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### It's all the little things

What makes a Christian a Christian? What makes a good spouse a good spouse? What makes us irreplaceable at work or at anything we do? All the little things! In our relationships it is important that we not only concentrate on the big events and the big mountains but also every second of everyday. As a Christian it is sometimes easy to allow the enemy in to fooling us that the small things don't matter: "its only a white lie" the voice tells us, or "its not a big deal, at least you didn't do that" and at the end of the day its hard to remember, a sin is a sin! We must work to win as many battles as possible for at the end of the day those small battles add up to eternal victory in this war. As brother Richard reminded us in yesterday's devotional the "junk" can pile up over time and its important that we fight to clean up the mistakes in the past, repent of the sinful nature in our past, and work to keep our lives, our relationships, and everything as focused on God as humanly possible. As we work each day to strengthen our bounds, our relationships, and our walk with the Lord it will become more of a good habit and it will be easier to see where we are making mistakes, allow the Lord to correct us, and walk faithfully in His guidance and love.

As we all know "actions speak louder than words" and we must cautiously remember the words of our Christ daily: **But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew Chapter 10 verse 33 KJV)** – denying Christ is a awful thing for anyone to do but we must understand that denying Christ is not by words alone. "I believe in God", someone once told me "there are no atheist in hell" believing in God, believing in Christ is not enough for even the demons and satan believe in God, even the servants of the devil know that Christ is the only begotten Son, to truly be saved we must confess Christ with our mouths and with our hearts. **O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matthew Chapter 12 verse 34 KJV)** – you must understand that the things you say with your mouth represent the things you treasure in your heart. If you ever spend quite some time with someone who is faking something you can generally tell by the words out of their mouths. As we enter day 25 of the 30 day challenge I wonder... are you faking it? I know that in my own life I fall short, so very short of God's glory that I pray for forgiveness and mercy often. Today its time to examine our lives, are we living for Christ? Or is the Lord grieving over the condition of our walk? What do we need to do to make it right? Its the small things... pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you, for Christ to forgive you! Amen.

## Daily Devotional

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

### The Invitation

***And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him;... (Luke 24:30,31)***

Growing up in south Mississippi, we used terminology that might not be understood around the rest of the world. For instance, if I was going to describe one of my favorite uncles, I would tell you that he was “country.” What does being “country” mean? It meant that you were going to be polite in his house, that faith, family, and friendship were the qualities that defined his life, and you always had a standing invitation to come over for a visit. Another Mississippi term my uncle used was “make yourself at home”. When you walked in his house, you were supposed to act as if you were in your own house. I remember a young man that started coming to my uncle’s house to take guitar lessons. Every time he was there my uncle would ask him if he wanted something to eat. He would always say that he wasn’t hungry or he had just eaten. One day he arrived early in the morning and stayed until it was time for lunch. He had already refused to eat breakfast but when he refused to eat lunch, my uncle asked him to leave his house. My uncle said to him, “If you can’t make yourself at home in my house, I don’t want you to come”. The man got up, went to the table, and ate lunch with them. He never visited my uncle’s house again without “making himself at home.”

If our homes are going to be successful, we need Christ to “make Himself at home” in our homes. We need to give Christ a standing invitation to be in our homes. We need to make Him feel welcome in our homes. How do we do that? We must create an environment where Christ is welcome. We can’t have anything in our homes that we wouldn’t want Christ to be at. Is your home a place that Christ is welcome? What do you need to do today to make sure He is welcome?

## Food for thought

by: Daniel Higginbotham ([dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com](mailto:dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com))

There is a time in every Christian's life when they take a few wrong turns and before you know it you find yourself lost, hurting, and in desperate need of refreshing, sober change in your life. Today as I write this message I find myself here, I have failed to live the life that God has lead me to teach others about and I want you to know that when we find our self here we must make one of two choices: repent and war to make the God honoring changes or continue down the path to condemnation and judgment... as a believer we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and in my life I have seen again and again that I am rebuked and corrected by my Lord and I praise my Abba, my Father in heaven for taking the time to correct a sinful man like myself. Has God been speaking to your heart? Over the past 25 days we have taken a hard look at so many things... is God talking to your heart? Do you feel the correction hand of God in your life? Rejoice! **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. (Revelation Chapter 3 verse 19 KJV)**. Zealous means to have zeal, zeal means great energy or enthusiasm in pursuit of a cause or an objective, my objective? To fully repent and welcome Christ in to my home in a way that nothing can keep Him away! As we enter day 25, what is your objective? Do you have "zeal" for the Lord? Why not?

Repentance is something that you don't see preached about like you did when I was growing up. Repentance is a HUGE area of importance in our life and we must do all that we can possibly do to ensure we have asked for forgiveness for our sins. Let me be clear with you, we all sin against God, we all need to repent and ask for the Lord's forgiveness. To refuse to repent is to deny your fallen condition, to deny your fallen condition is to deny the grace and mercy of Christ, to deny the grace and mercy of Christ is to deny Christ, to deny Christ is to deny the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE and results in eternal condemnation and separation from God. **If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. (2 Chronicles Chapter 7 verse 14 KJV)** – are you called by "His name"? If you are a born again child of God through the blood of Jesus Christ you are most surely called by His name and it is time to accept the rebuke of God and to fully turn to Him begging of Him for strength to live our lives in a Christ honoring way, daily.

