



Devotionals for  
Parents and Kids  
Set 2



## **Parents,**

While we are not able to connect with you through in-person retreats, camps, and events at this time, we are delighted to bring Trout to you and your home in this digital content pack. This packet is designed as a parent-led, family devotional. You will notice it is slightly different than the first set of devotionals. We are still in the process of refining our layout and format and hope that each week will bring you something new and improved.

Our goal is to provide you with a way to engage your elementary-aged kids in God's Word through a daily study of the Bible. There are no formal activities in this set. At a time when it is difficult for parents to just run to the store to get supplies, we decided it would be simpler for you to choose your own activities from those things you already have on hand. However, we do have made some suggestions in the daily message to parents.

We are privileged to be able to partner with you in this way during this uncertain time. While we are prevented from gathering in groups, our God is still sovereign. He is still faithful, and we are so thankful for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

We welcome your feedback, and if you find this content pack helpful please share on your social media outlets.

**TROUT LAKE CAMPS,**

*Program Team*



# TROUT LAKE TIMES

Dear Parents,

Today's lesson is about patience. As you walk through this packet with your camper, remember to reinforce practice. It takes a long time to learn new things, and we aren't perfect. Help them to know that even when they do things wrong, God still loves them and not to be discouraged. Encourage them to continue to strive to do their best. God will see they are trying.

## JUST KEEP TRYING

BETTY THOMAS

At her youth group outing at an ice skating rink, Piper clung to the handrail when she first stepped onto the ice. She was skating for the first time. It looked so easy, but she found it to be much harder than it looked. She finally let go of the rail and eased out onto the ice. She was doing quite well when her feet suddenly seemed to slide right out from under her, and she fell. "Whoa!" she exclaimed. She got up slowly, went back to the handrail, and hung on once more.

After a while, Piper ventured out onto the ice again. As kids zoomed by, she lost her balance, and down she went. She got up slowly, skated a short distance, and then...oops! She fell again...and again! Piper finally headed for a bench and sat down--and stayed there. Mrs. Bell, her teacher, sat down beside her. "Need some help?" she asked.

Piper shook her head. "It's no use. I keep falling."

"Skating takes practice," said Mrs. Bell. "Forget about falling, and keep trying. Come skate with me. I'm sure you can learn to do it."

Piper wasn't so sure, but she agreed to try again. By the time they were ready to leave, she was doing much better and having a great time.

At church the next day, Mrs. Bell walked up to Piper. "As I watched you learn to skate yesterday, it made me think of our lesson for today," she said. "It's about how we can keep sin from defeating us, and you gave us an illustration of what we need to do."

"Really?" asked Piper. "What did I do?"

"Even though you fell several times, you didn't just sit around and feel bad about it. You got up and went on learning to skate," replied Mrs. Bell. "That's what we need to do when we sin. We confess it to Jesus and ask Him for forgiveness, but then we need to forget it and go on living for Him. He forgives us and continues working in our lives to make us more like Him. We shouldn't let ourselves feel defeated by sin, but Jesus defeated it for us! We can accept His forgiveness and then get back on our feet and keep walking with Him."

## Key Verse:

### Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

*<sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

## Challenge: HOW ABOUT YOU?

*Do you feel down and defeated by things you've done that were wrong? Do you ask God's forgiveness several times before you really feel forgiven? If you're truly sorry for something you've done, confess it to Jesus. He promises to forgive you. You don't have to keep dwelling on what you've done in the past. Leave the sins you've confessed behind and go on living for Him.*

## Prayer:

Take time to thank God that sin doesn't have to control us and that when we ask God to forgive us, we can leave that sin in the past and move on. Also pray that God will use our failures to help us grow to become more like Jesus. And when we get knocked down, to get up again and keep practicing living for Jesus.

