



The Lord is my Shepherd

2021 Devotional

A LETTER FROM PASTOR JAY

This is a new year like no other! New hope comes with new seasons, yet we are painfully aware that many of our challenges from last year are unresolved. In the middle of this unsettled season, God is whispering to us to come close to Him. Can you hear the invitation of God to simplify your life and dedicate time to prayer, fasting, repentance, and hearing His voice?

I hope you will join us for 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting. This devotional was written to help you engage in this season of prayer. A daily portion of Scripture has been chosen to help guide our prayer times using the S.O.A.P method (pg 4).

This year, we have added a special section to help families of older kids and teens to engage in prayer together (beginning on page 28). Lastly, because of Covid-19, we are not meeting for evening services during the fast but will have three online events at 5:30 p.m. on January 10, 17, 24. Each night will have a different focus. We will have a live conversation about prayer, fasting and devotions. We will also be taking questions, prayer requests, sharing communion, and praying together. See the schedule (pg 1) for more details.

I am so excited that you are joining us for 21 Days of Prayer. This will be a beautiful time and will prepare us with the spiritual foundation we need to face all of the challenges of the new year. This season of spiritual preparation will allow us to thrive even in difficult times. I look forward to sharing this time with you!

Praying with you,

PASTOR JAY

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PRAYER AND SERVICE SCHEDULE

January 11 - 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting begin

Sundays - Facebook Live Weekly Prayer
beginning Jan 10 Time: 5:30pm - 6pm

January 31 - 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting ends

PREPARING FOR PRAYER AND FASTING

Below are a few questions to help you prepare for this time of prayer & fasting.

- What will be your prayer focus? It usually helps to make a list.
 - What do you sense God speaking to you about this season of prayer? Do you have a sense of what He wants to do or are there areas you long to connect with God about?
 - What type of prayer/fast will you do?
 - Is there a way to apply the prayer/fast to your family?
 - What time of day will you do the devotional SOAP reading?
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TEN BIBLICAL PURPOSES TO FAST

- **To Strengthen Prayer-** Ezra 8.23, Nehemiah 1.4, Daniel 9.3, Joel 2.12
- **To Seek God's Guidance-** Judges 20.26-28, Acts 14.23
- **To Express Grief-** Judges 20.26, 1 Samuel 31.13, 1 Peter 3.18, 1 John 1.9
- **To Seek Deliverance or Protection-** 2 Chronicles 20.3-4, Ezra 8.21-23, Esther 4.16, Psalm 109.24
- **To Express Repentance & Return to God-** 1 Samuel 7.6, Joel 2.12, Jonah 3.5-8
- **To Humble Oneself Before God-** 1 Kings 21.27-29, Psalm 35.13
- **To Express Concern for the Work of God-** Nehemiah 1.3-4, Daniel 9.3
- **To Minister to the Needs of Others-** Isaiah 58.6-7
- **To Overcome Temptation & Dedicate Yourself to God-** Matthew 4.1-11
- **To Express Love & Worship to God-** Luke 2.37, Philippians 3.19

HOW TO DO A FAST

-DECIDE WHAT YOU WILL FAST

Commit to the Lord which type of fast you will do (partial, normal, absolute). If you are new to fasting, I would recommend a partial fast, especially since it will be a 21 day journey. In a partial fast, simply give something up that is important to you for 21 days in order to pray and seek God.

Examples:

- Give up T.V., internet, and movies
- Eat only fruits, vegetables, and liquids
- Only consume liquids (juices, vitamin drinks, etc.)
- Give up some category of foods

-REPENT

Submit to Jesus the excesses, attachments, the wrong thinking/beliefs, and cultural baggage that you have allowed in your life. Ask God to reveal them to you, to wash you of them, and to break the connection to them. Allow the cleansing power of God to be a reality to you.

-PRAY

Set a regular time of prayer for these 21 days. As much as possible have a regular time of prayer every day. I find morning and evening prayer for 21 days is very effective. Make a prayer list. Bring the issues of your life to God and ask Him to reveal and to move you into His will on these issues.

