

CHAMP SPORTS DEVOTIONAL



SPRING 2025

CHAMP Office – 704.341.5387
Weather Hotline – 704.341.5473
www.champsportsinfo.com

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Season Schedule

Practices Begin: Week of March 3
Uniform Distribution: Week of March 3
Game Schedules: Week of March 10
Opening Day: Saturday, March 15
Spring Break: April 14-21 (No practices or games)
Practices Resume: April 22
Season Ends: May 17

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Updated Mon-Fri. at 3:00 PM; Sat. at 7:30 AM

**Join us weekly for Sunday morning
worship at 9:45 AM in person or via livestream.**

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

The Word (John 1:1-3)

Week of March 3 – 7

Words are powerful! Words help us communicate. Imagine telling someone else what you think or how you feel without words! How many words do you think the average person says every day? According to most studies, the average person says about 16,000 words every day!

In the Bible, God tells us that His Son, Jesus, is “*The Word*.” In John 1:1, we read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

What does God mean when He says that His Son is “The Word”? How does God communicate with us?

First, God communicates with us by what He has created. When we look at the stars and the planets and the flowers and trees and the animals and ourselves, we learn things about God. We learn that God is good at building things. We learn that God is big—far greater than the universe that He has created. We learn that God is good—think about how God has provided the sun and the rain and so many different types of food for us to eat!

Second, God communicates with us by what He has said in the Bible. How did God write the Bible? God wrote the Bible by inspiring around forty different authors over a period of 1,500 years to write down the words of God.

Third, God communicates with us by His Son. In Hebrews 1:1-3 we read, “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”

What does it mean that Jesus is “the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature”? It means that Jesus is just like the Father! If we know Jesus, then we know the Father!

God loves to talk to us. He wants us to know Him and walk with Him each day. He also wants us to talk to Him. He wants us to tell Him about what is going on in our hearts and minds!

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Questions: What is prayer? How often should we pray? [1 Thessalonians 5:17: Pray Continually!]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Light (John 1:4-5)

Week of March 10-15

Light is very important! Without light, we would be in darkness! Without light, life cannot exist!

What kinds of lights has God made? In the Bible, God tells us, “And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars” (Genesis 1:16). God has also made other kinds of lights like fire and fireflies!

People also make lights. Thomas Edison and other inventors figured out how to make light bulbs so that we can see things at night or in dark places. Imagine life without lightbulbs!

In the Bible we learn that Jesus is “the Light of the World.” Jesus told us, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

What does Jesus mean when He says that He is “the Light of the World”? Does He mean that He is going to help us to see rocks and tree roots so that we won’t trip over them? Or does He mean that He is going to help us understand who we are, and who God is, and how God wants us to live our lives in this world?

How does God want us to live our lives in this world? God has given us many instructions in the Bible, but God says that the greatest commandment is, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” And the second greatest commandments is, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37, 39). If we do these two things, we will “walk in the light” (1 John 1:7).

Jesus said that, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world” (John 9:5). Jesus also said, “You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). Who was Jesus talking about? He was talking to all those who believe in Him and are full of the Holy Spirit and eternal life.

When God lives inside of us, our lives become full of light. Then, people can look at us and the way that we live, and they can see that God is real because of the way that we live our lives. When Jesus who is “the Light of the World” lives inside of us we become “Light in the Lord.” Does Jesus live inside of you? Are you darkness or are you light in the Lord?

John 1:5

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Questions: Why can't the darkness overcome the light? Who is the Light of the World?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

John Baptizes Jesus (John 1:22-36)

Week of March 17-22

For the first thirty years of Jesus' life, very few people knew how special He was. Jesus' mother knew that Jesus was God's Son. A few wise men knew that Jesus was the King of the Jews. Some shepherds knew that Jesus was Christ the Lord. But most people didn't know that Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth, was God's only Son.

When Jesus was about thirty, it was time for God the Father to introduce His Son to the world. In order to do this, God raised up a man named John. God sent John to prepare the way for Jesus. How did John prepare the way for Jesus? It was similar to the way that a farmer prepares the soil to plant the seed. How does a farmer prepare the soil? The farmer plows up the soil. This allows the air and the water and the nutrients to mix and create a good environment for the seed.

