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# Family Devotion

17 - 30 August 2020

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# HOW TO USE THIS 'FAMILY DEVOTION'

This compilation is for 2 weeks, and consist SIX family devotional materials.

- ONE family devotional material is provided for Monday to Wednesday. Your family can choose either day within the 3 days to go through the material. Family members are encourage to continue the conversation during mealtimes on subsequent days. This is the same for Thursday to Saturday, where ONE family devotional material is provided.
- ONE Family Devotion material is provided for Sunday. We encourage all families to have a devotional time together on every Sundays.

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY

17 - 19 AUGUST 2020



## TITLE

**Salome: An Ambitious Family**

## OPENING PRAYER

Opening prayer by a member of the family

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Matthew 20:20-28, 27:56**

## SHARING OF MESSAGE (To be read or expounded by family members)

Salome is the feminine name for Solomon, meaning “peace”. According to the Bible Salome was the mother of James and John. Perhaps she followed Jesus for the sake of her two sons at first, but later she did become a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. She was one of the women present at the crucifixion of Jesus. Some suggested that Salome could be the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. They were faithful women who took care of the daily needs of Jesus and his disciples. Though they were not mentioned often, their ministry was very essential.



Salome had a wish for her two sons. She came to Jesus with her sons one day, and said, “Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom.” (Matthew 20:21) This mother was asking for her sons to be kings with Jesus. Salome had been with Jesus and surely knew that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. She might be thinking that since her two sons had been following Jesus for few years, they should be the most qualified right hand man and left hand man of Jesus.

Jesus said to Salome and her two sons, “You don’t know what you are asking, can you drink the cup I am going to drink?” (Matthew 20:22) Jesus already knew that he was going to be crucified and the disciples would also be scattered.





With such mixed feelings, Jesus reminded them that as they shared in his sufferings, they would also share in his glory. Jesus' answer to them was that to sit at his right or left was not for him to grant but his Father. Apparently, Jesus was not annoyed by this request but the other ten disciples were. So Jesus also took this opportunity to teach his disciples what a true leader should be. "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave." (Matthew 20:26-27)

A requested that nearly turned into infighting and division was moderated by the Lord and he took them to a higher spiritual level. What a good lesson for Salome!

## SHARING

1. As a parent do you think you should step in to help your children to obtain certain success or clean up their mess? What is your opinion?
2. What are the characteristics of a true leader?



## CLOSING PRAYER

Father God, please help us to draw closer to you and not to love the world and its power. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Close by reciting The Lord's prayer)



THURSDAY-SATURDAY

20 – 22 AUGUST 2020



## TITLE

**Ananias: A family That Cheats Together**

## OPENING PRAYER

Opening prayer by a member of the family

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Acts 5 : 1-11**

## SHARING OF MESSAGE (To be read or expounded by family members)

In order to ensure that there would not be shortage for anyone, the early church practiced a system of sharing possessions. Everyone who had land or houses would sell them and laid the money received for the things sold at the apostles' feet. Then it was distributed to anyone who needed it.



In chapter 4 a man called Joseph, sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. (Acts 4: 36, 37) In Chapter 5, there was a couple, Ananias and his wife Sapphira, sold some property, but their hearts were not pure.

Together the two of them agreed to keep some of the money for themselves and brought the remainder and laid it at the apostles' feet. Their problem was not about keeping a portion for their own use, but deceiving God.

After collecting the money from selling their fields they must have been considering how much to keep for themselves and how much to contribute for common use. Maybe they needed some money because their children were about to get married, or maybe the furniture in their homes were broken. In fact they had two options. The first was to give only part of the money but they were afraid of losing face because other persons had given all. The second was to give all and to look to God's supply for what they needed for their family. Either of these options was fine.



But this couple thought of a third option, which was to give only part of the total amount but say to have given all. So they seemed to keep the money they needed and at the same time to have face in front of others. Ananias and his wife Sapphira thought that they had a perfect solution. However, nothing can be hidden from God. The couple remained dishonest despite being confronted by the apostles, so they were judged by God and died. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events. God is not to be offended.