-SHARE

Share your journey with others who are fasting. Stay current on your devotional reading. Join us for our January Facebook Live conversation and prayer broadcasts. There is great power in unity and common experiences. As you share your journey, the process will solidify and become more real to you. As you share the things God is doing in you, it will anchor them more deeply in your spirit.

-WHEN THE FAST IS OVER

Reflect on the things God did and said to you during the fast. Thank God for His answers; worship and praise Him for a powerful fast. Resolve to do God's will. Plan some ways these things can be part of your life when the fast is over.

-THE MAIN THING

The main thing is to keep the "main thing" the main thing. This is about getting closer to God. Keep worship, repentance, submission to God, and determination to do God's will at the center of the fast. If your fast does not provide opportunity for your prayer life to intensify, do a different kind of fast.

It is good for us to set aside our routines, to focus, to pursue God, and to alter our diets enough that we think about God every time we eat. A fast creates openness to God's plans, His word, and His presence. A focused time of prayer and fasting will disrupt the natural and allow the spiritual to deepen in our lives.

TECH HABITS WHILE FASTING

Technology has more influence on us than we realize. These habits will help you to focus throughout the 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting.

Daily Habit 1- Scripture before phone

Daily Habit 2- Turn off your phone for one hour every day for mid-day or evening prayer by yourself or with family.

Daily Habit 3- Just before bed, reflect on your commitment to habits for the day.

Weekly Habit 1- One hour of face-to-face conversation with a friend without access to a screen.

Weekly Habit 2- All media at four hours per week or less

Weekly Habit 3- Attend church service with your phone turned off.

WHAT IS SOAP

SOAP is a way to engage the Scriptures and to help us live out God's word. A really neat part of doing this devotional is you are not doing it by yourself. Hundreds of other people are reading the same Scriptures you are. Below is an outline explaining how it works.

Consider playing the selected worship music for the month in the background while you pray. It can be found on YouTube by clicking [THIS](#) link.

SCRIPTURE

Read the portion of Scripture assigned for today. Ask the Holy Spirit to use one of these verses to speak to you. One of these verses will grab your attention or shine out from the page. Copy that verse on a piece of paper or a smart device.

OBSERVATION

Quiet your heart, set aside the "to do" lists in your mind, and as best as you can, focus in on this verse. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see why this verse jumped out at you. Read the verse again and try to understand it in its context. Who wrote it? To whom was it written? Why was it written? What is happening in this passage? Take a few minutes to meditate and reflect on the meaning of this verse and let it soak deeply into your heart. What did you notice about renewal and returning to God? Write down what you observe.

APPLICATION

Write a few thoughts on how you could apply to your life what you just read. How can you put this into practice today?

PRAYER

Ask God to help you live out His word and to be faithful to the insight the Holy Spirit has brought to you. In the end, none of us can live the Christian life without God's help. Write down your prayer for the day, ask specifically for God's help, and thank Him for this insight.

SOAP EXAMPLE

Psalm 23:1-2

SCRIPTURE

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads beside still waters.”

OBSERVATION

The Lord is my supplier, my sustainer, my caretaker, my protector, and guide. What more do I need?

APPLICATION

If God is my supplier and sustainer, then why do I worry so much? He who aligned the universe, who spoke and continues to speak the stars into the sky, He can certainly align my life. I have concerns because I don't see the big picture; however, seeing the big picture would negate my need to rely on God. Trust only comes when I am out of control and must rely on the God who holds the big picture. Like a shepherd who knows where the fertile pasture is, God is leading me toward purpose and destiny. And sometimes, I am led through dark valleys toward fertile pasture.

PRAYER

Lord, today your word has cut my heart. I repent of not trusting you. I repent of relying on my own wisdom and understanding. You are my supplier, my sustainer, my caretaker, my protector, and my guide. What more do I need? Show me those areas in which you desire to stretch my trust. Teach me to move with the rhythms of your grace.

DAY ONE

PSALM 23:1-3

“Some prayer, some power.
More prayer, more power.
Much prayer, much power! ”
~ Vada Mildred Hagee

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Review and implement the tech habits on page 3

DAY TWO

PSALM 23:4-6

“Prayer might need to be renamed. The word is too small and has become too cliché. It’s ‘only’ the best gift we have ever been given. It’s something we should cherish more than our very breath. It’s our ‘talk time’ with our father who is the best father ever and loves to be with us and pays close attention to everything. And yet at the same time, commands the galaxies and knows when each and every ladybug lands. Prayer is so underrated.”

