

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

### April 19 - 24, 2020

There are 6 B.U.R.P. Times, one for each day of the week except for Saturday. 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 (when possible), 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 19, 2020

#### **Bible: James 1:2-3**

**Understand:** Joy in troubles? This seems to be a mistake, yet that's what the verse says. When you think about it, there must be resistance applied for muscles to grow strong. The more intense the resistance, the more pressure one is able to endure for longer periods of time. The next time a trial comes into your life, rejoice knowing your spiritual stamina is being developed. Instead of getting knocked down next time, you'll remain steadfast in hope and with faith a little larger. This reminds me of the people of Port St. Joe. Hurricane Michael may have knocked us down and beat us into pieces, but with this virus, a lot of us are seeing that we are a little stronger and carry a little more stamina...and a whole lot more faith! Not that we cannot become sick, but our hope and faith in our Lord is a little stronger this go around. What a great testimony to those who don't know Christ!

#### **Reason (Ask & Discuss):**

- Describe a troubling situation you faced and how you found joy in the journey.
- How are you finding joy in today's troubles?
- How has your faith grown since being a child of God?

**Pray:** Lord, we know that finding joy in troubling times is difficult. Life is hard sometimes! Help us to find the joy today and in the days to come. Thank you for being faithful to us, your children. It's hard to see the joy, but thank you for it and for stretching our faith. Let our faith be the shining light to those around us that may not know you. Amen. (Jae Glass)

## Monday, April 20, 2020

### **Bible: Psalm 1:1-6**

**Understand:** When we are in the middle of a mess, a good place to turn, if not the very best place to turn, is to the middle of the Word of God, to the Book of Psalms. Reading and meditating on these Holy-Spirit-inspired meditations, prayers, and praises of people who faced the normal ups and downs of daily life as well as seasons of horrendous suffering can give us great comfort and encouragement and even direction in our own troubling times. For example, when we are facing difficulty, because we want relief, we will sometimes cope in harmful ways. We can develop “Corona-tude,” become hyper-sensitive and hyper-critical and injure our loved ones with our words. Or we can develop a rebellious attitude towards our government. Or we can begin to look to the news and social media for our comfort instead of to the Lord. We can obsess over money and become consumed with worry. And on and on. It’s natural, really, so we need supernatural help. And here in the first Psalm, which is really a little summary of the entire book, we are reminded that there are really only two ways to live – the way of righteousness (trusting in God, faith in Jesus Christ) or the way of wickedness (not trusting in God, faith in self or a false god). God promises to bless (v. 1), prosper (v. 3), and watch over (v. 6) those who trust in Him, while those who do not trust in Him are “blown away” (v. 4). With so much already against us, we do not want to add the Lord to that list by coping in ways that dishonor Him. Let’s stay in step with Him.

### **Reason (Ask and Discuss):**

- Do you notice a lifestyle progression in verse 1? What might this say about us and sin?
- In what ways is the person who does not get comfortable in sinful behavior and who delights in God’s Word like a tree? What does that mean? How is a tree different from chaff?
- Have you developed some “Corona-tude?” What are some ways you can keep it managed?

**Pray:** Father, thank You for wanting me/us to be blessed from the deepest levels of our lives to the furthest reaches of eternity. Lead me not into temptation. Help me to stay in step with You during this bizarre time. Help me to avoid giving sin opportunities in my life and to look to You and Your Word for unmovable strength. In Jesus’ name, Amen. (Boyd Evans)

## Tuesday, April 21, 2020

### **Bible: Psalm 119:11**

**Understand:** “I really need to memorize scripture but I am so busy and don’t really have the time.” I’m not sure I would be able to tell you how many times I have heard that statement. For some reason, scripture memory seems to be one of those spiritual disciplines many of us feel okay with skipping over, but God really encourages us to hide His Word in our hearts. How great would it be to instantly evaluate the world we live in with its ever-changing values, subjective morality and constant Godless influence with a heart full of Scripture? Maybe this extra time we now find ourselves with can be used by our families to hide in our hearts one of the most precious gifts ever given, God’s Word.

### **Reason (Ask & Discuss):**

- What scriptures have you committed to memory?

- Can you think of a situation where having scripture memorized would have been/or was helpful?
- What verse/verses will you memorize together as a family this week?

