

June 3, 2015



FAMILY DEVOTIONS

THE BEST FAMILY TIME BEGINS RIGHT HERE!

Some of the most challenging times in parenthood are the "transition" seasons when schedules and lives are in the process of CHANGE! Even the most organized, structured, scheduled mom experiences new challenges as seasons change. And the truth is that when the change affects our children, we as moms and grands are profoundly affected too! And here we are. Summer time is here and it is honestly a paradox in most homes. The yearly challenge of reorganizing, rescheduling, and restructuring brings its own seasonal stress, in spite of the wonderful Family Time opportunities which are uniquely available during the summer months. We invite you to enjoy these devotions with your whole family...we invite you to enjoy them when you are alone with your Messiah. We hope to encourage you, to inspire you, to motivate you, and to empower you as you embrace the wonderful, crazy Summer Time opportunities for memorable and productive Family Time! We are cheering you on!

∞ LET THE CHILDREN COME ∞

One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. But Jesus said, Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children. And he placed his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left." Matthew 19:13-15 NLT

I love these parents! In spite of the disciples' scolding and rebuking the parents, attempting to keep their children from bothering Jesus, these determined, persistent, tenacious parents stayed and remained "present." Perhaps they waited, and waited and waited...Why? Because they felt compelled to bring their precious children into the presence of this man... to receive a blessing from this Healer, this Miracle Maker, this Wonder Worker... from His strong, loving, miracle-making, healing hands. This man Jesus, knew the hearts of all involved and called out, "Let the children come...don't stop them!"

The truth is that Jesus is in the people-building, Kingdom-building business. And, His purpose here on earth was and is to connect with people, to do life with them, and to give LIFE, TRUE LIFE to them, to you, and to your children, in order to bring all of the glory to His Father. However, people must come to Him willingly...men, women, boys, girls, children...We all must come to Him in order to connect and to have relationship with Him, and with the Father...

The truth is that we must come to Him as children come to their own parents...and to Him, their Messiah. We must come hungering and thirsting for what He offers, just as an infant is totally dependent on parents to provide nourishment, protection, provision...Our Savior provides that same sustenance for our souls and for our spirits. In humility, in extreme want, extreme need, and complete trust, we must come...He knows our hearts.

Jesus very clearly instructs, perhaps commands that the disciples not hinder or stop the children from coming into His presence...a very powerful thought as summer time is here and yes, schedules are a bit crazy. For some families, the temptation is to fill every moment with the wonderful opportunities available to their child. And for other families, perhaps, an unstructured schedule at home is their choice. Many others will do some of both...But regardless of how Summer Time is scheduled and spent...Jesus spoke very clearly about not hindering or stopping the children from coming to Him! And I think that instruction is for parents as well...in all seasons!

May we as parents and as grands never hinder, or stop our children from coming into the presence of Jesus...May we never shoo them away because they are bothering our own agenda. May we not allow summer busy-ness and business to distract us from people-building and Kingdom building. May we lovingly lead, teach, and model for our precious ones who to follow, where to meet, and how to come into the presence of Jesus. May we lead them into private time with Jesus, Family Time with Jesus, and into corporate worship with fellow believers in the local church...in all seasons!

Our faithful Lord empowers and equips us to come...to lead...to teach...to model...He speaks with authority to each one of His children. He speaks with power and Truth. He speaks with Love...He leads through the Spirit... He speaks through the Spirit to every one of the believers who hears His voice as He calls, "Let the little children come to me..." (No age limits!)

THE BEST FAMILY TIME BEGINS RIGHT HERE!

Grab your Bible, journal, a pen and some TIME.

Invite your children to do the same...and enjoy the print-outs included for the young ones. (You will need their crayons or markers!) Then gather around the kitchen table or throw out a blanket on the lawn. The BEST Family Time begins by TAKING TIME with Jesus...who said.....

"Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them..." Luke 18:16 ICB

There is truly no greater excitement and fulfillment than watching your precious ones come to Jesus! Summer blessings!

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." 3 John

APPLICATION

Using your journals to record your thoughts:

The disciples thought that they were protecting Jesus and lost sight of the people and the Kingdom causes...

What things in my life do I need to be aware of this summer that might stop or hinder my family coming to/meeting with Jesus? (distractions, busy-ness, business, scheduling, my own agenda)...

- *Ask your children the same question.*
- *What should they be aware of in their own lives? (screen time, social media, activities...)*
- *What are Jesus' clear instructions?*
- *Why do you think that He cares so much for children of all ages?*
- *Make some Family plans and commitments to meet with Jesus personally and as a family.*
- *Make a list of some fun Family Times your family has had with Jesus...*
- *Make a list of new ideas.*

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