



Summer 2010

Family Devotions

Week 9

August 16—20

Written by Chuck Bassett and Gary N. Nichols

Monday August 16, 2010

Find the song “Cats in the Cradle.” Play it at the end of the devotion time.

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ~ 1 Timothy 5:8

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“Provide” does not always mean money.

The year 2000 was hectic for the successful restaurateur ,Drew Nieporent, for he was managing numerous restaurants, including Montrachet and Manhattan's Grill, while consulting on several others, including those owned by Joseph Phelps Vineyards, Nieman Marcus and Interstate Hotels.

One day in 2001, Nieporent finally decided to spend more time with his family. “I knew I was away too much when I walked into the house one evening,” he explained, “and my son said to my wife, ‘Mommy, who’s that strange man?’”

Paul was rather blunt with Timothy, but so was Jesus with his followers. When it comes to important things, we need some straight talk sometimes.

Your family needs time with YOU, just as God’s children need time with Him.

Tuesday, August 17, 2010

God: You will be able to tell wonderful stories to your children and grandchildren about the marvelous things I am doing among the Egyptians to prove that I am the LORD. ~ Exodus 10:2

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. ~ Deuteronomy 4:9

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For two summers, when I was 15 and 16 years old, I stayed with my grandparents in east Alabama, playing baseball. By then, my grandparents were both devoted Christians. I was not...yet. They “invited” me to go to church with them to a little country church, and I often went, mostly out of a desire for something to do on a Sunday. I also remember seeing my grandfather nightly reading his Bible, just before he went to sleep. They told me “stories” of what God had done in their lives.

I came back home after my second summer with them and, for a few weeks, went to church a little more often than usual. That very fall, I received Christ as my Savior. I attribute to my grandparents a great deal of my journey toward Christ.

Faith can be wonderfully generational. Some of the most impressive Christians whom I know have a rich Christian heritage. On the other hand, some of the Christians whom I have also come to admire are those who **STARTED** a heritage of Christianity in their lineage, after having lived with non-Christian parents and grandparents.

Did you hear the wonderful stories of what God had done for your parents and grandparents? Maybe more importantly, do your children or grandchildren hear them from you?

Wednesday, August 18, 2010

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." ~ Hebrews 13:5

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Here are two heritages. Which will you give to your family? Spend your best energy by chasing material gain, even with a rationalization that you want your family to have more than you had in your younger days, and you will pass on a heritage of materialism. Spend your best energy by giving your time and your commitment to your family, realizing that your family is your greatest entrustment in the kingdom of God and trusting that He will take care of your needs when you get that priority straight (Matthew 6:25-33). Give the greatest heritage a parent can give—one that will carry forward into your children's families.

See what gives us confidence of such a commitment: God's commitment to us that He will never leave us or forsake us. Your spouse needs to hear that you will never leave or forsake him/her. Your children need to hear that you will never leave or forsake them. Say it with holy confidence.

In 1994, I (Chuck) went to Russia with Campus Crusade for Christ. We were working with educators, showing them (get this...at the government's request) how to teach morals and ethics by using the Bible in the public-school classrooms. The evening marriage/family seminar was the largest attendance of any meeting we had. When our team members mentioned that they had been married 15 or 20 or 25 years, the audience gasped; for after 70 years of atheist Communist rule in that country, marriage had become a short-term proposition. I believe that the commitment of Christian spouses was the greatest witness to those precious Russian people.

Say it and mean it: "I will never leave you or forsake you."

Thursday, August 19, 2010

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” ~ Jeremiah 29:11

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ~ Romans 8:28

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OK, we all like simple formulas, right? Here you go: Jeremiah 29:11 + Romans 8:28 = Your family’s best.

We’re taught from infancy about responsibility. The “natural” order of things is to come up with our own dreams and present them to God, asking Him to bless them. Sometimes, we may “bump into” God’s will that way; but that is not God’s best way for us.

Meditate on this: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1-2).

It is wiser to first seek God with all your hearts, hear from God over a period of time, then walk in the way He has for you, thus assuring your family of blessing. Note that, in our Romans passage, God is not described as e-mailing you the answer. It takes great commitment, then “testing” and “approving” after that. However, it is worth it, to follow God’s plan for your family and to receive His assured blessings.

Friday, August 20, 2010

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. ~
Proverbs 3:5

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One of the tragedies of modern society is the crumbling of the stability of families. Also, where we ought to be able to trust more in family than in any other group, it is not always true today. However, it does not have to be that way.

Trust is faith.

In the mid-1990s, I was on a mission to Romania in the strength of summer. We were at a local clinic, witnessing to people awaiting to see our team's doctors who offered free medical care. The local pastor and I took a break from the courtyard, standing under a yawning tree. We began talking about faith, and I share with him what I thought was a good example, though he would soon give me a better one. I told him that a child stuck on a rooftop probably would not jump down into just anyone's arms, but he probably would jump into his father's arms.

My pastor friend smiled and suddenly called his young son to climb the tree we were under. I saw what he was up to and tried to deter him. However, when his young son got quite a few feet up the tree, the pastor clapped his hands and motioned for the boy to jump into his arms. I shall never forget the sight: the boy, with the biggest smile on his face, dove HEAD FIRST from the tree, into his father's arms, so certain was he that his father would not let him hit the ground.

So should we trust God. The time will come, eventually, when we will have to jump into His Arms or choose not to jump. Let's set an example of a loving child trusting his Father.