UPC Family Devotional

February – Week 2

Memory Verse of the Week

“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you.”

-Luke 11:9

Feb. 6 Sunday Luke 10:17-24

The seventy-two disciples return from their outreach, overjoyed for what we were able to accomplish in Jesus’ name. But the Lord turns their attention to something greater. Jesus urges them to rejoice that they are heaven-bound. It is our natural tendency to get caught up in the immediate. And although the current glories that God allows us to witness warrant our attention, we as God’s children are to long for greater glory: to be fully united with our Lord and to enjoy Him forever. And what a worthy cause for rejoicing this is! The Christian’s gladness goes from best to better still. We walk this life satisfied and sustained by the grace we have in Jesus’ name, and when this life is over, we get to behold Christ forever: the fullness of joy and the true treasure of our hearts.

Share about something amazing God did that made you extremely happy.

Also, Take some time to think about our name being written in heaven. How do you feel about this truth? Why?

**Younger Group**

The seventy-two disciples came back triumphant, because the demons submit to them in Jesus’ name. Jesus gives them authority to overcome all the power of the enemies. He rejoices in the Holy Spirit and praises God who reveals these things to little children. He then speaks privately to his disciples, saying, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you’re seeing.”

We can enjoy many blessings by sharing the gospel. Therefore, it is necessary for us to experience the Lord, His power and the joy of pleasing Him through witnessing Him to others.

Dear Jesus, thank you that our names are written in heaven because you have saved us. Send us to tell others about you that they, too, may find joy in your salvation. In your name, amen.

Feb. 7 Monday Luke 10:25-42

Many of us can empathize with Martha and the thoughts and heart motives behind her busyness. Deep down she may have a hidden desire to be noticed and have things perfectly prepared for her Lord’s visit. But Jesus gives Martha a gentle reminder that we all need to receive: what we really need is not recognition or the approval of others but rather, we need to recognize who Jesus is. Jesus reminds us that only thing is needed: to be with Him, the One who knows us, loves us, and who alone can give us the worth and meaning we long for.

In which sphere of life do you often feel the need to promote yourself before others? How does the quest for self-esteem prevent us from seeing the importance of Christ?

**YG**

An authority on the law wants to test Jesus, so he asks Jesus how he can inherit eternal life. Jesus answers that he must love God and his neighbor and defines ‘neighbor’ through the parable fo the Good Samaritan. Afterwards, Jesus visits Martha’s house. Martha is distracted by many tasks, while her sister Mary hands on to every word Jesus says.

The greatest commandment is to love God and our neighbors. Therefore, we must give a helping hand to someone in need and put God’s word first.

Father, I am so grateful for Your amazing love for me. Following Your example I will sincerely love You and my neighbors with the help of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Feb. 8 Tuesday Luke 11:1-13

After Jesus teaches His disciples how to pray, He tells them a parable concerning a friend who gets what he asks for because of his unwavering persistence. Earthly parents, with their sins and limitations, still know how to give good gifts to their children. How much more will our all-wise, all-knowing heavenly Father give us what we need! Ultimately, we should ask for the Holy Spirit, whom God will surely give us. And though many times we approach our Father with smaller request that we fear might sound foolish, we can pray with confidence that He wants what is best for us.

What requests have you been hesitant to bring to God? How do you deal with prayers that seem to go unanswered?

**YG**

When Jesus finishes praying, one of his disciples wants to learn how to pray. He tells them that they must pray to the Father and seek His kingdom. He also teaches the that everyone who asks will receive, like a man in the parable who continuously asks for three loaves of bread. Then, the heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.

When we pray, our heavenly Father hears more than we say, and He answers with more blessings than we ask for. Therefore, we must pray earnestly and persistently with faith.

Jesus, my Lord, thank you for teaching me how to pray. Sometimes it is hard for me to keep praying, but I will stay awake and pray under any circumstances. In your name, amen.

Feb. 9 Wednesday Luke 11:14-28

Jesus gives a harrowing description of how an impure spirit will come back with seven others and inflict even worse damage upon a person who has received God’s healing yet did not submit to him. This tale emphasizes the urgency of responding correctly when prompted by the Lord. The long-term consequences of resisting the Lord may be irreparable. Therefore, Jesus clearly states that those who are not with Him – those who are unwilling to obey – are in fact working against him. What matters most is not our spiritual pedigree or experiences but whether we are ready to hear God’s word and immediately say yes.

