

# **CHAMP SPORTS DEVOTIONAL**



## **Winter 2022-23**

CHAMP Office – 704.341.5387  
Weather Hotline – 704.341.5473  
[www.champsportsinfo.com](http://www.champsportsinfo.com)

# Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

## Season Schedule

**Practices Begin:** Week of November 28

**Uniform Distribution:** Week of November 28

**Game Schedules:** Week of December 6

**Opening Day:** Saturday, December 10

**Season Ends:** Saturday, February 11

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**Weather Hotline:** 704.341.5473  
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 players and their families!**

# Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

*Week of November 28 – December 2*

Welcome to CHAMP Sports! We are excited that you are here! This season during devotions we are going to talk about some of the things that Jesus shared with His disciples the night before He died on the cross. The things Jesus told His disciples that night were wonderful things. They helped Jesus' disciples understand how they were supposed to live their lives after Jesus returned to God the Father in heaven. They will help us, too, if we want to know how to live a victorious Christian life!

The night before Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He gathered with His disciples in a large upper room. There, He shared the Last Supper with them, and He washed their feet.

Why did Jesus wash His disciples' feet? Jesus said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him" (John 13:12-16).

If we want to follow Jesus, we must understand who Jesus truly is. One thing that Jesus told us about Himself is that, "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve" (Matthew 20:28).

Why does Jesus serve us? The answer is because Jesus loves us. In the Bible we learn that "God is love." What is love like? Jesus tells us, "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). By washing the disciples' feet, Jesus was demonstrating what love looks like. Love doesn't care how low it must go in order to make someone clean. Jesus was about to die on the cross for our sins when He washed His disciples' feet. There was nothing lower that Jesus could do than die on the cross for our sin, but it was the only way to save us; so, because of His great love for us, Jesus was willing to die on the cross for us!

Shortly after Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He told them, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). The question that we must each answer is, "Do we want to be Jesus' disciples?" If we do, then we must love one another just as Jesus loves us.

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**1 John 4:16**

**God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**

*Questions: What is God's love like? What is your favorite Bible verse/Bible story?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# The Father's House (John 14:1-7)

*Week of December 5 – 9*

Do you know where God lives? This is a bit of a trick question. God is everywhere. However, there is one special place in heaven where God sits on His throne and rules over all of creation. The Bible tells us that God “dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Timothy 6:16) and that He is “the great and awesome God” (Deuteronomy 7:21). God is terrifyingly powerful, but He is also gentle and kind towards His children.

Before Jesus died on the cross, He wanted to comfort His disciples. In John 14:1-3, Jesus said, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

Was it easy for Jesus to prepare a place for us in God the Father's house? No, it wasn't! Why not? It wasn't easy because God is holy and we are sinners. What does it mean that God is holy? God is perfect in all of His ways. There is no one who is like God. He is pure. He is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. God's holiness destroys everything that isn't holy. In order for us to live in God's house, God had to make us holy. Jesus came into the world to make us holy.

In order for Jesus to make us holy, two things need to happen. First, Jesus had to deal with our sin. Sin is dark and dirty. God doesn't allow sin into His house. He doesn't allow darkness into His kingdom of light. Jesus dealt with our sin by dying on the cross. Jesus' blood cleanses us from all sin.

Second, Jesus sends His Holy Spirit to live inside of us and make us holy. As the Holy Spirit fills us, He transforms us into new creations in Christ! We become children of light and we are able to live in the Father's house! Right now, if we believe in Jesus, Jesus and the Father will come and make their home with us, and wherever Jesus is, there we will be also! God wants to live inside of us, and He wants us to live inside of Him. Do you want to be a part of God's family? Do you want to live in God the Father's house?

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## **John 14:3**

**If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.**

*Questions: Can we become holy? How? We must be washed by Jesus' blood and filled with the Holy Spirit.*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# God is Working (John 14:8-12)

*Week of December 12 – 16*

What is the best gift that we can ever get? The answer is God. God Himself is the best gift that we can ever receive. Why? Because God is everything that we need. He is life. He is light. He is truth. He is strength. He is love.

At Christmas time, we often get some pretty nice things. We enjoy good food and good times. These are all wonderful things! All of these things point to one of the most wonderful things that we can ever have—a place in God's family. God the Father has a huge heart. He is generous and kind. He gives good gifts to His children: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" (James 1:17).

One gift that comes with being a part of God's family is getting to participate in His life and His work. Jesus said to his disciple Philip, "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves" (John 14:10-11).

What did Jesus mean? Jesus was telling Philip that the words that He said were the Father's words: "I [Jesus] can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me" (John 5:30). Jesus was also telling Philip that the wonderful works that He was doing were the "works of the Father" (John 10:37). How did Jesus do the works of the Father? Jesus tells us: "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" (John 5:19).

After telling Philip these incredible things about His relationship with the Father, Jesus said that anyone who believed in Him would also do the works that He does (John 14:12). How? Because he or she will become a part of Jesus' life and will participate in whatever He is doing! What a great gift!—to be a part of God's family, to be filled with God's Spirit, and to have the joy of being a part of the good works that Jesus is doing in this world!