John was sent by God to prepare the hearts of the people of Israel to hear Jesus' teaching and preaching. John told the Israelites that it was time to repent, confess their sins, and focus their attention on God and His Word. When people agreed with John's message, they were baptized with water. This baptism was called "John's Baptism." "John's Baptism" was a baptism of repentance. Many of those who were baptized by John were later "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:3-5).

One day while John was preaching and baptizing people, Jesus came to John and asked to be baptized, but John said, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" (Matthew 3:14). However, Jesus insisted in order to "fulfill all righteousness," and John baptized Him. When Jesus came up out of the water "the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'" (Matthew 3:16-17).

This was a big moment in human history! This was the first time that the Holy Spirit had rested on any human being permanently! John said, "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matthew 3:11). Jesus is that one who can baptize us and fill us with the Holy Spirit! Do you want to be filled with the Spirit?!

Galatians 5:22

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Questions: What does the word "repent" mean? [Repentance means that we change our minds; Biblical repentance means that we change our minds about going our own way and instead we go God's way. Who is "The Way"?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Jesus Cleanses the Temple (John 2:13-25)

Week of March 24-29

God is everywhere, but where does God live? Today, God lives in the hearts of His people, but He also lives in His temple in heaven.

A long time ago, when God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, God lived in a tent surrounded by His people. This tent was called the tabernacle. The tabernacle was a little model of God's temple in heaven where He sits and rules the universe.

Later on, King David wanted to build a temple for God. The temple would be like the tabernacle, but it would be bigger, better, and located in God's City, Jerusalem. However, God wouldn't let King David build the temple because David was a man of war, but God said that King Solomon, David's son, could build the temple.

When Solomon finished building the temple, he dedicated the temple to God, and the glory of the LORD, which was like a bright, shining cloud, filled the temple. When the children of Israel saw that God's glory had filled the temple, they knew that God was with them, to love them, watch over them, protect them, and provide for them.

When Jesus was twelve, He went to the temple and sat with the teachers of Israel. He listened to their teaching and asked them questions. "And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers" (Luke 2:47).

When Jesus was about thirty, He went up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. When He got to the temple, "He found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there" (John 2:14). This did not please Jesus. The temple was supposed to be a holy place for God to live, not a place for dishonest thieves to do business (Mark 11:17). So, Jesus made a "whip of cords, and he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables" (John 2:15).

When the Jews saw Jesus do this, they were shocked. Who was Jesus? Why did He think He had authority to drive businessmen out of the temple? In response, Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). What was Jesus talking about? He was talking about His death, burial, and resurrection! Jesus was speaking about the temple of His body!

Isaiah 56:7

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Questions: Why does God care so much about His house? Does God live inside of you?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

You Must Be Born Again (John 3:1-21) (Invitation Week)

Week of March 31 – April 5

Jesus said many things that were hard to understand. Nicodemus was a Pharisee. The Pharisees were a group of men who were emphatic about doing what God said is right. They studied the Bible. They memorized the Bible. They knew the 39 books of the Old Testament inside and out, and they knew the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) by heart.

It seems like most of the Pharisees didn't care much about Jesus or didn't like Jesus, but a few of them were curious about Jesus and wanted to get to know Him better. Nicodemus was one of the curious Pharisees, so he came to Jesus at night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him" (John 3:2). Jesus responded to Nicodemus saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

What was Jesus trying to get Nicodemus to understand? Nicodemus seemed to be the kind of person who wanted to know God and be a part of God's kingdom, but Jesus said that the only kind of person who can truly see the kingdom of God is the person who is born again.

What does it mean to be born again? Does it mean that we must become babies again? Can a five-year-old or a ten-year-old become a baby again? No. This is not what it means to be born again. Jesus tells us that to be "born again" is to be born of the Spirit: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:5-6).

The second birth is a spiritual birth. It is a birth wherein God's Spirit comes to live inside of us because we believe in God's Son, Jesus. When this happens, we are filled with God's eternal life and we become children of God. Do you want to be born again?