## IN OTHER GOOD NEWS...

### Bible Passages:

#### Romans 6:12-14 (NIV)

<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup> Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

#### 1 John 1:9 (NIV)

<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

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# TROUT LAKE TIMES

Dear Parents,

Today's lesson is about similarities. As you interact with your campers today, ask them to notice the similarities you have with each other and the other people around you. If they don't know how to pick out how we are the same, you can ask questions that will help them think about others and how we are all a lot alike. God made use all in His image, we are all His children and have a lot in common when we stop to think about it.

## PEOPLE AREN'T SO DIFFERENT

LINDA M. WEDDLE

"Hey," Chase greeted Ariana as she came up the driveway after school. "Mom invited a girl--a missionary kid--to come for supper and go with us to the school talent show tonight. Her name's Lauren, and her family lives in Africa. They're visiting Pastor Burns this week, and Mom thought Lauren would like to meet some kids her own age."

"Oh, great," said Ariana, rolling her eyes. "She probably wears funny clothes and doesn't have the slightest idea how she's supposed to act here. And all the kids at school will see me with her. How embarrassing!"

"Oh, come on, Ariana," said Chase. "You can be so silly!" He left to go shoot hoops with a friend across the street. Frowning, Ariana went into the house, where her mother repeated what Chase had told her. "But, Mom!" said Ariana. "What will I talk about with a strange girl from a strange place?"

"Don't worry about it, honey," said Mom. "She's just an ordinary girl like you." Ariana doubted that.

When Lauren arrived, Ariana had to admit that her clothes didn't look different. In fact, they looked pretty cool! And she didn't act different either. When Mom explained that they'd be eating at a fast-food place before the talent show, Lauren smiled. "That's my favorite. There's one of those in Nairobi, and every once in a while we get to go there."

While they were eating, Mom and Dad asked Lauren about her school and her life in Africa. Soon Ariana found herself eagerly joining in. It was fun to hear about a new place and another way of living.

"That was fun," Ariana said after they dropped Lauren off. "Lauren and I are going to stay in touch after she goes back to Africa!"

"That's great!" said Mom. "I'm glad you two connected. But even if you didn't have so much in common, you're still sisters in Christ because you both know Him as your Savior. Jesus unites us with all Christians, which is why we need to be kind and welcoming to them, no matter where they're from or how different from us they may be."

"Yeah, I guess you're right," said Ariana. "I'll remember that the next time we have missionaries come to visit!"

## Key Verse:

### Galatians 6:10 (NIV)

*<sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

## Challenge: HOW ABOUT YOU?

*As you interact with people today, notice the similarities you have with them. If you don't know enough about them, ask questions that will help you get to know them. Make this a habit for every day and every place you go.*

## Prayer:

Take time to Pray that God would show you how to see people as He does. Pray for missionaries that you know and ones that you don't know. Pray for those in your church. Pray for those in your family.

## IN OTHER GOOD NEWS...

### Bible Passages:

#### 3 John 5-8 (NIV)

<sup>5</sup> Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> even though they are strangers to you. <sup>6</sup> They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honors God. <sup>7</sup> It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. <sup>8</sup> We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

#### Footnotes:

- a. 3 John 1:5 The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family.

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# TROUT LAKE TIMES

Dear Parents,

Today's lesson is about love. As you interact with your campers today, take some time to talk to them about what they love. God wants us to know how much He loves us. Talk about the people and things you love and how your love for Jesus helps to change the way you interact and treat others.

## WHO HOLDS YOUR HEARS?

LISA NAGLE

"Look, Grandma! Bunny clouds!" declared four-year-old Taya. "They're shaped like bunnies." Zander and Grandma shared a smile in the rear view mirror. Taya kept a rabbit at her grandma's house, and she seemed to eat, sleep, and breathe rabbits.

As Grandma got dinner ready that evening, Zander grabbed his tablet and sat down to scroll through pictures of dirt bikes and dream about the one he was saving for. Taya went outside to feed Patches, the rabbit. Grandma stood at the sink, snapping peas and singing hymns.

"Taya has Patches in her lap--she's probably telling him a story," Grandma said after a minute. "She's such a little girl to be so loving and faithful to a pet. It reminds me, in a small way, of God's love and faithfulness to us."