Notice the last line of that scripture: **now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place** – does it feel like God is not active in your life? Does God have a place in your heart? A place in your home? As brother Richard reminds us we must allow the Holy Spirit to "feel at home" by repenting of any sin and totally walking away from the vices and sinful things in our life that push the Holy Spirit away from us and our home. **And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Ephesians Chapter 4 verse 30 KJV)** – if you grieve the Holy Spirit you may find yourself in a very spiritually painful position in which you feel lost and hurting. When this happens you must understand what drives the Holy Spirit away: open, willful sin. Are you hurting and wondering why you feel so down and out of it? Are you praying and praying and praying but just don't feel God's presence? It is possible that if you have willfully sinned against God and not accepted His rebuke that the Holy Spirit may no longer be present in

your home... how can you allow a healing to take place? Admit and confess your sin, repent of your sin, accept the rebuke of the Lord, turn from your sinful nature, eliminate anything that is not Christ honoring or edifying, give Christ the place He deserves in your home! As we have discovered over the past few days it is critical to keep Christ at the center and above all things, once we've understood and accepted that it is time to walk the walk.

What is the Holy Spirit pressing you to change in your walk and eliminate in your home today? Garbage in... garbage out... **O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matthew Chapter 12 verse 34 KJV)** – what are you exposing yourself or your family to today that you need to get rid of? Movies, TV, music, books, games, so many things out there that simply and totally fully disregard God's word and glorify sin and sinful situations... its time to start cleaning house! Its time to truly put Christ at the center as the leader of your home! What do you need to do today to put Christ at the center?

## Meet the family

Over the next 7 days we will be looking at God's wonderful grace and mercy as He has demonstrated in my life and my marriage and I pray that as God has blessed me to share with you the powerful works He has done in my life you would understand the only reason I am here now proclaiming the truth with you is because of His love and mercy. God's grace has saved me from countless darkness and evil and I pray you would know and accept the truth as God has demonstrated in my life: **Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians Chapter 5 verse 17 KJV).**

In September of 2011 as I have laid out I became born again by the grace and mercy of God. That faithful September night had been much more painful and harsh than any I could remember. The weight of a pending divorce, the anger of my lack of self control, the pain that I had caused my wife and son, the lostness of my life came crashing down. The new home, the new cars, the clothes, the vices, the addictions... nothing could fill the void in my heart. As I lay crying after realizing that I had no self control and that I was so fully lost I heard a voice and a question that I will never forget: **"is my grace not enough"?** The Lord Jesus Christ was with me that night, the Lord walks faithfully by our side even if we do not know it or won't admit it. I heard His question and immediately that night as I burst in to tears and as the walls around my sin came crumbling down I knew the answer... YES LORD! I still get emotional about it now because God could have lead me to a church to give my life to Christ, God could have used a preacher, my mother, someone else and instead... He Himself through the pain and suffering called out to me and crushed the doubt and pain in my life.

Since September of 2011 I have fought a war and realized more and more everyday the harder I fight the harder the enemy fights to destroy me. Quickly after being saved I felt a joy that I could not fully understand or explain and I did what I do when I get happy... I sang! I would walk around the house singing, whistling, being happy and after a few weeks of walking with the Lord my wife could sense a change in me that I know now she was fighting. My wife would go on to tell me "I don't know who you are anymore, your not the man I married" and indeed she was right! I was so far changed that my wife didn't know what in the world had truly happened. I tried to explain it but being that person who had said something like this many times before "I'm going to start living right" my wife didn't know that Christ was going to ensure I was! After fighting for weeks my wife was ready to leave me because I refused to stop being the changed person Christ made me...

For the spouses reading this now thinking "how in the world could she do that?" The truth is that the pain had not begun to heal, the truth is that it took many months and continues to this day to undo the damage done over many years of walking without the Lord. I am now beyond blessed with my wife and son attending church with me and my wife now even teaches Sunday school! What a wonderful blessing and looking back I wish I could have found Christ much sooner in my life but I know that 25 years of pain and suffering are the catalyst that Christ wanted me to use to share my testimony and demonstrate to those who are going through what I went through there is hope. The scripture teaches us: **For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. (1 Corinthians Chapter 7 verse 14 KJV)** – are you fighting to live your life for Christ? Is your spouse making

the fight harder? Rejoice in knowing that God can and will use you to reach those you love. Don't give up! Don't ever stop fighting! I was blessed to see my wife give her life to Christ and with no doubt I know that when my son is old enough He will willingly give his soul to the Lord. Already I find my 4 year old son telling his friends at school about God and already fighting the good fight as at 4 years old children are telling him God is not real...

Never give up hope! Pray, study, walk in faith, trust the Lord, live for Him and never stop living your life for the Lord you will one day bow before as He eternally redeems you before the throne of judgment! 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 forgive you for your sin and for any sinful situation in your life
- God to reveal to you how to change your life to live a more Christ centered, Christ honored life
- God to give you strength to continue fighting the good fight
- God to show you how to be an example to those you love that He may sanctify and reach themselves
- God to bless your family, your spouse, and your children with the wonderful truth you already know

## 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).**