~ Doug Grater

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY THREE

EPHESIANS 1:3-10

“Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?”
~ Corrie Ten Boom

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Join a friend or your family in prayer today for Kingwood Church

DAY FOUR

EPHESIANS 1:11-14

“Jesus’s resurrection is the beginning of God’s new project not to snatch people away from earth to heaven but to colonize earth with the life of heaven. That, after all, is what the Lord’s Prayer is about.”
~ NT Wright

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY FIVE

EPHESIANS 1:15-23

“God never gives us discernment in order that we may criticize,
but that we may intercede.”

~ Oswald Chambers

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY SIX

JOSHUA 1

“Praying most often doesn’t get us what we want
but what God wants, something quite at variance with
what we conceive to be in our best interests.”
~ Eugene Peterson

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Join us for our Kingwood Worship Service tomorrow at 10:30am in-person or online

DAY SEVEN

COLOSSIANS 1:3-8

“Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn’t act the way we want God to, and why I don’t act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge.”
~ Philip Yancey

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Join us at 5:30pm for the Facebook Live Prayer Time in Kingwood Community

DAY EIGHT

COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

“Prayer is first and foremost an act of love.”
~ Brennan Manning

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Review and implement the tech habits on page 3

DAY NINE

COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

”Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble.

But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it
and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference.”

~ Max Lucado

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY TEN

COLOSSIANS 1:21-23

“As a kid, I was taught that if you opened the Bible in the middle you’d probably land on the book of Psalms. And near the middle is everyone’s favorite, the 23rd, there is this line: “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.” I don’t know how many times I’ve read or recited this Psalm without pondering what that line actually means, but here is my take on it. When things are a bit tense, when life is not going at its best, when the potential for disaster is just around the corner, when your enemies are all around you - and even staring you down! - that’s when God lays out the red-checkered picnic cloth and says, “Oooo, this is a nice place. Let’s hang out here together for a while...just you and me.”

~ David Brazzeal

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY ELEVEN

COLOSSIANS 1:24-29

“We have all things and abound; not because I have a good store of money in the bank, not because I have skill and wit with which to win my bread, but because the Lord is my shepherd.”
~ Charles Spurgeon

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY TWELVE

GENESIS 1:1-13

“Your job is to abide in my pasture
Eating sweet grass and drinking pure water,
And sharing both with others—
That is a lamb’s business.”
~ Jessica Coupe

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY THIRTEEN

GENESIS 1:14-25

“Our shepherd intends that we experience his love every day, by living a life that is FREE FROM FEAR ... There is not a single day in your future when God will not be seeking you out to give you goodness, to give you love, even in those times, when you walk through the darkest valley. David doesn’t say that there won’t be pain; he doesn’t say that there won’t be trouble and distress, but he DOES say that there will always be goodness, there will always be love, there will always be kindness, hot on your heels.”

~ David Knott

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY FOURTEEN

GENESIS 1:26-31

“Trying to pray is praying.”
~ Manuel Plascencia

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Join us in at 5:30pm for the Facebook Live Prayer Time in Kingwood Community

DAY FIFTEEN

REVELATION 2:1-7

“Ignoring food when you have surplus and appetite, to deal in weightier matters of the soul, this is what it means to fast”
~ Oluseyi Akinbami’

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Review and implement the tech habits on page 3

DAY SIXTEEN

REVELATION 2:8-11

“The reality is, my prayers don’t change God. But, I am convinced, prayer changes me. Praying boldly boots me out of that stale place of religious habit into authentic connection with God Himself.”

~ Lysa TerKeurst

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY SEVENTEEN REVELATION 2:12-17

“God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world
the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil.”
~ Mother Teresa

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

** Join a friend or your family in prayer today for Kingwood Church

DAY EIGHTEEN

REVELATION 2:18-29

“There is nothing that prepares and strengthens you for the challenges of a new day like communing with God early in the morning as you view His beautiful creation- even when it is only through a window into your own yard!”