****Coaches, please present "The Gospel" devotion on the next page. If any players on your team respond by praying to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior, have them sign their name in their own handwriting on the card provided. Please return signed cards to the equipment shed. When we follow up with players we will give them their signed card to take home. Thank you!*

John 3:3

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Gospel

Invitation Week Continued (March 31-April 5)

What is the Gospel? The Gospel is God's good news about His Son Jesus Christ.

What is the good news? The good news is that God sent Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners.

How did we become sinners? By disobeying God. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Each one of us has also disobeyed God.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

The bad news is that:

“The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23a).

The good news is that:

“the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23b).

How do we receive God's free gift?

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

What does it mean to “believe in the Lord Jesus”?

It means that we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died to pay the penalty for our sins, that He was buried, and on the third day God raised Him from the dead. It means that we receive Christ as our Savior and surrender our lives to Him as our personal Lord and Master.

Jesus promised, “Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32-33). Today, “if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

If you want to believe in Jesus and confess Him as your Savior and Lord today, please raise your hand. If you have raised your hand, please pray this prayer with me.

Heavenly Father, today I believe in your Son, Jesus. I believe that He died to pay the penalty for my sins and that He was raised from the dead so that I could be justified and receive eternal life in His name. Today, I surrender my life to Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and acknowledge Him before men. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me! Amen.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Living Water (John 4)

Week of April 7-12

In Bible times, it wasn't always easy to get water. There were some rivers and some streams, but in many places, if you wanted to get water, you would have to dig a well.

Wells are a lot of work. First, you have to dig a deep hole in the ground. Then, if there is water at the bottom of the hole, you have to lower a bucket down into the well and lift the water up. This takes a lot of time and a lot of muscle!

One day, Jesus was passing through a place called Samaria, and he came to a well. Jesus was tired from His journey, and His disciples had gone to a nearby city to buy food, so He sat down at the well to rest. While He was sitting there, a Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

The woman was surprised when Jesus spoke to her because she was a Samaritan and Jesus was a Jew. Normally, Jews and Samaritans didn't talk to each other very much, but of course, Jesus wasn't a normal person!

The woman said to Jesus, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water'" (John 4:9-10).

When the woman heard Jesus' words she was confused. Jesus didn't have a bucket. He couldn't get water from the well! What water was Jesus talking about?

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14).

What kind of water does Jesus give people? Jesus gives people the waters of God's eternal life. God is a fountain of living waters (Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13). The Holy Spirit produces the life of God inside of everyone who believes in Jesus (John 7:37-39)! Do you want to drink the water that Jesus gives?

John 4:14

Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

Questions: How is a spring of water different than a pond or a lake? What is eternal life?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Father Loves the Son (John 5)

Week of April 22-26

One day, Jesus was in Jerusalem and he came upon a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years. This man was lying on a bed near a pool of water. There were many other sick people there, but Jesus looked at this man and said to him, “Do you want to be healed?”

The man did want to be healed, but he didn’t think it was possible. (Maybe he didn’t know who Jesus was or that Jesus was able to heal all kinds of diseases.) “Jesus said to him, ‘Get up, take up your bed, and walk.’ And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath” (John 5:8-9).

The power of God is amazing! Jesus easily healed a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years! But it was the Sabbath Day. Do you know about the Sabbath Day?

God told Israel that they must work six days each week, but on the seventh day of the week they had to rest. The day that they rested was Saturday. On Saturday they couldn’t do any work, but Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath! Was Jesus working on the Sabbath? Was He allowed to heal people on the Sabbath? Many of the Jewish people thought that Jesus had done a bad thing!

What did Jesus say when they accused Him of doing something evil? “But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I am working.’ Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing” (John 5:17, 19-20a).

By these words, Jesus told his Jewish brothers that everything that He was doing was something that God the Father was also doing. Jesus and the Father were working together! If Jesus was healing someone on the Sabbath, then God the Father was healing someone on the Sabbath! Could God be doing something wrong? Of course not! Whatever God does is right!

God wants to work in each one of our lives! He wants us to know Him. He wants us to know what makes Him happy. He wants us to know what makes Him sad. He wants us to do the good things that He has prepared for us to do! Will you let God work in your life?!

John 3:35

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.