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## **Matthew 5:16**

**Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.**

*Questions: What are some of the good and perfect gifts that God has given to you?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# God's Peace (John 14:23-30)

*Week of January 3 – 6*

When you are afraid or things do not go well, what do you normally do? Do you talk to your parents? Do you talk to a friend? Do you go to a happy place or do something that calms you down?

As Jesus was getting ready to leave this world and go back to heaven, He told his disciples, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27).

What kind of peace does Jesus give us? Jesus gives us the peace that He has. Jesus gives us His own peace. Jesus' peace is a supernatural peace. "Supernatural" means "above nature" or "outside of nature." Only God has this kind of peace to give because God is supernatural.

What is the world's peace like? It is like a beautiful song or a happy place. It is feeling good because everything is going well. It is like Christmas morning or going on vacation. There are many things that people do to find peace, but only Jesus' peace is perfect and lasting. God wants to give us His peace. The only way we can get God's peace is by believing in Jesus and being filled with the Holy Spirit because *peace* is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

What are the fruit of the Spirit? [Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control]. These nine things are things that God IS. He is Love. He is Joy. He is Peace... God wants to live inside of us and fill us with Himself. If we will let Him, He will fill our lives with His peace, His love, and His joy!

What is God's peace like? In Isaiah 66:12, God describes His peace as being like a river. What does this mean? It means that God's peace, like a river, constantly flows into us. It is gentle but strong. It is calming and promotes health. It fills our spirits with a kind of bubbling joy.

God's peace is perfect because God is unchangeable, unstoppable, all-powerful, and all wise. Nothing can trouble God or make Him anxious. He is eternal life. If we want God's peace to flow into our lives like a river, Jesus tells us how. We must "keep His word," and the Holy Spirit will help us, teach us, and fill us with the "fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ."

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## **Psalm 34:14**

**Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.**

*Questions: Do you have God's peace in your heart? How can you help other people have God's peace in their hearts?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# Abide in Jesus (Invitation Week) (John 15:1-17)

*Week of January 9 – 13*

Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

There are two kinds of people in this world. The first kind of person believes in Jesus and is connected to Jesus like a branch is connected to the vine. This kind of person has God’s eternal life flowing into him or her. This kind of person bears good fruit.

The second kind of person does not believe in Jesus. He or she is not connected to God’s eternal life and does not want Jesus to be his or her Lord and King. He or she does not bear good fruit.

Which kind of person are you? Are you the kind of person who believes in Jesus? Is your life full of the fruits of God’s righteousness? Is your heart full of God’s love? Do you have God living inside of you?

If you do not have God living inside of you yet, what should you do? God “commands all people everywhere to repent because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man who he has appointed” (Acts 17:30-31).

What will happen on the day that Jesus Christ judges the world? Jesus will separate people like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. The sheep are the people who believe in Jesus. The goats are the people who have rejected Jesus. Jesus will welcome His sheep into His kingdom, but the goats will be sent away “into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41).

Why did God prepare an eternal fire for Satan? God prepared the Lake of Fire for Satan because Satan declared war on God. Satan wanted to be like the Most High God. Satan wanted to get rid of God so that *he* could be God. What Satan did was terrible! This is why God will cast Satan into the Lake of Fire. But we don’t have to join Satan in the Lake of Fire! We can renounce Satan’s rebellion and believe in Jesus! Do you want to believe in Jesus?!

\*\*\*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 closet.

When we follow up with players we will give them their signed card to take home. Thank you!

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**Ephesians 5:9**

**The fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true.**

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# The Gospel

*Invitation Week Continued (January 9 – 13)*

**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 Master, and acknowledge Him before men. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me! Amen.*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**



# God's Kingdom (John 15:18-16:15)

*Week of January 16 – 20*

God tells us in the Bible that He is a great King: “I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations” (Malachi 1:14). Do you believe that? Do you believe that God is a great King?

What does a king do? A king rules over his land. A good king does what is right and good. A bad king does what is wrong and bad. God is a great King. God is all-powerful, and He always uses His power to do what is right!

In this world right now there are two kingdoms—God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom. God's kingdom is a kingdom of light and truth. Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of darkness and lies.

Some people are a part of God's kingdom. They love God the Father, and they love Jesus. They want to hear God's words. They want to know what God thinks, and they want to do what God says is good to do.

Some people are a part of Satan's kingdom. These people do not want to hear what God thinks. They wish that God wasn't real. They want to get as far away from God as possible.

Which kingdom do you want to be a part of? Do you want to be a part of God's kingdom or Satan's kingdom? If you choose God's kingdom of life and prosperity, you must obey God. Everyone who is a part of God's kingdom will obey Him forever. If you choose Satan's kingdom of death and destruction, you will be the slave of sin and corruption.

What does God want each one of us to do? He wants us to choose life! God told the Israelites long ago, “Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days” (Deuteronomy 30:19b-20a).

When we choose life, God sends His Holy Spirit to live inside of us and everything changes! All of a sudden we are filled with God's “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17). We are now and forever a part of God's kingdom!