~ June Creel

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY NINETEEN

REVELATION 3:1-6

“Fasting from any nourishment, activity, involvement or pursuit—for any season—sets the stage for God to appear. Fasting is not a tool to pry wisdom out of God’s hands or to force needed insight about a decision. Fasting is not a tool for gaining discipline or developing piety (whatever that might be). Instead, fasting is the bulimic act of ridding ourselves of our fullness to attune our senses to the mysteries that swirl in and around us.”

~Dan B. Allender

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY TWENTY

REVELATION 3:7-13

“Prayer is sitting in the silence until it silences us, choosing gratitude until we are grateful, and praising God until we ourselves are an act of praise.”

~ Richard Rohr

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

DAY TWENTY-ONE REVELATION 3:14-22

“Each time I step back from the clutter of the online world, I’m amazed
how much time is freed up to declutter my real world.”

~ Wendy Speake

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATION

APPLICATION

PRAYER

SUGGESTED FAST FOR KIDS & TEENS

Day 1 Fast TV, Movies, DVDs & Videos	Day 2 Fast TV, Movies, DVDs & Videos	Day 3 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 4 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 5 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 6 Fast TV, Movies, DVDs & Videos	Day 7 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy
Day 8 Fast TV, Movies, DVDs & Videos	Day 9 Fast TV, Movies, DVDs & Videos	Day 10 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 11 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 12 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 13 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 14 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy
Day 15 Fast Cell Phone	Day 16 Fast Cell Phone	Day 17 Fast Cell Phone	Day 18 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 19 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 20 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy	Day 21 Fast Sugars, Dessert & Candy

A LETTER FROM PASTOR JEREMY

Dear Parents,

If you've been around me very long, you've probably heard my spiel about technology, especially social media. It's a beast! However, we don't live in a world where we can bury our heads in the sand and pretend like it's not there. Social media is here to stay. It's not about "should we allow it?", but rather "when should we allow it?"

I met a friend earlier in 2020 who shared the following youth devotional with me. Toby did a fantastic job of harnessing what's right about social media to use it properly. I told him, "You reclaimed social media as a tool that we use, instead of a tool that uses us."

In the following pages, it'll take some time, but you'll love how it provides space to both talk about social media, as well as, use it for the highest purpose- to glorify God! Carve out about an hour, two days each week over the next four weeks (eight sessions together as a family) and I think you'll be glad that you did.

In the trenches with you (I just became a dad of three teenagers!!!),

Pastor Jeremy

CONNECTED

KEEPING FAMILIES CONNECTED THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

By Toby Bowker

Connected is a creative devotional designed to bring your family together utilizing technology. For the next four weeks, you will sit down twice a week and incorporate the Bible and some of your favorite tech platforms. From YouTube to FaceTime, Instagram, Zoom, and more, get ready to have some fun with your family. Each devotional only requires a short amount of time, but we have a feeling, you will want them to last longer. You are going to have so much fun doing them. Good news! Once you have finished the four weeks, you can repeat all the individual devotionals, time and time again.

Our **GOAL** is to see families spend more time together.

Our **HEART** is to see you connect with Jesus and each other.

Our **HOPE** is that you make connecting with each other a normal part of your life.

Our **PRAYER** is that you experience and enjoy the power of spending time with family.

CONNECTED

WEEK 1 - DAY 1

TODAY'S GOAL

Experience the power of prayer using Facetime.

SCRIPTURE

“When you call on me, when you come and pray to me, I’ll listen.”
Jeremiah 29:12 (MSG)

When you pray, God is listening. He is also faithful to answer our prayers. Take a moment right now to have everyone in your family, share something you are praying about and asking God for. Big or small, every prayer matters to God.

ASSIGNMENT

The only thing more rewarding than spending time connecting with God in prayer, is spending time praying for someone else. Today, you are each going to choose a friend to pray for, call them on Facetime, and pray for each one of them individually. Your entire family can join in, or you can pray for them on your own with your family praying while you are on the call.

STEP 1 - Everyone choose who you will be praying for.

STEP 2 - Pray for each person before you call them.

SAMPLE PRAYER

Jesus, we pray that _____ will be encouraged by our prayer for them. We ask that they feel your love through this prayer and that they will be inspired to spend time with you this week in prayer too. Thank you for listening to our prayers. In Jesus name, Amen.

