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FATHER'S DAY DEVOTIONAL

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IT'S FUNNY WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THINGS
GET PERSONAL

01.

It's Personal

Nathan Jager, Fairhaven Student Pastor

My mind was made up, I was not going to date while in college. Girls want time, they want attention and you have to buy them things. I was broke! I needed to focus on grades and work and my social life. So off to college I went, committed to not having a relationship. And then I met her, on day one of college. She was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. It started as small talk, and then turned into a dating relationship less than a week later. We dated, got engaged, married and now have four incredible children. Wow! What a difference she has made in my life!

My list of reasons for not dating in college no longer mattered once I met her. Why? Because now it's personal.

It's funny what happens when things get personal.

Many people refuse to believe in God. And truthfully, they have really solid reasons for not believing in Him. Here's a small list of why some people refuse to believe in God...

1. Why would He allow suffering?
2. Why did He let that bad thing happen to me?
3. Why does he let bad things happen to good people?
4. Why does He not show Himself?
5. Christians can be some of the meanest people ever.

Why would I want a part of that?

All very good reasons!

In John chapter 9 there was a group of Jewish leaders that had reasons to believe that Jesus was not the son of God. To them, the reasons were very good! They went so far as to accuse Jesus of being a sinner, but then Jesus healed a blind man. The leaders decided to question this former blind man, and the man's response was amazing....

I don't know whether he is a sinner ... But I know this: I was blind, but now I see. - John 9:25

He doesn't know all the answers, He can't explain everything that happened. But He knew Jesus changed everything for him. To him, it was personal! And what a personal difference Jesus made in this man's life!

You don't have to have all the answers, in fact, none of us do. My prayer is that we will all look at the blessings we have been given and know that they come from a God who personally loves us. Because that makes all the difference!

1. What personal difference has God made for you?

2. Why does it matter that God is a personal God?

3. Is it comforting knowing you don't have to have all the answers?

COMMUNITY IS IN NEED OF A FAITHFUL LEADER

LIVING CLOSE TO GOD. HAVE MORE OF

IF WE COME CLOSER TO GOD, HE WILL COME CLOSER TO US. THE BEAUTIFUL THING IS IF WE CAN TAKE A STEP CLOSER. WHEREVER YOU ARE IN YOUR LIFE WITH GOD, YOU CAN TAKE A STEP CLOSER.

TAKE A STEP
CLOSER
TO GOD AND
HE'LL LEAN IN

Depth & Intimacy

Paul Clark, Fairhaven Campus Pastor

This spring has been a busy season at the Clark house. Over the better part of the last couple months, either myself or Kay has been out of town on business almost every week - seven different cities, four different time zones and 5,000 miles. Each trip was unavoidable and important, but the miles and the time zones made it difficult to connect. There were fewer smiles, fewer touches, fewer meaningful conversations, and fewer minutes together sharing deeper thoughts. When the traveling was finally over, I was really intentional about my time with Kay, to get back to the intimacy that comes from closeness; the relationship we have come to love.

The same can happen in my life with God. The busyness and demands of work, family and schedules, can conspire together to create distance between me and my heavenly Father. I can find myself dashing between people, places and my to-do list; experiencing less of God's touch and fewer honest and meaningful conversations with Him - losing depth and losing intimacy. In the ebb and flow of our spiritual life, we will inevitably experience seasons of closeness and seasons of distance. This doesn't surprise or disappoint God. It's human. Nevertheless, He's always waiting for us, inviting us to come closer, to intentionally connect with him at a deep level.

Come near to God and he will come near to you.

- James 4:8

What an invitation! Wherever you are in your life with God, you can take a step closer. What does that mean for you? Does it mean spending some time talking to God at the beginning and end of your day? Perhaps it might mean allowing God to speak truth into your life through reading or memorizing Scripture. Could it mean being more consistent in attending worship services, or perhaps serving God's people in some way? What would it mean for you to take a step closer to Jesus?

The beautiful thing about our life with God is that no matter where we are, whether we feel close or far away, God promises that if we come closer to Him, He will come closer to us.

Our families, our friends, our church and our community are in need of men who are living close to God; men who have fixed their eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2) and refuse to be drawn away.

1. On a scale of 1-10, one being really close to God, and 10 being far away, where would you say you are?

2. What are the things in your life that create distance between you and God?

3. What is one step you can take today to come closer to God?

GEN ERA TIONS

PRAY FOR
TO COME...

03.

