UPC Family Devotional

February – Week 3

Memory Verse of the Week

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

-Luke 12:34

Feb. 13 Sunday Luke 12:13-21

As Christians, we are called to use the provisions we receive from God to make Him known and help supply the needs of others, as a testimony to His character. Even when we do not have much, God personally receive our small sacrifices as a fragrant offering. No matter your circumstances, God calls you to hold on to your earthly possessions with a loose hand so that you can store up eternal riches in heaven.

How does the temptation to be greedy manifest itself in your life and how do you fight it? How can we know what is valuable to God? How can you help one another grow richer in the sight of God?

Younger Group:

The rich man in Jesus’ story works hard to get a lot of crops. The rich man is greedy and stores all his crops for himself. Because he has a lot, he thinks he can just eat, drink, and have a good time now. But Jesus says this way is foolish. Being greedy leads to a foolish life.

God has blessed us with many good things. He does not want us to be greedy with those things, but to share them with others. Let us be generous with our blessings.

Dear Jesus, please forgive us for the times we considered other things more valuable or more important than you. Teach us to value and diligently seek what is truly important in your eyes. In your name, amen.

Feb. 14 Monday Luke 12:22-34

Have you ever caught yourself worrying about something you have no control over? In this passage, Jesus exhorts believers not to worry over the issues of life such as food, drink, or clothes. Although we may not live in parts of the world where basic survival is under constant threat, there are many other things that can easily get us worried. But there are at least two reasons why believers should not worry about life. For one, we cannot change anything by worrying. And secondly, our Creator and heavenly Father values human life far above that of other creatures, which He also faithfully cares for. He knows what we need and will provide in His way and time.

What do you tend to worry about most? How does God’s sovereign care over creation ease those anxieties?

YG

Jesus teaches that we should not worry about what we will eat and what we will wear. God, our loving Father, will provide us with everything we need. God wants us to think about His kingdom first. When we desire God and His kingdom, we are storing up eternal riches in heaven.

God gives us many blessings so that we can bless others for His kingdom. Think about a friend that you can bless and let us be generous to them.

Dear Father, thank you for providing us with everything we need. Give us generous hearts to help those around us. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Feb. 15 Tuesday Luke 12:35-48

Jesus tells his disciples that they are stewards or managers, who should faithfully execute their kingdom duties. In the end, those who are faithful will be rewarded while those who are found unfaithful will be punished. All of us have been entrusted with the Master’s business, to which we must be fully committed through hard work and perseverance. It is important to know that everything we have, including our very lives, belongs to God and that we will one day give an account for how we have lived here on earth.

How has the Lord called you to serve Him? How are you using your time and talents for the sake of the gospel?

YG

Jesus teaches that we should live our lives waiting for his return. He wants us to be prepared for his second coming. This means that we should seek his kingdom each day of our lives. We should use the things he blesses us with to advance his kingdom. And it also means to glorify God in all that we are called to do.

We do not know when Jesus will return, but until that day, let us be prepared by living for his kingdom. Let us glorify God everywhere we go by following his word.

Dear Lord, we eagerly await Your return. Help us to be awake and prepared every day. Show us how to glorify You in our lives. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Feb. 16 Wednesday Luke 12:49-59

Jesus rebukes his followers for knowing how to accurately predict the seasons yet failing to read the signs of the times. One of the most tragic things that can befall a believer is to be so preoccupied with worldly matters that they end up neglecting the work of the gospel. The kingdom of God is already here but, at the same time, it is still unfolding and will be completed when Christ returns. As creation and history move toward their final purpose intended by God, let us strive to announce the coming of His kingdom in every way we can.

What implication does Christ’s imminent return have for the way we plan our lives? How can you invest in the kingdom of God as you await Christ’s return?

YG

Jesus did not come to break up families. But Jesus did come to divide his people from the world. Sometimes following Jesus will mean that we must take his side and not the side of unbelievers. Following Jesus also means that we do our best to resolve arguments with other believers.

If there is someone that you have done wrong to, let us go to them and ask for forgiveness. God wants us to live in peace with others.