STEP 3 - Call each person on Facetime and pray for them. Each call should be no longer than 5 minutes.

SAMPLE CALL

“Hi, my family and I are praying for people tonight, and I wanted to know if we could take a minute to pray for you. What can we pray for you about?”

(Pray short prayer here specifically what they asked you to pray about here)

“Thank you for letting us pray for you. I’ll talk to you later this week. We love you.”

****** If they do not pick up, spend two minutes praying for them with your family.

STEP 4 - Pray with your family to end today’s devotional. Ask God to encourage each person you called and thank him for listening to your prayers.

Have a great week and be sure to spend time in prayer.

CONNECTED

WEEK 1 - DAY 2

TODAY'S GOAL

Spend time praying for someone in your extended family through Zoom.

SCRIPTURE

“So, speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope, so you’ll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (MSG)

God loves when we encourage each other and one of the best ways you can encourage someone is to pray for them. Not only will your prayer encourage them, but the fact that you stopped your busy schedule to do it, will let show them they matter to you. Everyone loves to feel important and your prayer will show them they are to you.

ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment today is to encourage someone from your extended family through a Zoom call with them. Once on the call, you will encourage them through prayer. You can choose any extended family member you want, including, Grandma, Grandpa, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin, whoever you think can use the encouragement the most. Warning! Smiles and tears may be coming your way. You can access the Zoom website on your laptop, desktop, or iPad, but if it is easier, the Zoom app can be downloaded free of charge to your smartphone.

Please note this assignment requires setting up your Zoom call in advance. If you do not already have a Zoom account, you can set one up

free of charge. Once you set-up your Zoom account, follow the steps to create your meeting, and then send your family member (text or email) the link to log on and time the meeting starts.

STEP 1 - Choose the family member you want to encourage.

STEP 2 - Log on to your Zoom call a few minutes before your designated time.

STEP 3 - Once your family member logs on, explain why you set-up the call.

SAMPLE

“Hi _____, we set this up because we wanted you to know how much we love you, and wanted to encourage you, by praying for you. What can we pray for you about?”

(Pray short prayer here specifically what they asked you to pray about here)

After the prayer, spend a few minutes catching up, but try and keep call to 10-15 minutes.

STEP 4 - Pray with your family to end today’s devotional. Ask God to encourage each person you called and thank him for listening to your prayers.

Have a great week and be sure to spend time in prayer

CONNECTED

WEEK 2 - DAY 1

TODAY'S GOAL

Spend time as a family watching a popular pastor on YouTube.

SCRIPTURE

“Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.” 1 Timothy 4:13 (NLT)

Why are pastors so important? One of the reasons is they teach us the Word of God. Learning what Scripture says is the key to living a life that is pleasing to Jesus. Thank to YouTube, we have access to a lot of great pastors and their teachings about the Bible.

ASSIGNMENT

Today, you are going to choose a topic together and then find a pastor on YouTube teaching about it. We encourage to choose a topic that is timely for your family. For example, if you have anyone that is sick in your family, or extended family, choosing a message on healing would be relevant. If you have a family member that has a big decision to make, choosing a message about wisdom would work.

STEP 1 - Choose a topic together relevant for your family. You can watch your message on any laptop, tablet, Smart TV and Smartphone. TV is recommended.

STEP 2 - Log on to YouTube and type this in the search bar ‘Pastor preaching about (insert your topic here). Parents, please be sure your selection is a pastor you are comfortable with.

STEP 3 - Select the message you want to watch and click play.

STEP 4 - Watch 15 minutes of message and as a family, discuss what you got from it.

If you choose to do so, you can watch the remainder of the message here, pick a time to watch it together later, or agree to watch it on your own sometime this week.

STEP 5 - Finish this devotional with a family prayer centered around the topic you just learned about.

Have a great week and be sure to finish the message you were watching if you did not already do so.

CONNECTED

WEEK 2 - DAY 2

TODAY'S GOAL

Experience the joy of preaching and the impact it can have on people.