True Legacy

Doug Carroll, Fairhaven Campus Pastor

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message. - John 17:20

Have you ever heard the word legacy? Many times, when people hear the word legacy and think of some type of inheritance that will be passed down from generation to generation, like money, a business, real estate and so on. Sometimes legacy is thought of as family stories, successes or even family values. But, it goes deeper. It refers to passing the love of Jesus to all those who follow. It is about God's ownership of everything that you have and your stewardship of all that God has given you.

“My prayer is not for them (his disciples) alone. I pray also for those who will believe (at the present and for generations to come) in me through their message.”

This prayer that Jesus prayed was not just for those disciples who were so close to Him, but also for those who would become Christ followers. Jesus is praying for the generations of believers to come, a prayer of legacy. Even as Jesus approached His death on the cross, His last moments on earth were spent praying for us. Jesus prayed for you, me and yes, even for those people who sometimes annoy us.

As a parent, we want to leave something for our children, something they will remember us by - a fortune, an amazing athletic record in high school, a library named after us - so that our legacy lives on ... or so we think. The truth is that many of us don't even know the names of our great-great grandparents, let alone their stories.

I know that I personally can't wade through my family tree and tell you all the names and stories for each person. I do know the legacy of faith and understanding of God that has been passed down through my family and has impacted the lives of generation after generation.

My parents and grandparents prayed for me before I was born, when I was growing up, and even when I was far from God. Now they are praying for my wife and my children. What would it look like if we prayed for our children and our family for generations to come, like Jesus prayed for us? To pray not just for our children, but for a legacy for our family that is so big, it would affect many generations to come.

If you want to make a difference in your family now and for generations to come, then pray like Jesus that they would come to believe in him.

1. Have you ever thought about what your family will remember about you?

2. What are you praying for right now, for your wife, your children, your family?

NOT
JUST
ONE HOUR,
ONE DAY
A WEEK.



04.

The Church

Jared Petty, Fairhaven Campus Pastor

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. - 1 Corinthians 12:27

From the time I can remember, my parents always brought me to church. Sundays were about going to church, dinners with family and neighborhood football games in the backyard.

My mom would teach Sunday school classes and dad would help with services and make sure we knew our Bible verses. Church was always part of my life.

I also learned that church wasn't just relegated to Sunday mornings. We had Bible studies in our home throughout the week, helped elderly neighbors and saw Christ lived out in my parents. My father wanted to make sure that our faith wasn't just about going to church, but being the church.

So often in American church culture, going to church can become the extent of our faith. We compartmentalize our faith to one hour, one day a week. Corporate worship with other believers is important to growing in our faith, but living out our faith at school, in the workplace and in our homes is truly the heart of being the church.

The word “church” in the New Testament was first introduced by Jesus when He famously told the disciples, “...on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” Matthew 16:18

Jesus was declaring an important principle, the Church is the hope of the world. He would create a new “assembly of believers” to declare the gospel, share compassion with others and create an environment for a loving community.

The word church in the Greek is ekklesia, which literally means “a called-out people to God.”

God not only saves you from sin, but He sanctifies you to a divine purpose in His kingdom. He has called you to make a difference in your church.

As a Campus Pastor, I am able to witness people making a difference at church each week. From the faithfulness

of the set-up crew, to the hospitality of the ushers and greeters, dedicated Sunday school teachers, worship team, small group leaders, etc.

I am truly blessed to serve with a team that is passionate about Jesus and to see that passion and love spill into others each week.

My dad made a difference in my life by leaving a legacy of faith, and a love for the church. We too can leave a legacy when we choose to be the church, so others can find hope in Christ.

1. Where can you make a difference in church by using your time, talents, and treasures to bless others?

2. How can you be the church this week to someone who needs a helping hand, a word of encouragement, or by being an example at work/school?

13 The mandrakes give a smell, and
at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant
fruits, new and old, *which* I have laid
up for thee, O my beloved.

People

2 I would lead thee, and bring thee
into my mother's house, u^e would in-
struct me: I would cause **talk**
of spiced wine of the juice
of thy fountain, and thou shalt
forget the Lord, they have provoked

3 His left hand should be under my
head and his right hand should em-
brace me, with iniquity, a seed
of children that are corrupt. **about**

should have been as Sodom, and we
of spiced with little more than a posh
granat **what the**

head, and his right hand should embrace me. 3 The ox knoweth his own

THE vis **passion**
Amoz,

Judah and Jerusalem in the days of
Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah,
kings of Judah.

2 Hear, O heavens, **about**
earth: for the LORD ^{with speech},
have nourished and brought up chil-
dren, and they have rebelled against
me.