Without thinking, Zander said, "You're as bad as Taya, Grandma. She's always talking about rabbits, and you're always talking about God!" He clapped a hand over his mouth, wondering if she'd be upset.

Grandma laughed. "I guess you're right. Whatever you love will be on your mind. Jesus has my heart, so I can't help but think about and praise Him."

Grandma often told Zander Jesus loved him, but he hadn't really thought much about it. Right now, he just wanted a dirt bike! But Grandma's words made him wonder. "Is it wrong for me to think about anything besides God?" Zander asked.

"No." Grandma sat down beside Zander. "We all have different things we think about each day, and God has given us natural interests and abilities. I love to grow flowers; Taya loves Patches. We can find joy in these things. But Jesus wants our hearts. He loves us and died for us, and when we love Him in return, it changes the way we think about everything." Grandma put an arm around Zander's shoulders. "Who--or what--holds your heart, Zander?"

"I...I don't know," said Zander. Does a bike have my heart? he wondered. It sounded silly to even think it. Right then he knew he didn't want it to be a bike. "I want Jesus to have my heart," he said. "Will you help me talk to Him?"

## Key Verse:

**John 14:27** (NIV)

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."<sup>[a]</sup>

## Challenge: HOW ABOUT YOU?

*Who or what has your heart—your love? It's okay to be interested in different things, but Jesus wants your heart. He died and rose again to save you, and He loves you so much. When you love Him in return, He helps you see that He's more important than anything else. Give Him your heart by trusting in Him.*

## Prayer:

*Take time to pray as a family that God would have your whole heart.*

## IN OTHER GOOD NEWS...

### Bible Passages:

**Matthew 22:37-40** (NIV)

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

*Footnotes:*

- a. [Matthew 22:37](#) Deut. 6:5
- b. [Matthew 22:39](#) Lev. 19:18

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# TROUT LAKE TIMES

Dear Parents,

Today's lesson is about belief. We all know that we believe the things we see with our eyes and hear with our ears. But Satan likes to make us question our belief. He will try to fill our heads with foolishness to distract us from what is true... God's word. Remind your campers that we read the Bible so that so we know what is true. Today, instead of reading the Bible verses from this page, grab our Bible and read to your children directly from God's word.

## DON'T BE FOOLED

CHARLES VANDERMEER

"Guess what!" exclaimed Skyler when Milo walked into the kitchen for breakfast. "There was a water pipe break, so they cancelled school for the day."

Milo didn't see the twinkle in his sister's eye. "All right!" he exclaimed. "I'm going to play my new video game and..." His voice trailed off as his sister started laughing.

"Actually, there was no water pipe break. We still have to go to school. April Fool!"

Milo groaned, but then he grinned back at her. "Just you wait, Sky. I'll get you back!"

Later that day, Milo saw his sister in the hall between classes. "Hey, Skyler! Good news! Remember when you told me you hoped your softball team would qualify for the regionals? Well..." He smiled and didn't finish the sentence.

This time it was Skyler who missed the twinkling eyes. "We're going to play in the regionals?" she asked excitedly. "Wow! How did you find out about..." Skyler stopped. "Milo! Are you paying me back for the joke I played on you this morning?"

"Yep!" said Milo. "Gotcha! April Fool!" They both laughed.

When Milo and Skyler told their parents about the April Fool jokes, Mom smiled. "You both were easily tricked into believing something you really wanted to believe," she said. "That's interesting."

Dad nodded. "Maybe it should remind us how important it is to make sure what we believe is true, not just what we'd like to be true--especially when it comes to spiritual things. Satan is a great deceiver. A lot of people say things that sound nice but aren't really true."

"Like...that everybody will go to heaven?" Milo asked.

"Or that our sin isn't a serious problem?" Skyler added.

"Yes," Mom said. "They may be completely sincere and really believe what they say, but that doesn't make it true. The Bible says we're all sinners in need of Jesus, and only those who trust Him will have eternal life."

"That's one reason why we need to read the Bible, isn't it?" asked Skyler. "So we can know whether something we hear about God is true or not."

