of course!). The idea is for your family to enjoy it, not dread it. Keep it concise. Make it as interactive as possible. Let everyone lead in a part. However, we do think it is important for the family to see a parent, preferably Dad (if possible), open his Bible or a "family Bible" and read the Scripture, leading the family to seek and worship God. So, here's the suggested flow. Here's how to B.U.R.P.:

- B Bible** -- Read the passage. We suggest reading from an understandable translation like the New International Version, the New King James Version, or the Holman Christian Standard Bible.
- U Understand** -- Have someone read the "Understand" section -- This is written either by Boyd, Bobby, or Jae.
- R Reason** -- Read the questions, and try to get everyone to respond in some way. It is important to learn how to articulate our faith. Help each other.
- P Pray** -- Have a short prayer of commitment. One is provided for a guide. Read it if you like. God hears your heart.

Nothing satisfies like the Lord... and hearing and doing God's Word!

Sunday, March 29, 2020

Bible: Psalm 30:1-12

Understand: In this psalm, David praises God for saving his life (verse 1) and affirms that healing comes from the Lord (verses 2-3). He gives a testimony that suffering does not last forever (vv. 4-5), a confession with regard to how trials and difficulties exposed his pride (v. 6, "I will never be shaken."), an affirmation that the circumstances of our lives are ultimately in God's hands (v. 7), and with his renewed health, David renews his commitment to praise God and to proclaim His faithfulness (vv. 8-12).

Reason (Ask and Discuss): David's difficult circumstance exposed something in his life that was not what it needed to be for a child of God –namely, forgetting what he affirmed in v. 7, that **our lives are in God's hands, not in our own**. He was living as if he knew the future and as if he was invulnerable, a proud heart.

- Has this Corona crisis exposed some things in your life that are not what they need to be for a child of God?
- And if God kept you Corona-free or healed you from it, why would you want Him to do so? What, if anything, will be different in your life as a result of this crisis?
- What was going to be different in David's life because of his healing? What does that say about the ultimate reason for our health and life?

Pray: Father, our confidence is in You. Help us to be patient during this time, knowing that "weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." Show us what we need to learn from this, and may it change us for the better and in ways that make a difference in eternity. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Monday, March 30, 2020

Bible: James 5:7-11

Understand: While the immediate context is patience in waiting for the Lord to return, the broader application is patience in suffering, persevering, waiting on the Lord to intervene or relieve the suffering. He gives three examples of how patient perseverance leads to blessing: (1) the farmer waiting patiently for his/her crops to grow (waiting on the rains, which are out of the farmer's control); (2) the Old Testament prophets who spoke for the Lord, and often, as a result, were ridiculed or treated harshly; and (3) the Old Testament man named Job, who endured unimaginable, unexplained suffering, but who, in the end, was strengthened, perfected, and richly blessed by God.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- Why is it so difficult to wait in quarantine or semi-quarantine?
- While we are waiting, God is always at work. What do you see or sense God doing in you and your family while you are in this season of waiting?
- How did the farmer (and farmers today), the Old Testament prophets, and Job endure?
- James, the writer of this text, is confident that God rewards patient perseverance with blessing because of what character traits of God (v. 11)?

Pray: Father, thank You for being a God who is full of compassion and mercy. Thank You for loving us and for not treating us as our sins deserve (Psalm 103). Thank You for sending Jesus to die for our sins. Help us to be patient in this time of waiting. Grow us as we wait. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Bible: Hebrews 12:1-3

Understand: Run the race of faith! In chapter 11 we have a large cloud of witnesses who give us an assurance that faith is powerful! By faith the walls of Jericho fell, kingdoms were conquered, the mouths of lions shut, promises obtained, etc. With eyes on Jesus, the one who began our faith and will complete it, let us loosen the grip of sin that is holding us back and run the race of faith --the race to make much of Jesus in this world! When we grow weak and weary we can be reminded of what Christ endured. Because of the joy that awaited Him, not even the cross could detour Him.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- What detours have slowed you down in your relationship with Jesus?
- What is your favorite story of faith from Hebrews chapter 11?

