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Every moment is precious

Today as I was blessed to spend time with my wife and son simply enjoying a hay ride and petting zoo I understand that every moment we have with those that we love is precious. Weather sitting around relaxing at the house or going on vacation, weather watching a movie at home or grocery shopping every second we spend with our loved ones is precious and we must treat it as such. Life is but a vapor, here today and gone tomorrow, some time today if God calls you home would you know you've lived your life enjoying the blessings that He has given you? Enjoying the time you've spent with your spouse and your children? Would you look back and see a life well lived walking with the Lord and seeking to make Him more known in your home? Or would you see empty darkness, would you see your family lonely desperately searching for something else to fulfill your role in the family? Every family is one man married to one woman, and children, and we are called to fulfill our duty and obligations or we may find our loved ones filling our spots with things and other people... as you enter in to day 14 of the 30 day challenge I pray you would search desperately for your short comings in your marriage and in your family, look at them honestly and put them in God's hand that He may mold you in to the person He has called you to be!

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (Luke Chapter 12 verse 20 KJV) – as you enter in this day I pray you would know the truth, when God calls you home you can't take anything with you! You can't take the home or the cars your pride yourself in, you can't take your clothes, your TV, or all those things you work so hard to accumulate... the only thing you can take with you is the salvation that we are FREELY given by the Lord Jesus Christ! Ponder the truth, if today is the day, are you ready? Have you lived each day to know Christ more? Have you prayed today? Have you thanked God for the time you have been given? Have you prayed that He would protect your family? Have you taught your children and given all you strength and love providing as God has commanded? Are you still holding a grudge? This day be free from the burdens in your heart, know God is in control, treasure each moment with your family, and seek to know Christ more! God alone knows the plan that He has for us, God alone knows the very second our spirit will know absolutely that He has called us home. It was powerfully put, "there are no atheist in hell"... when you close your eyes in this world for the last time you will know absolutely for sure, God does exist, Jesus Christ is the only way back to Him, and I pray you would have desperately trusted in Him!

Daily Devotional

by: Pastor Richard Webster (abcpastor@bellsouth.net)

The Fire Station

The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. (Nahum 1:7)

One of the first jobs my dad had was as a fireman. One of my favorite memories was hanging out at the fire station with my dad. Many times my mom would have something that she needed to do and would leave me at the fire station with him. If he had to leave because of a fire, one of the families from church lived behind the fire station and I would stay with them. There was one occasion that for some reason I had to go to a fire with him. I remember how exciting it was to ride on the fire truck and how shocked I was to see the fire. The fire was at the local dump and everything was burning out of control. My dad and the other firemen made sure that I was safe inside the fire truck the whole time. I felt so safe that I fell asleep after hours of watching them put out the fire.

Can you imagine the sense of safety and security I must have felt to fall asleep in such a dangerous environment? How could I sleep? I knew that my dad loved me and that he wouldn't let anything happen to me even in the most dangerous situations. A home should be a place of security. We should strive daily to make sure that the people in our home know that our home is a safe haven for them. How do we do that? We must first give our home to the Lord. He is the only one capable of knowing everything that we will face. We must next shower our homes in prayers of protection. Then we create a place of security through love. Is your home a safe haven today? What do you need to do to make it that way?

Food for thought

by: Daniel Higginbotham (dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com)

As we continue to discover the foundation of the family we have observed God's plan for us as husband, as wife, as husband and wife, as parents, and only scratching the surface I pray that you would have a better understanding as you seek to know God more, as you seek to honor Him with your prayers, obedience, love, and faith. As you walk in faith the last thing that we must look at in our foundation is perhaps the greatest: love. Love in our homes is the best example of a Godly home. Love between husband and wife, love between father and children, love between mother and children, our love is the greatest example of what we believe about Christ and His way and truth for our lives. Love is such an important characteristic of a Godly home that it is described this way: **And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (Mark Chapter 12 verse 31 KJV).** Love is not just a word, it is not just a feeling, it is an action, showing love is making sure your actions speak louder than words! Love is more than a kiss, love is more than holding hands, love is every look, every thought, every action, every prayer, we must love in our homes as Christ loved the church!

A brother in Christ once told a story of how some women saw a man buying flowers for his wife at the store and thought "I would love a husband like that" and as the man got home he gave his wife flowers hoping she wouldn't go to the cops about last night when he beat her... looks can be deceiving from the outside but God knows our heart, our family knows our heart, we may say all the right things, do the right things, and pretend perfectly in public and at church pretending to be the perfect family but we serve a God who knows not only what we do in the open, but also in secret. **But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. (Matthew Chapter 6 verse 6 KJV).** Knowing that God sees and knows all things why in the world would you ever waste the effort trying to fake it? True love is a dad stepping in front of a bullet for his children, true love is a husband pushing his wife out of the way of a speeding car, true love is the God of the universe dying on a cross not calling down legions of angels to destroy the world. What love God must feel for us to die for us!? As Christ Himself wonderfully told us: **Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John Chapter 15 verse 13 KJV).**

As you enter in to day 14 of the 30 day challenge I am curious, are you loving your family like you are commanded? When is the last time your spouse desperately wanted something you couldn't give them and you hurt in that? When is the last time that you would give anything to give them what they desired? When is the last time you put their needs above yours? Is this not what we are called to do? **For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. (Ephesians Chapter 5 verse 23 KJV)** – How did Christ love the church? He loved the church so much, He so desperately cared for the body that He put our peace and eternal life above His own. Did Jesus Christ have to die on the cross? No. Jesus Christ the living God, the Almighty, the Holy Lamb, the King of Kings could have called down His angels to save Him from the hands that killed Him... but He didn't, why? **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting**

life. (John Chapter 3 verse 16 KJV) – love... He loved us as His sons and daughters and knew that if He didn't lay down His life that there would be no other way for us to come to Him! What can you learn as a parent, as a spouse from that? Sacrifice everything for those you love...