When have you experienced the painful consequences of half-hearted submission? How has God restored you from this?

**YG**

Jesus delivers a man from a demon that keeps him speechless. The demon is gone, the man starts talking, and the crowds are amazed. However, some of them say that Jesus is driving out demons by Beelzebul. Jesus tells them the condition of a person who is not with him. That person ends up worse than before, but those who guard God’s words are blessed.

Even though the kingdom of God has come through Jesus, some people reject the truth. Therefore, we need to remember that we are blessed by hearing and keeping God’s word.

Father God, I want to be blessed by obeying Your word. May the Holy Spirit fill me so that I can faithfully stick to the word all the time.

Feb. 10 Thursday Luke 11:29-36

When we gaze at the Lord and walk in the direction of His light, we will indeed shine brightly for all the world to see. But this requires vigilance on our part as well. We must “see to it” that we are living in the light by being accountable to one another. By surrounding ourselves with others who are passionate about holiness, we can guard ourselves against any darkness encroaching upon our hearts.

What things of the world threaten the light God has given you? What steps are you taking to be more accountable to others?

**YG**

Jesus tells the crowds that this generation is an evil generation, so it demands a sign. However, he says that no sign will be given to them except the sign of Jonah, and Jesus himself will be a sign to this generation. He continuously says that their eye is the lamp of the body, so they must not let their light turn into darkness.

A sign of God’s kingdom was given through Jesus, but people kept asking for it. However, we must progress into God’s kingdom with the light of the gospel.

Dear God, it is Your good plan that You show the kingdom of God through Jesus. Rather than asking for a sign, I first want to experience Your presence in me. In your son’s name, amen.

Feb. 11 Friday Luke 11:37-54

Jesus presents a sad irony: the teachers of the law, those most responsible for faithfully expounding God’s word, are actually making the truth of Scripture inaccessible to those who hear them. They do so by overloading their followers with burdens and seeking to catch people in their sins. It is all too easy to choose legalism over love, falsely believing that following rules is more important than walking humbly with God and serving our fellow brothers and sisters. When we do so, we miss the essence of the gospel, just as the teachers of the law did. While we ought to value God’s law as a guide for righteous living, we must avoid using it as a weapon to condemn others.

What aspect of God’s law have you seen used to condemn others? To whom is God calling you to demonstrate gospel-centered love?

**YG**

Jesus goes to eat with the Pharisees. They noticed that Jesus did not wash his hands before eating. They were shocked that Jesus did not follow their traditions. Jesus teaches them that their hearts, not their hands, needed to be washed. The Pharisees loved their rules and traditions more than they loved God and people.

Jesus came to wash our hearts clean. And now we can love God and love people just as God commands. Let us be gracious and kind to the people in our lives.

Dear Father, we thank you for giving us a new heart that loves You and obeys Your word. Please help us to love our friends, family and neighbors. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Feb. 12 Saturday Luke 12:1-12

Jesus warns that blaspheming the Holy Spirit is an unforgivable sin. These words strike terror into many Christian hearts, who fear that they may have committed this sin at some point. While it is right to tremble at such a final and eternal condemnation, we must understand that blaspheming against the Holy Spirit ultimately means rejecting Christ to the uttermost. Should a person ever come to that, there is simply nothing which can be done to wash that sin away, for that person has turned their back on the only means of salvation. For believers, however, our salvation is in God’s hands. When we receive God’s free gift of grace, He cleanses and clothes us with the perfect righteousness of Christ and removes our condemnation forever.

On what do you base your eternal security? How do you respond when doubts regarding your salvation assail you?

**YG**

Many people come out to listen to Jesus teach but he first gives his disciples a special lesson. He tells them to not be afraid of people like the Pharisees. But instead, fear God who is our Creator. He cares for us, and He knows everything about us. Jesus teaches his disciples that if we acknowledge him in front of people, he will acknowledge us in heaven.

When we say that we believe in Jesus, God receives us as His children. Let us tell our friends that we believe in Jesus and share the gospel with them.

Dear God, I pray for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I pray that they would hear about Your love for them and believe in You. Please give me courage to acknowledge You before them and the wisdom to share the gospel. We put our faith and trust in Jesus. Thank you for making us Your children. In Jesus’ name, Amen.