

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

Week 3 || April 5 - 11, 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, April 5, 2020

Bible: Proverbs 17:22; Philippians 4:4

Understand: It's good to laugh because laughter can be healing, especially when life happens, like it is right now. In fact, when you laugh, your body chemistry just has a party! Your endorphins (your feel-good hormone, your natural tranquilizer) explode, your immune system is immensely boosted, blood flows and oxygen bombards your brain. A cheerful heart literally is good medicine...! And so not only is it good to laugh, it FEELS good to laugh. It feels good emotionally as well as physically...!

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- What do you think it means to **rejoice in the Lord** (Philippians 4:4)? How is rejoicing in the Lord different than just rejoicing in, say, a victory by your favorite team (remember sports?), or the end of the Coronavirus pandemic?
- **Proverbs 31:25** says that the woman who fears the Lord **can laugh at the days to come**. Why is the woman or person who loves the Lord able to laugh at (not be sorrowful about) the future? (Hint: Revelation 21:4).
- Have you ever laughed until it hurts? Can you remember one of those times? What was the situation?

Pray: Heavenly Father, we cannot rejoice in our circumstances, but we can rejoice in You. Help us to learn to laugh at ourselves in a good way and to find joy in our daily lives. Help us to live on the lighter side, knowing that You are going to take care of Your children no matter what may happen. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Monday, April 6, 2020

Bible: Isaiah 40:28-3

Understand: Our Lord is unfathomable! We serve a God who is never fatigued; His plans are beyond our understanding. God's wisdom is not fully comprehensible, but we should trust that His plans are good. As humans, we grow weak and tired, but our God gives us strength and power! In verse 31, believers are reminded that those that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, soar on wings like eagles, run and not grow weary, walk and not be faint. There is a general principle here that patient, hope-filled, praying believers are blessed by God with strength in their trials.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- How do we receive this power and strength?
- What trials are we facing as a nation, state, city, family, or individual that should be turned over to God?
- How have you seen His strength shine through in previous trials?

Pray: Lord, thank you for the strength and power that only you can provide to us during our trials. Thank you for the reminder that we cannot possibly fathom your plans but that your plans work together for the good of those that love you! As we face the trials of today, tomorrow, and the time to come, be with us and guide us. God, help us to continue to share this power and strength with those around us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Bible: John 16:33

Understand: Jesus assured the disciples of many things before He shared this powerful statement at the end of chapter 16. People would remove believers from the synagogues and even kill them thinking they were serving God. He said it was better that He left so the Holy Spirit would come. He pronounced that the ruler of this world was judged and that if we ask the Father for anything the Father would answer. Jesus said all these things so that we would have peace! In a world that only offers tribulation and suffering the children of God can be brave and have peace. Our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome the world and in Him, we can too.

Reason (Ask & Discuss):

- What has Jesus done so that we may have peace in this world?
- Are there areas or issues going on right now in your life where you need this promised peace?

Pray: LORD this world can bring about suffering and uncertainty but praise to you for overcoming the world. Help us when we are weak, help us with our unbelief. Let us turn to you in faith knowing that your promises are true. Bring us Your peace and help us share that peace with others. In Jesus' name we pray and believe. Amen!

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Bible: 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 8-10

Understand: In the Roman era fatherhood often lacked love and compassion. Many cruel and criminal practices were widely practiced by Roman fathers who were seen as the absolute legal authority of their families. Paul begins here by proclaiming our heavenly Father is a responsive and loving Father, who exercises His authority in the best interests of His children. Our Father is a compassionate "Daddy," He is aware of our troubles, He is merciful and the one from whom all help comes. When we receive help from Him we get the privilege of helping others in the same way. Paul goes on to relay a personal illustration of trouble and burden that was so intense it led him to believe his own death was imminent. But Paul saw divine purpose involved in the trial! Paul recognized that the painful experiences of life are not random, pointless happenings but divinely intended chances for growth. Paul was taught not to rely on his own strength, intelligence or natural abilities but rely only on God. God raises the dead! He saved Paul more than once and He would save him again.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- Do you believe God understands and knows your troubles?
- Will you give your troubles to Jesus and rely only on Him to save you?