As you have completed this week you have read about the relationship between husband and wife, between parents and children, we have covered so much... if from this program you don't take a single thing except this I pray you would pay attention: love conquers fear and hate. Through our love in Christ knowing the pain and price He paid for us, knowing His command for us to forgive all transgressions of those who have hurt us, knowing that we must love like Jesus. Jesus Christ is love, we must first seek to love the Lord our god with all our heart, soul, and strength for this is the greatest commandment, then we must pour out this same love abundantly upon our families! How is the love in your home? Isn't it time to make a change? What could get better? How could you more fully fulfill your role? How could you be a better servant of Christ? How can you be a better light for Christ? How can you grow and allow Jesus to heal your family? As you enter in to day 14 I pray you would ponder these questions and search the scripture and the Almighty God in prayer for these answers! Pour out your love even through the pain and hardship that the Holy Spirit may move in your family always! Amen.

Meet the family

We will soon be hearing from the second family in the “meet the family” section and I pray that you would ponder in your heart God's vision for your own family. Think to yourself today, what has God done in my life? What has He done in the lives of my family? Praise Him and thank Him for every blessing and every second that He has always been by your side! Amen.

Prayer Suggestions

Today before you pray I would like you to understand the beautiful promise the Lord gives us about our prayer: **Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (Matthew Chapter 7 verse 7-8 KJV)** – today God is giving you the opportunity to demonstrate His power and grace... while you take it? Bow your head, humble yourself before Him, open your heart and your mouth in prayer!

Today pray for:

- **God to touch your heart and show you how to truly love your family as He has called you to do**
- **God to touch your heart and heal the pain that you've experienced allowing you to forgive those who have hurt you**
- **God to touch your spouse and allow the trust and love to grow stronger and fuller**
- **God to touch your children and protect them in this dark and cruel world**
- **God to touch your family and give you strength to allow Him to move in your home always keeping Him first**

About

The My Emanuel 30 day challenge came about through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and we pray that God would be glorified and praised as a direct result of this program. It is the deepest desire of all those involved with this program that the healing grace of Jesus Christ would be abundantly felt throughout the families with a member participating in the challenge. The program is a direct result of the power of the Lord and a demonstration of His wisdom and foresight in bringing both the paths of Pastor Richard Webster, myself, and all those who have helped with the program together in a way to use us and our individual talents to profess the wonderful Good News of His salvation and wonderful grace, mercy, and abundant love.

Throughout our lives we have seen and directly felt the chaos and tragedy caused in the destruction of divorce. In interacting with brothers and sisters from all walks of life we have seen again and again the damage caused by the wedge the enemy drives in between a man and wife. It has been our greatest displeasure to see the tragedy, pain, suffering, and grief caused by the life altering decision in which so many couples make out of anger only to realize later that not only was it not what they wanted but so far from what they needed they couldn't even remember what they were separating for. It is our desire for all couples to understand the truth, God desires marriage to be a life long commitment and made us for this exact purpose: **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis Chapter 2 verse 24 KJV)** – to become one flesh as we will examine later on through the program is a physical alteration that to reverse would be a mutilation and a physical destruction of ones own flesh and is the furthest thing from God's desire for any family. It is our dearest hope that God will reveal His glory and that Jesus Christ will pour out His grace upon all those who participate in this program regardless of the purpose. The truth is that Jesus Christ is not “a hope” He is the ONLY HOPE and the only way for families to make it through the stress and destruction of today's society is through keeping Him always at the center.

Pastor Richard Webster is the Pastor of Adairsville Baptist Church in Adairsville, Georgia. Brother Richard has been a powerful influence in my own walk with the Lord and I pray that as God has used this brother for His glory and has shared much wisdom to me through him that you would pay special attention to the message God has blessed this brother to share. Pastor Webster is both a husband, a father, a brother, a son, a friend, and a pastor who is determined to serve the Lord and bring glory and honor to our Savior. I pray that you would understand that this brother has seen first hand the destruction of divorce, the pain and suffering that comes at the hands of the evil of the enemy as satan tries to relentlessly destroy families. Know that the daily devotionals are the ultimate inspiration of Jesus Christ and may the Lord be seen through every word.

It feels strange even now trying to write about myself, my name is Daniel Higginbotham and simply put I am a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is my desire and hope that the Lord God Jehovah would make His presence known and that you would feel the Holy Spirit interacting and interceding in your life. I thank God for this opportunity and I will pray for you and your family over this next 30 days that God would reveal the beautiful truth to you as He has me: **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John Chapter 8 verse 36 KJV).**