SCRIPTURE

“And then he told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.” Mark 16:15 (NLT)

Jesus has called all of us to preach the “Good News”. What is the good news? He is! Jesus wants the entire world to know, He loves them and has great plans for all of us. He came, lived a perfect, sinless life, died on a cross for our sins, and rose again three days later, proving he is the one and only God, and through him, we can have eternal life. Now, that is good news!

ASSIGNMENT

Earlier this week, you watched a pastor preach a message on YouTube, and today, you get to be the pastor. Each person will preach a message, no longer than three minutes, and then upload it to YouTube for all to be encouraged by. We are thankful for our pastors, and they have been blessed to preach, but God wants all of to tell the world the ‘Good News’ of Jesus.

STEP 1 - Choose who will record your message. The easiest way to record and upload your message to YouTube is your smartphone, but you can film on any device you prefer.

STEP 2 - Each person records a two-to-three-minute message about Jesus.

STEP 3 - Upload every message to YouTube

.
If you do not have a YouTube channel, you can either create one, or upload each message to another platform like Facebook or Instagram. Be sure to monitor and reply to the comments your friends and family will be leaving. You just might be the internet's greatest new preacher! If you do not have any of the above platforms, simply enjoy each message all to yourself.

STEP 4 - Pray for your pastor. Pray for his family, health, and wisdom to continue to lead your church. Finish this devotional by thanking God for the 'Good News' of Jesus.

Have a great week and look for opportunities to tell someone about Jesus.

SEE YOU NEXT TIME

CONNECTED

WEEK 3 - DAY 1

TODAY'S GOAL

Encourage your Instagram followers with one of your favorite Bible verses.

SCRIPTURE

“Discover creative ways to encourage others and to motivate them toward acts of compassion, doing beautiful works as expressions of love.” Hebrews 10:24 (TPT)

When you encourage someone, it motivates them to do good things. God loves it when find creative ways to encourage the people in our lives. From family to friends, there is always someone that needs encouragement, and it is awesome that God chooses us to do what he could do on his own.

ASSIGNMENT

Technology gives us a lot of creative options to encourage people and your assignment today is to use IGTV on Instagram. Whether you have five followers, or five hundred (maybe even more), you are about to experience the power of encouraging someone. Warning! Seeing your friends and family react to your creative encouragement, could be addictive, and you might want to do it again and again and again.

STEP 1 - As a family (all of you at the same time) record a video centered around encouraging people. No more than two minutes long. Typically, people will not watch anything longer than that. A tripod is ideal for this or you can use the video timer on your phone.

STEP 2 - Upload your video to IGTV on Instagram. You will need to choose a select a cover photo (choose something fun of your entire family, take a new picture if need be), and write a title and short description before posting it.

STEP 3 - Post your video to IGTV.

If you do not have an Instagram account, you can either create one, or upload each message to another platform like Facebook. Be sure to monitor and reply to the comments your friends and family will be leaving. You might be surprised how God will use what may seem like a silly video, to really encourage someone. If you do not have any of the above platforms, simply text it to friends and family and watch what happens.

STEP 4 - Pray that God uses your video to encourage people.

Have a great week and look for opportunities to encourage someone for Jesus.

CONNECTED

WEEK 3 - DAY 2

TODAY'S GOAL

Learn the power of words and have fun doing it.

SCRIPTURE

“Words kill, words give life; they’re either poison or fruit you choose.”
Proverbs 18:21 (MSG)

What comes out of your mouth has the power to lift somebody up or tear them down. When it comes to your words, would you rather speak life or death? Instead of hurting them, it pleases God when we choose to use our words to help people. Words are some of the most powerful things God has given us, and it is our choice what we do with them. Choose wisely.

ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment today is to combine life-giving words and laughter. Those two are good enough to turn anyone’s day around. As a family, you are going to choose a filter (preferably one that makes all of you laugh) on your favorite social media platform and record a sixty-second video of you speaking nothing but positive things. Once you are finished you will post it on your stories and tag any friends you want to be the recipient of your life-giving and super fun message.

Example Filters - Dog Ears, Sparkles, Silly Face, Heart Eyes, Etc.

Example Video - We want to take the next sixty-seconds to tell you how important you are. We think you are amazing. You are special, important, extremely good looking, and if were in front of you right now, we would all give you a giant hug. (Continue on from here) Potential Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, Etc.