## SHARING

1. Why do people like to compare with others?  
What is the rationale behind?
2. Do you think we can lie? Why?



## CLOSING PRAYER

Father in heaven, I pray that you will keep my heart to be truthful always. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Close by reciting The Lord's prayer)

SUNDAY

23 AUGUST 2020



## TITLE

**Cornelius: The Whole Family Belongs To The Lord**

## OPENING PRAYER

Opening prayer by a member of the family

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Acts 10:34-48**



## SHARING OF MESSAGE (To be read or expounded by family members)



Cornelius was a centurion of the Italian Regiment living in Caesarea. According to the Bible he was a godly man, deeply reverent, as was his entire household. He gave generously to charity and was a man of prayer. In the early church, there was clearly tension between the Jews and the Gentiles as the Gentiles were unclean to the Jews.

One day at about three in the afternoon (Jewish prayer time) Cornelius had a vision. He saw an angel of God, coming towards him, telling him that his prayers and good deeds had not gone unnoticed by God! The angel asked him to send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon Peter.



At the same time on the other side, Peter had a vision too. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him to kill and eat. But Peter refused because according to Jewish laws these were unclean. The voice spoke to him a second time telling him not to call anything unclean that God had made clean. Peter learned from his vision that God never showed favoritism. (Acts 10:34).

While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, Cornelius' servants arrived at Peter's house. When Peter arrived at Cornelius' house, Cornelius had called together his relatives and close friends and was waiting for him.



Cornelius' desire for God was obvious and he was willing to accept the grace of God with all his relatives and close friends. Peter preached to Cornelius and his family telling them about Jesus being the anointed one, who was killed by hanging on a cross, but on the third day God raised him from the dead. Jesus was ordained by God to be the judge of all -- the living and the dead. All the prophets had testified that: whosoever believed in Him and calling His name would be justified.

While Peter was saying these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the message, even the Gentiles. That was a pioneering event in the early church, and Peter said, "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." (Acts 10:34-35)

## SHARING

1. Have you ever experienced unfair treatment by others such as teachers, friends, neighbors, classmates, etc.?
2. God speaks to Peter through a vision. How did God speak to you?



## CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Father God, please forgive me for looking down upon others sometimes. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Close by reciting The Lord's prayer)

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY

24 - 26 AUGUST 2020



## TITLE

**Aquila: A Family That Walks Together**

## OPENING PRAYER

Opening prayer by a member of the family

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Acts 18:1-3 ; Romans 16:3-4**

## SHARING OF MESSAGE (To be read or expounded by family members)

The Book of Acts recorded a story about Aquila and Priscilla. They were a good example of a husband and wife serving God together. Their names were mentioned six times in the Bible: Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3, 1 Corinthians 16:19 and 2 Timothy 4:19. In a trip Paul first came to Athens and then to Corinth. There he became acquainted with Aquila and his wife Priscilla. They had just returned from Italy. Paul lived and worked with them, for they were tentmakers just like Paul. Later this couple worked hard planting churches everywhere and their home was a church too.





Aquila and Priscilla had moved their house at least four times. They were forced to move from Rome to Corinth. Approximately 18 months later they accompanied Paul to go from Corinth to Ephesus to serve the Lord there. Later they returned to Rome and set up a church there. "They risked their necks for Paul's life." (Romans 16:4) Later they went to Ephesus to work with Timothy. They moved so many times not for their own future or children or safety or comfort but for the Lord.

In Ephesus, the couple met a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria. He was a learned man with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor in the synagogue, though he knew only the baptism of John and not others.



When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

According to church history, Priscilla and Aquila were martyred by beheading on July 8, 66, outside Rome. Today a catacomb outside Rome is dedicated to Priscilla and is called Catacomb of Priscilla. There are also churches and monuments commemorating her in the city of Rome.



## SHARING

1. What do you think was the secret of Priscilla and Aquila that they could serve the Lord together till death?
2. Would you consider opening up your home as a place to minister to others? What are some of the things you can do?



## CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, please help me to be faithful till the end. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Close by reciting The Lord's Prayer)

THURSDAY-SATURDAY

27 – 29 AUG 2020



## TITLE

**Lydia: A family That Loves Gatherings**

## OPENING PRAYER

Opening prayer by a member of the family

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Acts 16 : 11—15**

## SHARING OF MESSAGE (To be read or expounded by family members)

The first stop for the gospel to spread to Europe was Philippi, and Paul went there during his second missionary journey. Philippi was a famous city in the Roman Empire. The city was by the seaside and most of the residents were idol worshippers. One night Paul had a vision and he saw a Macedonian standing there, urging him to come over to Macedonia and to help them. So Paul took Silas and Timothy to Macedonia, and soon they came to Philippi, the first city in Macedonia. There Paul saw several women meeting and praying by the riverside, so he sat down and explained the words of God to them.





God opened the heart of one of the women, Lydia, and she paid full attention to Paul's teaching. Lydia was from the city of Thyatira. She was a business woman selling purple cloth. Purple was royal and purple clothes were very expensive. It was chiefly worn by princes and by the rich. At that time, those who engaged in this type of business were rich merchants, so Lydia should be a wealthy businessman. She was not only rich but she desired God and feared God. Despite her busy schedule, Lydia joined gatherings. Sometimes we use the excuse of "busyness" at work to escape from gatherings. In fact, the root cause is not whether we are busy or not. If we do not seek God, we will always find excuses; on the contrary, nothing can stop us to come to God if we desire Him.

The Lord opened Lydia's heart to what Paul said. Lydia and her whole family believed and was baptized together. Lydia also put her faith into action. She invited God's servants to live in her house. "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.' And she prevailed upon us." (Acts 16:15) "She prevailed" tell us that Lydia was determined and was opinionated.

Twelve years later, Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippi Church, "because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." (Philippians 1:5) "First day" means the day the Philippians accepted the gospel. "Until now" refers the time that Paul wrote the Epistle of Philippians. So the Philippi Church had slowly grown from the Lydia family to a church in 12 years. This seed of the gospel had come to fruition.



## SHARING

1. Do you like receiving friends/guests/classmates to your house? Share about your experiences?
2. How long have you been a believer? Do you think you have grown in Christ? Can you tell any differences in your life now?



## CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Father God, please help me to mature and grow in the Lord. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Close by reciting The Lord's prayer)



SUNDAY

30 AUG 2020



## TITLE

**Lois: A family With Inherited Faith**

## OPENING PRAYER

Opening prayer by a member of the family

## SCRIPTURE READING

**2 Timothy 1 : 1-14**

## SHARING OF MESSAGE (To be read or expounded by family members)

Eunice was a believing Jewish woman, from Lystra, and her son was Timothy. (Acts 16:1) She married a Greek and perhaps after her husband died, she moved back to her mother's house with her child Timothy. Timothy grew up under the care of his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois. Together, these two women nurtured a great servant of God. When Timothy became an important co-worker of Paul's evangelism, Paul even called him "my dear child" (2 Tim. 1:2), "genuine child in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2).



In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he praised him for his "sincere faith" (2 Tim. 1:5). "Sincere faith" is the kind of faith that is unfeigned, without dissimulation and without hypocrisy. Paul mentioned that Timothy's faith dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice and so Paul must have been familiar with Timothy's family. The term "grandmother" or "maternal grandmother" is not mentioned in any other place in the Bible. So is the name "Lois". So Lois was indeed a special Bible character. Lois means "more desirable", Eunice means "joyous victory" and Timothy means "honoring God". Their names reflected their relationship with God.



When Timothy was growing up, he witnessed the strong faith of his mother and grandmother. They taught him and set a good example for him. Paul mentioned: "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:14-15) Lois, Eunice, and Timothy were three generations of faithful believers, their relationship were like a chain of fine gold, shining for Christ in each of their time. As in Psalms 128 "Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD.... may you see your children's children!"



## SHARING

1. Please share about one life lesson that you have learnt from your mother or the person who raised you?
2. How to have sincere faith?



## CLOSING PRAYER

Father God, we pray that you will rekindle our love to live for you and may our lives be a blessing to the generations to come. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Close by reciting The Lord's prayer)