Pray: Father, enable us to always be moving forward in our relationship with you. This world is full of distractions and obstacles that can hold our attention and weaken our faith. But let us fix our eyes on You, who You are, what You have done, and the day our faith will be made sight. It will be worth it! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

Bible: James 1:2-4

Understand: Trials are inevitable; we know they are coming. The natural human response is not to rejoice when trials are put before us, so believers must make conscious commitments to face them with joy. Whenever you face trials of many kinds, the testing of your faith produces perseverance. This testing of faith drives believers to deeper communion and greater trust in Christ. Perseverance produces spiritual maturity, not sinless perfection, but qualities that produce a stable, godly, and righteous character.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- Has there been a test of your faith that strengthened your trust and relationship with Christ?
- How can spiritual maturity lead others to Christ?

Pray: Lord, today we thank You for the trials we face and ask that You use them to strengthen our faith in you as we persevere. Lord, help us to see these trials as opportunities to witness to others around us! May we face the trials coming our way with joy and be reminded that all things work together for our good! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday, April 2, 2020

Bible: Matthew 6:7-13

Understand: God never intended for prayers to be recited, chanted, or thoughtlessly repeated. He knows your needs and your heart long before you ever seek Him, but Jesus provided a model for us here in Matthew. The Lord's Prayer guides us to submit to God's purposes, plans, and glory - "Your kingdom come, Your will be done." The prayer continues asking God to provide our daily bread. May we not become independent and no longer need Him, but we shall ask for his provision at all times and know we rely on Him. Further, verse 12 acknowledges God forgiving our sins as we have forgiven those that sinned against us. May we not forget the mercy and grace He has shown to His children! Finally, in verse 13, Jesus asks for protection from temptation. We know the devil is alive and around us. Lord, please guide us and lead us away from those temptations that lurk near and far. Deliver us, rescue us, and set us free from sin!

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- What part of The Lord's Prayer stands out to you the most? Why?
- How can we use this as a guide for our time spent with God?

Pray: Father, we thank You for this opportunity to seek Your face. Lord, we know that You are almighty and powerful and know our needs long before we ever encounter them. Thank You for the ability to pray and communicate with You and for being our "daily bread." We ask that You help us to show grace and mercy to those that have sinned against us and be reminded of Your forgiveness that You show us each day. Lord, steer us from evil and temptation in the days to come. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday, April 3, 2020

Bible: Philippians 4:12-13, 19-20

Understand: Aristotle defined contentment as “possessing all things and needing nothing.” The stoics of Paul’s day held as their highest ideal “complete self-sufficiency in all things.” Paul, however, was content not because he needed nothing or because he was self-sufficient, but because he was utterly dependent on God who gave him everything he truly needed. Paul could be content no matter the situation because the Gospel was making progress. When we are discontent, it is very important to ask ourselves where the origin of contentment lies for us.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- What is the origin of contentment for you?
- Does it lie in the progress of the gospel or does it lie in physical comfort or emotional security?

Pray: Father, remind us today that we can face any situation in this life when we depend on Christ’s strength. May we find contentment that the Gospel cannot be stopped, that it will continue to progress! God, thank you for supplying all our needs according to your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To You, our God and Father, be glory forever and ever. Amen!

Saturday, April 4, 2020

Bible: 1 Timothy 6:6-10

Understand: The word “contentment” essentially means, “I’m doing great just as I am.” Paul says that Godliness (following the Lord) along with this attitude is “great gain,” in contrast to the increasing desire and pursuit of stuff and riches, which can lead to painful loss. The issue is not the “stuff” or “riches” themselves, but our attitude towards them --our “need” for them, our dependence upon them, which leads to our pursuit of them. The issue is believing and acting like we must have these things or a certain standard of income in order to be successful, and not believing and acting like we must have God and His blessing more than anything else to be successful. The warning is that wanting more and more leads to the love of money (treasuring or, literally, having affection for money), which leads us away from God and His blessing and into a life of pain (which is the opposite of what we usually think).

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- Why do you think human nature tends to struggle with contentment? What are some triggers that lead us to being discontent with what we have (wanting more)?
- What has being quarantined or semi-quarantined taught you, if anything, about contentment?
- What are some examples of ways you have been able to find enjoyment in things you already have in your home? Or in things that you do not have to buy (reading, relationships, walks, nature, etc.)?
- Does how you actually live your life show that you value Godliness (living for the Lord) more than money and stuff?

Pray: Father, thank You for all your financial and material blessings in our lives. Thank You for how You richly provide and continue to provide all things for our enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:17). Help us learn to be more content and to avoid the dangers of materialism. Help us to think about and value You more than we think about and value this world. In Jesus' Name, Amen.