"That's right," said Dad. "What the Bible says is always true."

## Key Verse:

### **Ephesians 5:6** (NIV)

***<sup>6</sup>Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.***

## Challenge: HOW ABOUT YOU?

*Has Satan used people to tell you untrue things? That the so-called little wrong things you do don't matter? That you're a good person and can make it to heaven on your own? Or even that there really is no place like hell? Don't be fooled. Ideas like those may sound nice, but they are not true. Check what you hear with what God says in His Word, the Bible.*

## Prayer:

*Take time to pray and ask God to reveal His truth about who He is and who we are because of Him, and to help us not fall for anything that isn't true according to God's Word, the Bible.*

## IN OTHER GOOD NEWS...

### **Bible Passages:**

#### **Galatians 1:6-8** (NIV)

**<sup>6</sup>I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— <sup>7</sup>which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.<sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!**

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# TROUT LAKE TIMES

Dear Parents,

Today's lesson is about perseverance, being able to stand firm despite difficulties, failure or opposition. The Bible gives us numerous examples of faith that is firmly fixed in place... steadfast and unwavering. Today when you interact with your camper, try to give them some examples of how your faith has given you strength to remain firm in your beliefs.

## STAND FIRM UNDER PRESSURE

BARBARA J. WESTBERG

Alexa watched her sister tighten the lids on several jars of beans and place them in a pressure cooker. Then she put the lid on the cooker and adjusted the heat. "How does a pressure cooker work, Hazel?" asked Alexa. She was spending the weekend at her older sister's apartment, and Hazel was showing her how to can beans they'd bought at the farmer's market.

"The heat causes pressure to build up inside the cooker, which helps cook and preserve the beans inside the jars," Hazel replied. "When they're done, we'll be able to store them for a year or more, and they won't spoil."

When the beans were finished cooking, Hazel turned the stove off. "Now we need to wait and let the pressure go down before we open the cooker."

CRACK! Alexa jumped. "What was that?"

Hazel frowned. "I think a jar inside the cooker cracked. It must have had a weak spot and couldn't handle the pressure. We'll check when it's safe to open it."

They grabbed some snacks and flopped down on the couch. "I feel like that jar sometimes," Alexa told her sister. "Like I'll crack under pressure." "What do you mean?" asked Hazel.

"There's pressure at school everywhere!" Alexa said. "Kids are always trying to get me to do things I'm not supposed to, and if I don't, they make me feel like I'm the one who's wrong!"

Hazel nodded. "I felt that way when I was in school too. But pressure can work two ways, like it did in the pressure cooker."

"You mean, it cooks the food and keeps it from spoiling, but sometimes it makes a jar crack?"

"Right!" said Hazel. "Pressure in our lives can work that way too. It can preserve us by reminding us we belong to Jesus and helping us stand firm in our faith. Or it can make us crack and give in to temptation."

"Do people have weak spots too?" Alexa asked.

"Sometimes, but we have the power of God's Spirit to help us," Hazel replied. "He reminds us of God's truth and gives us the strength we need to do what's right--and even if we do give in under pressure, Jesus will forgive us so we can start over. He'll help you stand firm so you don't crack."

## Key Verse:

### 2 Timothy 4:18 (NIV)

*<sup>18</sup> The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

## Challenge: HOW ABOUT YOU?

*Do you feel like you're under pressure? It can be hard not to give in to peer pressure to go along with what everyone else seems to be doing. But if you know Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit to give you strength. In today's Bible passage, God was with Daniel when he was under pressure, and He'll be with you too. Trust Him for the strength to stand firm.*

## Prayer:

*Take time to ask God to help you and your family stand firm under pressure.*

## IN OTHER GOOD NEWS...

### Bible Passages:

#### Daniel 1:8-15 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. <sup>9</sup> Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, <sup>10</sup> but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

<sup>11</sup> Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaël and Azariah, <sup>12</sup> "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. <sup>13</sup> Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." <sup>14</sup> So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

<sup>15</sup> At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.

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