Dear Lord, thank you for bringing me into Your family. Help me to follow You no matter the cost. I love you and I worship you. In Your son’s name, amen.

Feb. 17 Thursday Luke 13:1-9

Jesus tells a parable to warn his followers about impending judgment if they do not repent and produce the fruit of godliness. He compares the unrepentant to a tree that has been around for three years but has yet to bear any fruit. God, in His patience, is willing to wait until the last possible moment before finally pronouncing destruction upon the rebellious and unbelieving. Those of us who profess to know Christ must not pay lip-service but continually show tangible signs of his righteousness at work in us through our thoughts, words, and deeds. God has already provided all the resources we need to live a fruitful Christian life, and He has given us the Holy Spirit who enables us to live according to His will.

How doe God’s patience motivate you to live a godly life? In what areas of your life do you need to grow in faithfulness and fruitfulness?

YG

Jesus talks about the tragedies of the people who died by Pilate and the people who died in Siloam. He reminds the people to repent and turn to God while they still can. Jesus also teaches that he patiently waits for people to bear fruit. But one day he will come again and check on the fruit that we produced.

Let us repent of our sins to God. And let us bear fruit by loving and serving our friends and family.

Heavenly Father, please forgive us for sinning against one another. Help us to follow Your word and bear fruit for your kingdom. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Feb. 18 Friday Luke 13:10-21

Jesus’ miraculous act of healing on a Sabbath day is met with stern opposition. From the perspective of the synagogue leader, Jesus is breaking the law and potentially distracting others from engaging in proper worship. However, Jesus rebukes him for failing to understand what true worship is: celebrating God’s victory over evil and standing in awe of His glorious works. In light of this, the only right response to the healing is to be filled with delight at Jesus’ compassion and power, as many of the people naturally were. We ought to be careful that our desire for orderly outward behavior does not end up stifling the work of the Spirit when God moves in our midst.

When have you seen God more powerfully in your community? What can you do to support rather than stifle the power of God in such instance?

When God is at work the possibilities are endless, and there is nothing anyone can do to stop His kingdom’s advance. Rather than sit on the sidelines and critique what is happening, we should be eager to join in and receive all that God is pouring out upon His people. Eventually the blessing of God’s kingdom will envelop more than we can imagine, so it is our privilege to get involved now.

In what small ways are you contributing to the kingdom of God? How do you strengthen your heart when your efforts to spread the gospel seem unfruitful?

YG

The woman had been disabled for a long time. But Jesus comes and heals her. He sets her free. God’s kingdom also sets people free from the penalty of sin and death. Jesus then teaches that the kingdom is like a mustard seed and yeast. These comparisons teach us that God’s kingdom is always growing in visible and invisible ways.

Jesus came to bring God’s kingdom and we are now set free as citizens of that kingdom. Let us tell our friends and neighbors about Jesus to bring them into God’s kingdom.

Dear heavenly Father, thank you for setting us free from the penalty of sin and death. Help us to grow your kingdom by sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. In his name, amen.

Feb. 19 Saturday Luke 13:22-35

Many of Jesus’ Jewish listeners are replying on their ethnic heritage as children of Abraham for their salvation; others bank on the fact that they used to hang out with Jesus, staying near enough to hear His teaching but never letting it change their evil hearts. Jesus confronts their casual attitude of not realizing how difficult discipleship truly is. God’s chosen people are not fundamentally recognized by their religious tradition or associations with godly people. We must know and follow Christ personally, and this is evidenced by the renewal He brings to our lives.

How does entering through “the narrow door” differ from casual Christianity? How can you guard against taking Christ for granted?

YG

A man asks Jesus if many people will be saved. Jesus replies that there will be many who do not make it. Jesus is referring to people who trust in themselves and their good works to go to heaven. But a true disciple who is saved puts his faith and trusts in Jesus Christ alone.

Our good works do not make us worthy of entering God’s kingdom. Let us put our whole trust in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. Let us thank and praise God for Jesus.

Dear God, we thank you for sending Your son Jesus Christ to save us and bring us into Your kingdom. We love You and want to know You more. In Your son’s name, amen.