



Summer 2010

## Family Devotions

Week 8

August 9—13

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Monday August 9, 2010

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ~ Colossians 3:12

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In the waning days of Babe Ruth's career, relegated to the lowly Boston Braves, he was in no condition to play in the field. However, he drew fans to the park—something the Braves sorely needed.

In one game against Cincinnati, the Babe embarrassed himself, making several errors, letting in quite a few runs for the opposing Reds. As he came off the field after yet another bad inning, a din of boos and catcalls assaulted him from the stands. Head bowed, he was about to enter the dugout, when a little boy jumped onto the field, from near the dugout, and ran up to Ruth, hugging the great home-run hitter's legs. Touched beyond words, the Babe picked up the little boy in his arms and hugged him back.

The catcalls stopped. The booing ceased. The crowd witnessed something more important than a baseball game that day, something they were not used to experiencing in a Major League setting—an expression of genuine human compassion.

Things that we make such big deals over are meaningless, compared to the love that we all need. When will we be so transformed by Christ that we let that realization soothe our petty ranting and complaints?



Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. ~ Ecclesiastes 5:2

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As a child, Albert Einstein rarely took the initiative to speak. At the dinner table one evening, he finally broke his most recent reticence: "The soup is too hot," he complained. His parents, greatly relieved, asked him why he had not spoken in so long. "Because," he replied, "up to now everything has been in order."

There is no doubt: our sometimes too-quick tongues can get us into trouble. We've said things we've regretted. We can feel sorry. We can apologize. We can try to "make up" for words said too hastily. However, sometimes, the words linger in a person's mind, even after forgiveness.

The closer the people are in our lives, the more that hastily uttered untactful things can hurt. Let's learn from Solomon's wisdom: "A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

Wednesday, August 11, 2010

Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you." ~ Mark 5:19

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God loves families: He thought them up. Family was the very first human institution on earth ordained by God—well before government or church. That, in itself, should underscore the importance God puts on families.

He desires that everyone come to repentance and faith in Christ, that not one soul should perish (2 Peter 3:9). Likewise, He wants whole families saved. He wants YOUR family saved. He knows how both difficult and powerful that your witnessing to your family can be, as our text demonstrates.

In words, in deeds, and in character, be a shining Christian example to your family—whether you are mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, child, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, etc.. It may seem that you are getting nowhere and that your efforts are tiny. However, you are the Gospel yeast, and your family is the dough (Matthew 13:33).

Thursday, August 12, 2010

The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family. ~ Acts 16:34

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He who was charged with keeping them in bondage was brought to freedom by them. That freedom was so powerful that the jailer's whole family came to know Jesus. It was a miracle.

It is always a miracle. God knows how families should work. If I want to know about the workings of computers, I will go to Bill Gates. If I want to know how families work, I will go to God. His manual is the Bible.

Paul and Silas moved on. We wonder what happened to the jailer and his family. One thing I know—God began blessing that family in the ways He always wanted to bless them. When we have Christ-centered families, the blessings of Heaven begin flowing in ways that we could never have asked or imagined (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Friday, August 13, 2010

For God does not show favoritism. ~ Romans 2:11

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The 1960s comedy team, the Smothers Brothers, was very popular and had its own prime-time TV show. One of the running gags was that the more childlike Tommy Smothers would fall back on a complaint to his older brother, Dickie, “Mom always liked you best!”

I suppose that a common, usually unfounded complaint among children is that a sibling is showed favoritism. I know that my own mother went the extra mile to try to avoid showing favoritism to either me or my brother. If one of us got a present, the other could be assured to get the same thing—even the same color and design! It became a little joke between my brother and me.

God is the only “Father” Who can say with certainty that He is totally capable of not showing favoritism to any of His children. It could be that we do not “see” this, because of the varying circumstances that God allows into people’s lives. Like the UN-prodigal son, we may think that Father God plays favorites, but He doesn’t. (Read Luke 15:11-32, especially the older son’s response in verses 28-30.)

The point: God will bless your family in ways He has blessed other Christ-loving families. As you seek to faithfully follow Him, ask Him to prove it to you...and give Him time.

I dare you.