

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

May 03 – May 09, 2020

There are 6 B.U.R.P. Times, one for each day of the week, Sunday through Friday. 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, May 03, 2020

Bible: Psalm 4:1-8

Understand: This psalm may well have been a companion to the last one, which David wrote while he and his court were on the run from David's murderous son, Absalom. Both psalms contrast David's complete confidence in God to save or deliver him against the doubts of others. Whomever David is specifically speaking to in verses 3-5, they doubt God and are afraid and have no real peace. So David implores them to trust in the Lord as he does, and he tells them how: ***"Realize that God takes care of those who trust in Him (v. 3). Stop letting your fear and anger ("trembling") drown out the voice of reason and truth, and think about your life and where it is headed (v. 4). Offer the Lord your humility and your heart (not just religious ceremony), put your confidence Him, and follow His lead (v.5)."*** In contrast to the doubters, David was not afraid, and he could live and sleep in heavenly peace (3:3:5 and 4:8). This is because the Lord was the light of David's life ("my glory" in 3:3 and 4:2) and meant more to him than anything else in the world, including his material things (v. 7). The Lord was his greatest treasure, which was the key to his complete faith and confidence in God.

Reason (Ask & Discuss):

- In his commentary on the Psalms, Charles Spurgeon reflects on the helpfulness of this psalm and makes an interesting observation: ***"Happy is it for us that David was tried, or probably we should never have heard these sweet sonnets of faith."*** David's trials, while horrible, drew him back or close to the Lord, and his prayers in those times help us in our own trials. How would you finish this statement? ***"Happy it is for us that we are facing this trial (the Coronavirus crisis), or otherwise we should never have _____."***

- In verse 1, David was asking God for relief because he had experienced God's relief before. Can you think of/share a specific situation where God intervened for you in the past?

Pray: Father, thank You for David's heart for You and for His example to me of complete confidence in You. Help me to love and live for You above all else, and for others to see You in me. In Jesus' name, Amen. (Boyd Evans)

Monday, May 04, 2020

Bible: Deuteronomy 31:8

Understand: When we were kids, my parents would take us shopping at Sears (remember Sears?). They would always tell us not to touch anything and to stay close to them. But we had a way of wandering off to the toy section where we could touch some things. They always knew where to find us because that's where we would always go. I'm sure they got tired of us wandering off and having to come find us. So, to teach us a lesson, one time they didn't come find us. My brothers and I became scared and thought, "**Oh, no! They left us!**" So we went looking for them, unaware that they had been there the whole time, secretly watching us from a distance. Just before we started to panic, they revealed themselves and let us know they were watching us the whole time. We were relieved, not because we were not in trouble, but because we now realized that they had been there watching over us.

Even though I know the Bible says, "**Do not be afraid,**" if I am honest, sometimes I am. The real comfort and assurance comes from knowing our LORD is always there watching over us. In Deuteronomy 31:8, the LORD Himself promises us that He will never leave us nor forsake us. It also says, "**He goes before us and He is with us.**" I don't know about you, but I take comfort in knowing that I serve a God that is there for me. He knows my past, my present, and my future. He might seem hidden from me, but He is always there and knows where I am at all times. Because of who God is, I can be encouraged and not be afraid.

Reason (Ask & Discuss):

- Have you ever been left somewhere or felt lost?
- Are you afraid or discouraged? If so, what are you afraid or discouraged about?
- Do you find comfort in knowing that "**The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you,**" in all things?

Pray: Dear God, Thank you for going before me and never leaving nor forsaking me. Thank you for loving me and caring for me. (Jenny Stewart Evans)

Tuesday, May 05, 2020

Bible: Jeremiah 29:11 || Philippians 4:19

Understand: You may not be like me, but I love to plan! I enjoy events that are organized and well-planned. Structure is important to me, and my calendar is packed with scheduled days. When the days, weeks, months, and years come to an end, I love to reflect and think about how God orchestrated my life to be as it is today. During the challenges we encounter along the

way, it is easy to become frustrated, overwhelmed, and aggravated. However, it is important to remember that although our days may not flow as smoothly as we had planned, God's plans supersede all of ours. No matter what I have penciled in for this month, He has plans for me that I may not understand. When things don't go my way, I am tempted to think it will all fall apart if I don't fix it. BUT GOD provides my every need, just as He does for you!

Reason (Ask & Discuss):

- Reflect on God's plans for a moment. What has happened that led you to where you are now?
- Can you think of an unplanned event or time period that led you to a stronger relationship with Christ?

Pray: Lord, thank you for YOUR plans. Sometimes we like to think we are in control of our plans, but God, we know who holds today and tomorrow. Thank you for the hope and prosperity that you provide. Amen. (Jae Glass)

Wednesday, May 06, 2020

Bible: 1 Kings 19:11-12 (You can always read 1 Kings 18:1-19:18 for context)

Understand: Shhh! In houses full of people and a world full of motion this isn't the easiest task to accomplish, being quiet. Stillness, turning off the noise is something quite awkward for most of us, silence. The more we study Scripture, the easier it becomes to see that there is a huge amount of power in quiet. We must be careful to not drown out the Holy Spirit. Constant music, background noise, cell phone notifications, even talking to ourselves can cause us to miss out on hearing from Jesus. One thing I hope we find in our current situation is quality quiet time with the Lord. Elijah was a mover and shaker. He was constantly confronting corruption, injustice, and idolatry among God's people. He had just taken part in one very intense supernatural battle, fire from heaven, 850 false prophets defeated and he successfully prayed for rain after a 3-year drought. But now he finds himself worn out, spiritually, physically and emotionally, can I get a witness? Before all of this quarantine business started many of us were in the exact same place. Elijah needed to hear from God and so do we. God spoke to Elijah but not in a loud and powerful display, no, rather in a still small voice. God was teaching Elijah and us as well that in the quiet, in the listening, in the abandoning of our ideas, energy, and will, our hearts are ready to listen to God. Find the quiet and hear the still small voice this week.

Reason (Ask & Discuss): Sit in silence for 1 minute and share with each other.

- What did you hear, think about, how did you feel?
- Why is quiet so awkward to many people?
- What benefits might there be if you allowed yourself to rest and be quiet in your alone time with God?

Pray: Tonight find a nice quiet place with no distractions and spend some time listening to Jesus. (Bobby Alexander)

Thursday, May 07, 2020

Bible: Isaiah 43:2 || 2 Timothy 1:7-8

Understand: High waters, flames, global pandemics - none of these are pleasant. In addition, trying times like these bring about loneliness, financial stress, and fear for many. As stated in the scriptures above, God will be with you through all things, and the spirit that God gave us does not make us timid, but it gives us power, love, and self-discipline. Adversity is a bridge to a deeper relationship with God. For the believers, our confidence, sense of assurance, hope, and unshakable faith in Jesus is our witness to the unbelievers that may be searching for the missing piece - JESUS. Not only do believers dig deeper into the word when persevering through life's challenges (resulting in a closer relationship to the savior), but we also have more of an opportunity to reach the lost when times are hard.

Reason (Ask & Discuss):

- Do others see Jesus in you? Is your light shining for the Lord?
- What is your "witness" during the social distancing times we face today?

Pray: God, thank you for getting our attention this year. We know that you are sovereign and deserve our utmost respect. I pray that we will have opportunities this week to be the light and give you honor and glory. May we take advantage of spreading the good news to those around us - let others see you in us today and every day! Amen. (Jae Glass)

Friday, May 08, 2020

Bible: Numbers 23:19 || James 1:17 || Hebrews 23:19

Understand: Immutable. It's a word we don't usually use a lot in our day to day conversations (maybe someone should look up the definition real quick). But when you begin talking about who God is, it's a word that can't be overlooked. Everything changes -- seasons, favorite shows, friends the latest government guidelines -- but God never does. I question things, I question a lot of things. Maybe it is from my Dad's influence, maybe it's from being raised out West, but I question. Right now, with all the madness that information overload can cause and the ever-changing nature of that information, we can easily find ourselves without any answers. Every day more and more questions, information changes, and speculation about what tomorrow holds only brings more uncertainty. STOP! OUR God is immutable! Hold onto the One we don't need to question. Rest your hope in the One who is constant. ***"God is perpetually the same. He is not composed of any substance or material, but is spirit—pure, essential, and not of this world—and therefore he is immutable. He remains everlastingly the same. There are no wrinkles on his eternal brow. He is not affected by time; no years have marked him with the mementos of their flight; he sees ages pass, but with Him, it is ever now. He is the great I AM—the Great Unchangeable (C.H. Spurgeon).***

Reason (Ask & Discuss):

- What questions are you dealing with right now?
- Who are you looking to answer those questions?
- Do you believe God is constant, that He does not change and you can trust Him?

Pray: Dear Father, You always have been, are today and always will be the same, a good, good, Father. You are perfect, You are just, You are merciful, You are love, You are everlasting and You never change! May we look to You for answers, for hope, and for our future. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen (Bobby Alexander)