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This is how we learn

As parents it is hard to watch as our children have to learn some important but painful lessons in life, think back to when you were growing up, was there a lesson your parents tried over and over to teach you but you just didn't get it? Reading this even now you know exactly what I'm talking about, when did you finally get it? When you learned first hand through pain and suffering the importance of why or why not! In this life we find ourselves daily learning through every situation, we learn our choices have consequences, what consequences they may have, and we gain in wisdom and understanding as we face all of life's trials and tribulations. We find a great example of this learning process in God's word: **We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. (2 Corinthians Chapter 4 verse 8-10 KJV)** – as born again, saved, redeemed children of God through the blood of Jesus Christ each day as we awake in a world that does not know Him, we do. We learn His ways and become more like Him through every situation as we learn from His word, as He teaches us through prayer, as the Holy Spirit reveals to us the truth. Remember as you enter into day 16 of the 30 day challenge: **there is no TESTimony without the TEST!!**

We are blessed beyond our understand that we serve a God who does not send us through any trial or test without the promised comforter: **Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (John Chapter 16 verse 7 KJV)** – who is the “comforter”? The comforter is the promised Holy Spirit of God who dwells with-in every believer! It gives me comfort to know that as I face the challenge of this life that God faces it with me! Jesus Christ sent to us the promised comforter who dwells with-in the soul of each and every believer! What can we expect from this “comforter”? Comfort. Peace. Strength. Wisdom. Love. Kindness. All of the fruits of the spirit: **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Galatians Chapter 5 verse 22-23 KJV)** – today as you enter into the 16th day of this challenge I pray you would trust in the Holy Spirit. Seek Him out, seek to understand Him, seek to work with Him, seek to bring out His fruits daily in your life! Who in their right mind would not want the promised gifts active and evident everyday?? Amen.

Daily Devotional

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

Transplanting Grass

But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. (Hebrews 3:13)

We moved into the home that I grew up in the 2nd grade. One of the problems that we had with our home was that there was no grass in the front yard. After living there for a couple of years, I decided that I would take on the task of transplanting grass from the back yard to the front yard. I would cut out small sections of grass from the back yard and place it in the front yard. It was hard work and a very slow process. There were many times that I thought about quitting because it was such a slow process, but every time that I thought about quitting, my mom would compliment me on how good the yard was looking. Instead of quitting, I would go and get more grass and keep trying. Because of her encouragement, several years later we had a front and back yard that was full of grass.

Many times in our lives we will experience frustrating and difficult situations. It is during these times that we need someone to encourage us to keep trying. Maybe your frustrating situation today is your marriage. Let me encourage you to keep trying. Sometimes fixing our marriage is like growing grass. We might not see overnight results, but in time our marriages can become full and prosperous. Since a home should be a place of encouragement, maybe we need to become the encourager at our home. I want you to stop today and think about who needs encouragement in your home today. Remember that one of the benefits of having a daily walk with God is that He encourages your heart when no one else will.

Food for thought

by: Daniel Higginbotham (dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com)

We have talked about the “roles and responsibility” of the family over the past 6 days and today is the 7th, I pray as we close out this weeks component that you would understand we have by no means covered all the important areas of the family. The purpose of this program is not to cover every wonderful aspect of God's plan for us as a family but to get you acquainted with the fact: His word is sufficient in all things! I pray as we move forward after today that you would continue to seek Him out, seek out His plan for you and your family, keep Him above everything in your home for this is what we are called to do! It is only when we place Christ above all things and trust in Him in all things that we begin to understand the victory that we can experience in our Lord and savior!

As we close out the roles and responsibility of the family I want to talk about a role that we all share in the home: developing and trusting in the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The what?? The fruits of the Holy Spirit! **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Galatians Chapter 5 verse 22-23 KJV)** – what a beautiful piece of scripture, how wonderful could your marriage and your home be if we would simply trust in the Holy Spirit to lead us everyday? Love? Joy? Peace?? Longsuffering? Gentleness? Goodness?? Faith?? Meekness?? Temperance?? My goodness! All those things are wonderful! Could you imagine living in a home where all the fruits of the spirit are cultivated, developed, and trusted in? As born again children of God the Holy Spirit dwells with-in us and we ALL have the ability to allow the Spirit to move mightily in our home! I cannot begin to understand how people would rather trust in these: **Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians Chapter 5 verse 19-21 KJV)** – as you enter in to day 16 of the 30 day challenge I would have you ponder this question: are the fruits of the Holy Spirit or the wicked fruits of the flesh more observable in your home?

More than not in the 21st century most homes are filled with the wicked fruits of the flesh and because of this 50% of marriages end in divorce, children are addicted to drugs and alcohol before they ever graduate high school, suicide rates plague our children, 10 year old pregnant little girls, rampant sin and evil like the world has never seen... why? How? How in the world has this become the reality in which we currently find ourselves? We as mankind have embraced the evil fruits of the flesh instead of the beautiful fruits of the Holy Spirit. Today I want you to look at your home, is God above all things? Are you sure? Have you given God the right to tell you to rid your home of something that is not Christ honoring? Are you still watching those soft core pornography shows that come on cable TV? Are you still listening to the garbage music that defiles your ears? Are you still pretending like you can do anything you want because the grace of Christ has forgiven you? Its time for a hard look into your family, into your own life, into all your relationships and everything you do. If you don't know what to do or if something is a stumbling block in your home it may be time to pray, study, ask God to reveal it to you!

As we understand it is our responsibility to teach and guide our children it is critical that we understand you don't teach by commands, you don't teach by explaining why, you teach by showing why! Our greatest example of how one should teach is by looking at the life of Jesus Christ, our master, the King of Kings who came down from His throne in heaven, what did He do? **So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. (John Chapter 13 verse 12-15 KJV) –** He lead by example! Do you tell your children not to smoke? You probably shouldn't be smoking... Do you tell your children not to drink? You probably shouldn't be drinking! You must understand that the greatest absence of the fruit of the spirit is not because the Holy Spirit has failed, WE HAVE FAILED.

Today as you enter in to day 16 I pray that you would take a tough look at your life, take a look at everything in it, as it is your role and responsibility to lead by example, are you? Are you trusting in the Lord to lead and guide you? Are you putting God in His proper place? Are you showing your family the love that Christ has shown you? Today as you enter this day examine your life, examine your walk with Christ, examine the fruits of the Spirit that are active, examine the evil fruits of the flesh and work to get rid of them! Work hard to make the fruit of the Spirit evident in your life, allow the Spirit to lead you and trust that His way is truly better than yours! May God give you strength to allow Him to continue the transformation in your life! 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 reveal and teach you the fruits of the Spirit, that He would give you strength to let the Holy Spirit lead you
- God to reveal to you any stumbling block in your home and that He would give you the strength to remove it
- God to reveal to you any evil fruits of the flesh and allow you to remove them from your life
- God to reveal to you the power of His Spirit that dwells with-in you
- God would continue a healing in your life, allowing you to fully forgive those who have hurt you, drawing close to those He has put in your life

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).**