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## **Ephesians 5:8**

**At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.**

*Questions: Is Jesus your King? How can we find out what Jesus thinks is right and wrong? What good things will God give to us if we obey His voice?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# Ask and You Will Receive (John 16:16-33)

*Week of January 23 – 27*

Do you pray? What kinds of things do you talk to God about? What kinds of things do you ask God for?

Jesus made an amazing promise to His disciples about prayer. He said, “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:23-24).

Jesus promised that whatever His disciples asked “in His name” would be given to them by the Father. How could this be possible? What if they asked for a Lego set or colored pencils? Would they get it?

What did Jesus mean by asking “in His name”? Did He mean that the disciples just needed to end their prayers by saying, “In Jesus’ name, Amen.”? While saying, “In Jesus’ name, Amen,” is an excellent way to end our prayers, it isn’t what Jesus meant.

To pray in the name of Jesus is to ask God the Father for the same things that Jesus asks the Father for. In order for us to pray “in Jesus’ name” we must be joined to Jesus by the Holy Spirit in such a close way that our hearts become full of Jesus’ desires. When we desire the same things as Jesus, we will ask God for the very things that Jesus wants, and God will happily give them to us.

Something that can help us understand what it means to pray “in the name of Jesus” is a king who sends someone “in the king’s name” to deliver a message. The messenger doesn’t say what he or she thinks. The messenger gives the king’s message. When we pray in “Jesus’ name,” we don’t ask for what we want but what Jesus wants.

How can we know what Jesus wants? We can learn a lot about what Jesus wants by reading our Bibles. Some of the things that Jesus wants us to pray for is that we would 1) grow up to be strong in the Lord and the power of His might, 2) know God and Jesus Christ, and 3) be full of the Holy Spirit. Will you pray and ask God for these things?

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## **James 1:5**

**If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.**

*Questions: What is wisdom? Have you ever prayed and asked God to give you wisdom?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# Jesus Goes to the Father (John 17:1-13)

*Week of January 30 – February 3*

The worst moment of Jesus' life in this world was the moment that He became sin for us. What does it mean that Jesus "became sin"? It means that God the Father took all of our sins—the sins of the whole world—and put them on Jesus. Just imagine how terrible that was! Sin is so dirty! To have the sin of the whole world put on you would be unimaginably horrible. And what made it even worse was that when Jesus became our sin, He was separated for the first time ever from His Father. When this happened, Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46).

Why was it so terrible that Jesus was separated from His Father by sin and death? It was so terrible because the greatest joy of God the Father, His Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is that they love each other with everlasting love. It hurt Jesus terribly to be separated from His Father. It also hurt the Father terribly to be separated from His Son!

Will Jesus and the Father ever be separated again for any reason? No! Jesus died on the cross *once* for sins, and that's it! He will never die again. And He will never be separated from His Father again! Jesus was able to endure the horrors of the cross because He knew what would come after the cross. What came after the cross? Victory! Through the cross, Jesus stomped death, crushed Satan, smashed darkness, and defeated sin! After the cross, Jesus went back to His Father in Heaven the victorious "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

We read in the Bible that Jesus, "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). Where is Jesus now? He is seated at the right hand of the throne of God!

Did you know that you can sit down with Jesus on His throne? Jesus promised, "The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

How do we "conquer" so that we can sit down with Jesus on His throne? We believe in Jesus and we trust Him no matter what—just like Jesus trusts His Father no matter what. Will you trust God with your whole heart?

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**1 Corinthians 15:57**

**But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Questions: How did Jesus defeat evil? Do you want to sit with Jesus on His throne?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**

# Forever with God (John 17:14-26)

*Week of February 6 – 10*

How long is forever? Forever never ends! For those who believe in Jesus and enter into God's eternal kingdom, we shall "live forever" (John 6:51) with God. What will we be doing forever?

Jesus tells us something of what we will be doing forever: "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

First, we will be with Jesus where He is. Jesus is our forever home. Often we think of home as a place, but our forever home is a Person. All of those happy feelings that you get when you are curled up in your room and everything is wonderful point to the peace and joy that we receive when we are with God.

Second, we will see Jesus as He truly is. Jesus wants us to see Him as He truly is. There is nothing more beautiful than God. All of the beautiful things in this world were made by God, but He is more beautiful than all of the beautiful things that He has made. God made waterfalls and flowers and music and mountains and so many more lovely things, but He is more wonderful than all of these created things. We will never get tired of seeing God and getting to know Him better!

In God's forever kingdom, "God Himself will be with us and He will be our God. He will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:3b-4).

The law of God's kingdom is love because God is love. When we enter into God's eternal kingdom we will be made "perfect in love." In God's forever kingdom, we will all be so filled with God that we will love each other perfectly. This will be an amazing experience, but we don't have to wait until this world ends to experience God's love. God will pour out His love in our hearts right now by the Holy Spirit if we let Him!

Will you let God pour out His love in your heart right now?! If you will, you will taste and see just how good God really is!

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## **Psalm 34:8**

**Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!**

*Questions: How does God pour out His love in our hearts? Is the Holy Spirit living inside of you?*

**Please remember to pray for your players and their families!**