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, Your Word is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, it fully knows the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. Scripture is breathed out from you so we can learn, be corrected, be trained and be ready for every good work. Let us be a church where Your Word dwells richly in our fellowship! May our minds be renewed daily by your wonderful Word, help us to commit it to memory and may Your truth be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen (Bobby Alexander)

### Wednesday, April 22, 2020

**Bible: Hebrews 10:23**

**Understand:** Have you ever tried to lift an anchor? They are heavy! Their weight is determined by the size of the vessel they're meant to hold during high current and wind conditions. No matter how harsh the weather, the boat it's attached to will stay securely in place until weather calms and returns to normal. In comparison, the hope you have in God is stronger than any trial or storm you are facing. Through hope, you are anchored in Him who will never let you go and who will supply all help as you rest in Him.

**Reason (Ask & Discuss):** What are you holding on to during these trials of your life? Are you secure in the everlasting arms of the Father, or are you clinging to something else?

**Pray:** Father, today we bring it all to you. Lord, we know our faith sometimes wavers, but let us be safe in your presence during these storms. Although our faith may be tested and stretched, God, lead us to anchor our future in you! Amen. (Jae Glass)

### Thursday, April 23, 2020

**Bible: Psalm 2:1-12**

**Understand:** While Psalm 1 serves as a general introduction to the Book of Psalms, summarizing the two ways of life – the way of righteousness (trusting in God, faith in Jesus Christ) or the way of wickedness (not trusting in God, faith in self or a false god), Psalm 2 gets more specific, and speaks prophetically about how we actually become righteous. And that is by and through God's Son, Jesus. The Apostles understood that this psalm ("the nations") referred to Herod, Pilate, Jews, and Gentiles (non-Jews) crucifying Jesus (Acts 4:25-28), and the writer of Hebrews confirms that v. 7 refers to Jesus (Heb. 1:5). So this Psalm says a lot about Jesus -- that He is God's anointed Messiah (v. 2), God's Son (v. 7, 12), King of Israel (v. 6), and King of the all nations and Ruler of the Earth (v. 8). It also says a lot about this Era of Coronavirus. Interestingly, this Psalm speaks to the entire world, and Coronavirus is a worldwide pandemic. In v. 10, God graciously offers all those who reject Him and His Son a warning. Like the disasters Jesus spoke of in Luke 13:1-5, might the Coronavirus also be such a warning, revealing our mortality and God's tremendous power? And might it be a gracious summons from God to repent and be saved while there is still time? So God graciously invites the world, you

and me, to “kiss the Son” (v. 12), to love Jesus from the heart. Jesus and Jesus alone is our refuge from God’s ultimate judgment upon sin.

**Reason (Ask & Discuss):**

- What are some things the reality and rage of the Coronavirus show us about life?
- What does God say is worse than Coronavirus? (Hint: v. 12)
- Have you trusted Jesus to be your personal Lord and Savior?
- Who do you know who has not trusted Jesus to be personal Lord and Savior that you need to pray for? (Relatives, loved ones, friends?)

**Pray:** Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for our sins that we may be saved from wrath. Thank You for the promise that even though bad things may happen, You are our Resurrection and Life and we will be safe with You forever and ever. Please use this outbreak to bring people into Your family! In Jesus’ Name, Amen. (Boyd Evans)

**Friday, April 24, 2020**

**Bible: Isaiah 49:14-16**

**Understand:** Have you ever heard the statement, “the dullest pencil is better than the sharpest mind?” I can really identify with the truth it is trying to convey. I forget things, lots of things, names, important dates, items from the grocery store, you get the picture. Here in Isaiah, the people of Jerusalem felt like they had been forgotten but God assured them He could never forget His people, their names were inscribed on His hands! God will never forget His people but very often we can forget Him. I don’t mean we forget Him all together but many times we can forget just how involved He is in our lives and many of the great things He has done for us. What if you began to journal, you know “inscribe” things, write down how God is speaking to you, through His word, through sermons, by answering prayers, etc... I’m willing to bet that many of you are like me, “God show me this, teach me that, answer my prayer,” and many times, He already has. I have journaled off and on now for 15 years. When I look back through these books at what God has done I am never disappointed! I challenge you to start writing down some of your interactions with God, go back every now and then and let God remind you of just how faithful he truly is.

**Reason (Ask & Discuss):**

- What does the statement, “the dullest pencil is better than the sharpest mind” mean?
- Can you share a funny example of something you forgot?
- How do you feel knowing that just like Jerusalem God will never forget you?

**Pray:** Father thank you for always remembering us. Help us to find ways to remember how good You are and how involved You are in our daily lives. If we are not careful we can easily forget your faithfulness in the past as time moves forward. Help us use the many tools you have given us to never forget all you have done. In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen. (Bobby Alexander)