Pray: Lord Jesus in any and all situations you are faithful to save. You are merciful and always with us no matter what we face. Thank you for helping us no matter what troubles we may be experiencing. Please give us the wisdom and strength to help others as well. Our hope is only in You, you have saved us before and you will save us again! In Jesus' name we pray and believe. Amen!

Thursday, April 9, 2020

Bible: 2 Corinthians 4:7-9

Understand: Here in 2 Corinthians, Paul uses an illustration of a clay jar to explain God's power. He uses four contrasting metaphors here to better explain the strength that comes from God alone. Pressed but not crushed...pain and suffering are not inevitable, but with God's help, we will not be destroyed. Perplexed but not in despair...as believers, we will be confused and puzzled, but we will not be absent of hope or in complete loss. Persecuted not abandoned...ill-treatment and hostility may arise, but God is always with us and will never abandon His children. Struck down but not destroyed...we may fall down time and time again, but God's power revives us. The great power of God overcomes and transcends the clay pot. With God's all-surpassing power, anything is possible!

Reason (Ask and Discuss): These verses in 2 Corinthians remind us that our trials may come with pressure, confusion, persecution, and stumbles, but God provides an all-surpassing power that can overcome any of these trials!

- Does pressure, confusion, and persecution drive us to God or from Him?
- How have you seen this in your own life?
- When facing trials of this realm, what steps can you take to make sure you turn TO God instead of FROM Him?

Pray: Lord, thank you for your all-surpassing power! We know as your children that tough days are ahead. Some of us may face pressure while others encounter persecution and confusion, but whatever we face, we know that it is YOUR POWER that saves us! We ask that you remind us and help us to remember to turn to you instead of this world. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Good Friday, April 10, 2020

Bible: John 19:16b-18, 23-35

Understand: Even on Good Friday, it is difficult to read about the horrendous death of our precious Lord and Savior. John records three sayings of Jesus from the cross. What is amazing is that even in Jesus' final words, He was thinking of others. By saying to His mother, Mary, **"Woman, here is your son,"** and to John, **"Here is your mother" (vv. 26-27)**, Jesus showed that He was thinking of His mother, arranging for her care. When He said, **"I thirst" (v. 28)**, and finally, **"It is finished" (v. 30)**, Jesus was showing that He knew that He was fulfilling Scripture, that He had done everything necessary to take away our sin and bring us to God, those of us who would believe on his name by faith.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- What does **Ephesians 1:7** say about what Jesus accomplished for us on the cross? How about **1 Peter 1:18-19**?
- Can bad things lead to good things?
- How do you think God may use the Coronavirus pandemic to bring good?
- Who can you invite to watch our Easter Sunday service online?

Pray: Heavenly Father, Thank You for sending Jesus to die for our sins, my sins. Thank You for His example of love for You and others, and help me to follow His example. Father, please use this pandemic to bring people into Your forever family by faith in your Son, Jesus Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Saturday, April 11, 2020 (Easter "Eve")

Bible: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Understand: In this passage, Peter praises God for the glories of our salvation from sin. He reminds us of all that Christ's resurrection brings us – a living hope (not just wishful thinking, but a confidence generated by the Lord inside of us), and an eternal inheritance that will never diminish or be lost because of God's shielding us spiritually. Peter says we should rejoice in our salvation, even in the midst of trials. According to Peter, trials or troubles do not last, they serve a purpose, they bring grief, they come in various forms, and they should not diminish our joy.

Reason (Ask and Discuss):

- When you endure a difficult time with your faith intact, what does that tell you about your faith?
- What is an example of something difficult you have been through that made you better? How did it make you better?

Pray: Heavenly Father, Thank You for sending Jesus to save us. Thank You for His resurrection, showing that His death was effective to save us, and that He is not limited by death. Thank You for the promises of salvation and for being with us in trials. Help us to be able to rejoice even in tough times because of all You have done in us and because one day we will see You face to face. In Jesus' Name, Amen.