STEP 1 - Choose your social media platform and your fun filter.

STEP 2 - Record your sixty-second, nothing but positive, life-speaking video.

STEP 3 - Post your video to the stories section of your social media page. If that does not apply to your specific platform, simply post to your designated timeline.

If you do not have a social media account, you can either create one, or simply save it to your phone and text it to friends and family. You might be surprised how many people will laugh at your filter but be impacted by the words you are speaking through it.

STEP 4 - Ask God for forgiveness for any words that you have spoken that did not represent life and pray for the discipline to only speak life-giving words over yourself and those around you.

Have a great week and look for opportunities to speak words of life over someone.

CONNECTED

WEEK 4 - DAY 1

TODAY'S GOAL

Experience the presence of God through the power of worship music.

SCRIPTURE

“Come to close God, and God will come close to you.” James 4:8 (MSG)

What a promise from God! If your desire is to get closer to Him, His promise is to come closer to you, and when Jesus comes closer, so does everything that He has to offer like peace, joy, hope, love, and so much more. The best way to invite the presence of God in your life is through is worship. Whether listening to your favorite worship bands, or singing your own songs, your willingness to praise God, shows Him that you desire to be in His presence, and He loves that.

ASSIGNMENT

Utilizing your favorite music platform (see options below) you are going to create a song list of your favorite praise and worship music. Each member of your family gets to pick a song. If there is three of you, choose three songs. If there are four people, choose four songs, and so on. After creating your new worship setlist, you and your family will spend 10 minutes praising Jesus to your new worship collection.

Potential Music Platforms: Spotify, i-Tunes, YouTube, Apple Music, Etc.

STEP 1 - Each person chooses one worship song they want on the setlist.

STEP 2 - Explain why you chose your specific song and what it means to you.

STEP 3 - Give your new worship playlist a name and create it on your music platform of choice.

STEP 4 - Spend 10 minutes worshipping with your family to your new playlist. If you have time, you may find yourself wanting to listen and worship to all your songs.

STEP 5 - Share your new worship playlist with friends and family who you think might enjoy it, through your music platform, or text them the link.

Have a great week and spend time in the presence of God on your own worshipping God with your new playlist that hopefully will always remind you of God and your family.

CONNECTED

WEEK 4 - DAY 2

TODAY'S GOAL

Experience the power of worship with the help of a very special guest.

SCRIPTURE

“Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord!” Jeremiah 20:13 (NLT)

The Lord loves when we take the time to worship Him. Quite honestly, with everything He has done for us, He deserves all the praise we can give Him. If you ever feel down, lost, or confused about anything going on in life, worshipping God is one of the best ways to give you a new perspective on whatever you are facing. This is the reason worship leaders are so important to their church. They help direct our attention to God, instead of our circumstances.

ASSIGNMENT

As you finish your fourth and final week of the Connected family devotional, you are going to have the opportunity to praise the Lord with the Worship Leader of your church on Zoom. You can access the Zoom website on your laptop, desktop, or iPad, but if it is easier, the Zoom app can be downloaded free of charge to your smartphone. This is going to be special for your entire family. Let's get started!

Please note this assignment requires setting up your Zoom call in advance. If you do not already have a Zoom account, you can set one up free of charge. Once you set-up your Zoom account, follow the steps to create your meeting, and then send your worship leader (text or email) the link to log on and time the meeting starts.

Parents, depending on the size of your church, you may need to set this up through the church office. If your worship leader is not available, ask if someone else from the worship team can sit in.

STEP 1 - Log on to your Zoom call a few minutes before your designated time.

STEP 2 - Thank your Worship Leader/Special Guest for taking the time to join you

STEP 3 - Pray for your Worship Leader/Special Guest.

STEP 4 - Have your Worship Leader/Special Guest lead you in two songs of worship. If possible, letting them know the songs in advance is ideal.

STEP 5 - Thank your Worship Leader/Special Guest one last time and end Zoom call.

Congratulations! You have completed your fourth and final week of Connected. We hope you enjoyed spending time with your family in this fun and creative way. The biggest compliment you can give our team is to share this devotional with friends and family. The next coolest thing you can do, is repeat it all over again, and stay connected with God while spending time with the ones you love.



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