

PRAY LIKE THIS:

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN,
MAY YOUR NAME BE KEPT HOLY.
MAY YOUR KINGDOM COME SOON.
MAY YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH,
AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

GIVE US TODAY THE FOOD WE NEED,
AND FORGIVE US OUR SINS,
AS WE HAVE FORGIVEN THOSE WHO SIN
AGAINST US.

AND DON'T LET US YIELD TO TEMPTATION,
BUT RESCUE US FROM THE EVIL ONE.

MATTHEW 6:9-13 (NLT)



Centered IN CHRIST

July
Family
Camp
Devotionals



SUNDAY DEVOTIONAL

Introduction

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." – John 1:1

To be "Centered in Christ" we need to be "Centered in His Word."

The Bible is God's story, revealing to us who He as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the good and perfect plan He has for the people He created.

The Bible also is our story, revealing who we are – people at once created in God's image but also saddled with a sin-filled nature and a desperate need to be saved from ourselves.

The Bible is the grand story of God's redemptive plan to rescue us and restore us to a right relationship with Him for all eternity.

And, the Bible is God's promise book, filled from front to back with His assurances for those who follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

On the following pages are devotions on five of God's many promises – one for each day of camp. Take time to read them, reflect on them, memorize them, pray them, and respond to them.

May they help you to be "Centered in Christ."
-- Mark Vasché, July Family Camp Dean

Devotions inspired by 'Growing Strong in God's Family,' The Navigators, 1987. All Scriptures New International Version.

Write a prayer response to today's devotional:

FRIDAY DEVOTIONAL

Today's Promise: Guidance

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

-- Proverbs 3:5-6

In our humanness, we think we know what's best for us, and we make choices and decisions every day that we think are the best ones to accomplish what we want. Often times we ask God to bless those decisions, only later to wonder why things didn't turn out quite the way we had hoped.

This promise tells us that we've got it all upside down and turned around. It reminds us that God knows us better than we know ourselves, and He knows better what we need than we do.

So why not start first with Him, by praying and being in His Word, seeking His will, His way, His wisdom in the decisions of our lives?

Or, as Jesus puts it in Matthew 6:33, why not "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you."?

Jesus wants His followers, to acknowledge and submit to him as Lord and Savior in every area of our lives.

In other words, God wants us to be fully "Centered in Christ." What do you need to do to be "all in" with Him? How willing are you to be and do who He has created and called you to be and do?

Write a prayer response to today's devotional:

THURSDAY DEVOTIONAL

Today's Promise: Victory Over Sin

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." -- 1 Corinthians 10:13

Every person who has ever lived – including Jesus himself and each one of us – has faced temptation.

But the problem isn't the temptation; no, it's what happens when we give into it. Satan will use those temptations to lure us to sin, and that in turn separates us from God and each other.

The good news is that God understands our weaknesses, and is faithful even when we aren't. He promises that we won't face anything that we can't stand – as long as we draw on His strength and power rather than ours to resist the temptation. And, every time we're tempted He will give us a way out.

The sad reality, though, is that too often we choose not to take the way out, even when it is crystal clear to us.

What are the greatest temptations you struggle with?

What people or situations make you most vulnerable to giving in to temptation?

Will you confess all that to God, and ask Him to give you the desire and strength to recognize and take His "way out" when temptation comes your way?

Write a prayer response to today's devotional:

MONDAY DEVOTIONAL

Today's Promise: Salvation

"This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." – 1 John 5:11-12

Wow! God wants us to have life forever with Him! What a gift! What a blessing! What a promise!

And, we can claim that amazing promise by "having" his Son, Jesus, as our personal Lord and Savior.

The question today is: Who is Jesus to you? It's easy for us to say He is the Son of God, or the Messiah, or the Lord and Savior.

But who is He to you personally – right here, right now, deep down in your heart and soul? What the Bible tell us is that if we have truly confessed, declared, and given our life to Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we have eternal life. But if we haven't made that sincere, heartfelt confession, then God's gift of eternal life is still there, awaiting our decision.

So again, where are you today?

If Jesus is your Lord and Savior, will you renew your commitment to follow Him from here to eternity?

If you haven't yet accepted Him as Lord and Savior, will you claim God's promise of salvation? If so, will you talk with one of the pastors at camp?

Write a prayer response to today's devotional:

TUESDAY DEVOTIONAL

Today's Promise: Forgiveness

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
– 1 John 1:9

Sin is serious – more serious than even we Christians often take it. We can call our sins mistakes, or dismiss them as "little" ones, or blame them on other people.

Not so with God, who takes sin so seriously that He sent Jesus to earth to suffer and die for our sins. He knows that when we sin it breaks our relationship with Him. And He loves us too much to let that happen.

Confessing our sins and asking for forgiveness is our way of agreeing with God; it shows our repentance, submission, and obedience to Him. And our desire to be cleansed and restored to a right relationship with Him.

What about you?

Do you want to have a right relationship with Him?

Are there sins you need to confess and ask for His forgiveness today?

Will you ask Him to reveal sin in your life that you may not even be aware of or that you've forgotten?

Is there someone you need to forgive – or someone you need to ask to forgive you?

Write a prayer response to today's devotional:

WEDNESDAY DEVOTIONAL

Today's Promise: Answered Prayer

"Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." – John 16:24

"We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen"

Many if not most of our prayers end with these words. So, if Jesus' promise in John 16:24 is true, why aren't our prayers all answered with a "yes" rather than a more frequent "no" or a "wait"?

Maybe it's because we don't fully understand what "in My name" really means. Praying "in His name" means praying according to His will.

The Word tells us that God's will and ways are always good and perfect – and ours are not. And because His answers are always based on His will, not ours, His answers can surprise and please us or disappoint and confuse us, especially when we pray for something we think God would want – salvation for an unbelieving family member or friend, or protection for someone in harm's way, or physical healing for a loved one.

God understands that, but He wants us to trust Him.

What prayers do you want God to answer in your life right now? Will you ask for them "in His name" and according to His will - and then trust Him and His answer?

Write a prayer response to today's devotional:
