

June 24, 2015



FAMILY DEVOTIONS

GATHER & CONNECT



...and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

Connect- To join, to link, to fasten together, to unite, to bind, to establish communication between...to connect as with a bridge...

There is no doubt that our Creator, our Heavenly Father is the author of relationships...of gathering and of connecting, because He said that it is not good for man to be alone. I cannot imagine the intimacy that Adam and Eve experienced with their Creator...He placed them into the beautiful garden and explained life to them. He taught them all things...He gave them food...

He gave to them all things...The great God Almighty God cared for them just as you care for your children...He walked with them...It was His idea...Gather and Connect.

Marriage and the Family was His idea too...It was His plan...It was His purpose...and the same Biblical principle and pattern applies to the Family...Gather and Connect...Walk with them...Oh, yes...that was His idea too!

HIS IDEAS

Sometimes in the busy-ness and the distraction of life, we can forget that our Creator our God Almighty's ideas are truly the best...Always...Always...no matter what the circumstances, the times, the seasons, the ages or the stages...His ideas are just BEST...in Summer Time as well.....



GATHER & CONNECT



Last week Pastor Mac announced in the sermon for everyone to fill out the 'Connect' card which is attached to the bulletin. He delivers that same invitation each week to connect with LHC...

Connect- To join, to link, to fasten together, to unite, to bind, to establish communication between...to connect as with a bridge ... And, the word 'connect' seemed to scream out at me...and I heard it in a different way...It is something so much more than a casual opportunity...

Last week in my blog, we were reminded that the single greatest desire in a child's heart is to 'connect' with his or her family...the same desire in the heart of a teen as well...And yes, and the Lord placed that desire in adult hearts as well...first to connect with Him...He carved a place into our souls...into our spirits...an intimate place that only He can fill, that only He can satisfy...

And then, He placed the desire for relationship into the hearts and souls of mankind...the need for one another...for immediate family...for husband and wife...for sons and daughters...brothers and sisters...

And, in His infinite wisdom, He placed the need into our hearts for community...for the Family of Faith...for friends who are connected and united by the common purpose...who are linked and connected by a bridge...the bridge and connector being the Holy Spirit.

The Truth is that God created mankind to do life together...first with Him...and with one another...It is not good for man or woman or child to be alone...and with the Family of Faith, we do not have to be alone.

FAMILY TIME- FAMILY OF FAITH...

Some of the most memorable times in our family have occurred on Sunday mornings...or Sunday nights...or during the week...as we gathered and connected with our Family of Faith...as we stepped out of our comfort zones... as we volunteered...as we invested our Family Time into the lives of others...into the wonderful "People" programs offered in our local church. Since we had our first child and while we reared our children through college, we have had three church homes...and each one offered the most precious and wonderful blessings... as we chose to "connect"...to do life with the people in the local Family of Faith... We are certain that it made a difference in the lives of our children and in our lives as well, as "did life" with people who loved what and whom we loved... who loved Kingdom work! Why? Because, it was our Creator's idea to unite people's lives into community...to do life together...To build up the Kingdom and to bring glory to Almighty God...and to encourage...and to spur one another along in this life.

Something that I have learned through the years is that no matter how large or how small your immediate family is...we all need and crave The Family of Faith... I have heard countless people through the years as they have testified to the miraculous "connection" they acquire as they "do life with" their local church. When they make the concerted effort to get up early to teach Sunday school... or to work at VBS...or to commit to a weekly Bible Study...to attend a worship service...God provides the bridge of the Holy Spirit which unites and connects people in the most miraculous way...connecting through a bond which overcomes any obstacle of relationship...Yes, God's ideas are BEST...

The second lesson that I have learned through the years, is that someone may invite me, or inform me of a wonderful opportunity within the Family of Faith and it is so exciting to receive "the invite"...but, in order to "connect" with the Family of Faith, to truly join, to link, to fasten together, to unite, to bind, to establish relationship and connection, I must initiate my response. I must respond to the invitation, to the information, to "the call" to "connect"...I must choose to do life with the Family of Faith. The local church is composed of people who respond to the call to connect...to unite...to fasten together...to "do life together" in the name of Yeshua Christ.....no matter what the circumstances are...no matter what the impositions may be...no matter what life brings...that is just what family does for one another...

THE FAMILY OF FAITH-GOD'S IDEA

This summer, as you invest your hearts into your Family Time...I pray that you and your family will make the concerted effort and commitment to Gather and Connect with The Family of Faith found in one of the local churches in your area. I pray that you will not be tempted to take "time off" from the opportunity to Gather and Connect...but rather that you would find a new Summer Time opportunity to "do life with" your Family of Faith.

Today, we celebrate the blessing of our grand-daughter as she giggles and laughs in anticipation of the opportunity to "go to church"...And she goes to church to see her friends...big people and little people...She goes to church to sing songs about Jesus...to worship...She goes to church to "connect" with people who love what and whom she loves. She goes to church to Gather and to Connect...

AFTER ALL, IT WAS GOD'S IDEA... & OUR FATHER KNOWS BEST!

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.

APPLICATION

Read Hebrews 10:24-25 in a children's Bible.

Why does God clearly give instructions for us to attend church?

Discuss ways that The Family of Faith has encouraged you and your family recently.

Discuss times when you have been the ones to encourage or spur someone along.

Discuss special ways that your family can participate this summer in the Family of Faith...even when traveling!

Gather and Connect as you enjoy your Family Time!

TIME WITH THE FAMILY OF FAITH
interrupts busy, stress-full, stress-filled, schedules.
TIME WITH THE FAMILY OF FAITH
protects the family members from stress factors...
and offers de-stressing time!