Question: How many people did Jesus heal in the Bible? [23 described in detail, but Jesus likely healed thousands: Matthew 4:24]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Bread of Life (John 6)

Week of April 28 – May 3

Do you remember what God gave the Israelites to eat when they were in the wilderness after they came out of Egypt? God gave them a kind bread that the people called “manna.” “Manna” meant “What is it?” The people weren’t sure what kind of bread God had given them to eat because they had never had anything like it before.

Every morning, God made the manna and the Israelites found it on the ground around their camp. God told them to gather as much manna as they needed for the day, but no more. If they were very hungry, and they needed a lot, then they gathered a lot. If they weren’t as hungry, and they only needed a little, they gathered a little, but each person had as much as they needed for the day. By mid to late morning, when the sun was hot, the manna melted, and they would have to wait till the next day to find fresh manna from God.

There were a couple of rules about the manna: 1) No manna could be kept overnight. Do you remember what happened to manna that was kept overnight? It bred worms and stank. However, there was an exception to this rule. 2) On the day before the Sabbath, the Israelites could collect enough manna for two days so that they wouldn’t have to work on the Sabbath. Isn’t God good? He always provides what His children need!

One day, while Jesus was teaching, He said, “Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal” (John 6:27). What food was this? Was it manna? Was it take out from your favorite restaurant?

Jesus said, “Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ Jesus then said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world’ (John 6:31-33).

In what way is Jesus the bread of God? Jesus is the bread of God because He is the One who gives us strength each day to follow God and do His will!

John 6:35

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”

Question: How often do we need to receive strength and life from Jesus? Every day. All day. Forever.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Man Born Blind (John 9)

Week of May 5-10

One day Jesus saw a man who had been born blind. This man hadn't ever seen anything! Can you imagine what that must have been like? When Jesus' disciples saw the man who had been born blind, they wondered if the blind man had sinned, or maybe his parents had sinned since he had been *born* blind!

In response to His disciples, Jesus said, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). So, he went and washed and came back seeing." (John 9:3-7).

Why did Jesus do so many miracles? There are lot of reasons. One reason was that God loves people and wants to make people well. Another reason was that Jesus had to fulfill the promises of God (because God never breaks His promises!).

God had promised through the prophet Isaiah (about seven hundred years before Jesus came into the world): "Say to those who have an anxious heart, 'Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy'" (Isaiah 35:4-6).

When Jesus healed the man who was born blind, many people were shocked and confused. Did Jesus really heal a man who was born blind? So, the leaders of Israel called the man's parents and asked, "Is this your son?" "His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes.'" (John 9:20-21). So, they asked the man again about Jesus, and the man said, "One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). What a thing to say!

Later on, Jesus asked this man, "Do you believe in Me?" And the man said, "Lord, I believe!" The question that Jesus asks each one of us is, "Do you believe in Me?" What is your answer?!

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Question: How many promises did God make in the Bible? [Scholars suggest at least 7,000 and possibly up 8,810]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Lazarus (John 11)

Week of May 12-17

Lazarus was one of Jesus' good friends. One day, Lazarus became sick, so Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, sent a message to Jesus, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (John 11:3-4).

Do you know what happened next? Lazarus died. Was Jesus wrong? Let's see what happened next. After Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, Jesus stayed two more days where He was, and then He said to His disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

At this, Jesus' disciples were confused because there were many people in Judea who didn't like Jesus. However, Jesus had work to do in Judea! So, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him" (John 11:11-15).

When Jesus arrived at Lazarus' house, Mary and Martha were incredibly sad. Martha said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died" (John 11:21). Jesus said to Martha, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:23-26).

After Jesus said these things, He went to the tomb where Lazarus was buried and asked for the stone that was in front of the tomb to be removed. When the stone had been taken away, Jesus first prayed to His Father and then He said, "Lazarus, come out." And what did Lazarus do? He came out—alive!

Raising Lazarus from the dead was one of Jesus' greatest miracles. This miracle proves that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. This miracle proves that not only can Jesus give life to our bodies now but that He can give us eternal life forever!

John 11:25

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Question: How many miracles did Jesus do in the Bible? [Many scholars say 37]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!