3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the
ass his master's crib: *but* Israel doth
not know, my people doth not consider.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have

7 Many waters cannot quench
neither can the floods drown
man would give all the substance
his house for love, it would
be contemned.

le "We have a little sister who has no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for?"

9 If she be a wall, we will
to palace of silver: and
we will inclose her w
of cedar.

10 I *am* a wall, and my b
towers: then was I in his c
that found^d favour.

14 Solomon had a vineyard
at Hazezon-tamar, which was
between Samaria and Shechem;
and he let out the vineyard
keepers; every one for the fruit
to bring a thousand silver
pieces a year, to the king.
To what purpose is the

been as Sodom, and we

They are

— Ich bin — thun — Österreich.

nate. Every city is desolate,
are burned with fire : your la-
gers devour it in your prese-

desolate, as overthrown by
 and the daughter of Zion
 a cottage in a vineyard, as a
 garden of cucumbers, as a bes

9 Except the LORD of hosts
unto us a very small remnant
should have been as Sodom
should have been like unto G

10 ¶ Hear the word of the
rulers of Sodom; give ear un
of our God, ye people of Gon
11 To what purpose is the

ISAIAH.

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A Saturated Life

Paul Seabold, Fairhaven Outreach Specialist

What does it look like to make a difference for the Kingdom of God in my workplace? Are there specific things I should be doing? I have asked myself these questions over the years as I have worked in various jobs including the military. I have come to realize there is not a checklist that I need to follow, I realized that I need my life to reflect Christ. I do not mean this statement in the classic bumper sticker way, I mean that the presence of God should saturate my life to such an extent that it is impossible for others not to notice.

Being a lieutenant in the Army, I usually have soldiers who drive me where I need to go. On one occasion, we had to drive as a part of a brigade-sized convoy to Camp Grayling

Michigan. The trip took the better part of 10 hours and incorporated over 600 military vehicles. As I sat in that “metal box” for those hours, I noticed something happening. My conversations with the soldiers in the truck began to move from surface level small talk to deeper conversations about beliefs and faith. It was not something I had planned or even orchestrated, but because I had sought to fill my life and motivations with Christ, it was an inevitability. People tend to talk about what they are passionate about and what is going on in their life.

There are two passages from Colossians that really drive home this idea of what our passions and motivations should be in life and in the workplace.

And whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. - Colossians 3:17

Whatever you are doing, work at it with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not for people - Colossians 3:23

It is all about Christ and our service to Him as our Lord and Savior. I genuinely want to do well at my job in ministry. I genuinely want to do well at my job with the military.

My desire to do well should not be founded in any desire to make myself look good, but to ultimately glorify God and make a difference for His kingdom. All the honors, accolades, raises and bonuses will fade away, but the glory of God is eternal.

1. What are your passions, things that you can talk to someone about with very little prompting?

2. How does God (or does He) help you define success in the workplace?



06.

Others-Focused

Kirk Lithander, Fairhaven Outreach Pastor

As I reflect upon Father's Day, I'm reminded of my father, Dale Lithander, who knew no stranger and modeled a lifestyle of service. For example, he donated, installed and maintained a telephone system at the local homeless shelter. My father met Iranian laborers and invited them to our home to enjoy my Mom's home cooked meals. And, he enjoyed listening to the residents' stories at the rescue mission and encouraging them.

My father intentionally reached out to serve the marginalized and foreigners in our town—especially the underserved. His legacy made a difference in individual lives AND impacted our community for God's glory.

His example of loving cross-culturally, ultimately encouraged my calling into missions.

God calls us to engage in a missional lifestyle, but it requires making time in our schedules to serve the overlooked and underserved. We are to follow Jesus' example of servant leadership, *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve...* - Mark 10:45.

To adopt a missional lifestyle, we need to shift our paradigm from "self-focused" to "others-focused."

Here are four practical ways to make a difference in people's lives.

- **Engage in random acts of kindness**

Small acts can make a huge difference in another person's life. For example, mow your neighbor's yard when they're out of town or pay for the person's meal behind you in a drive thru.

- **Volunteer in a community organization**

Serving at a local food pantry or serving breakfast to the homeless at Saint Vincent de Paul are tangible ways to show Christ's love. For more information visit: www.stvincentdayton.org.

- **Serve as an English conversation partner**

We have many immigrants living in the Miami Valley, and learning English as well as trade skills are necessary

for refugees to find gainful employment. Fairhaven partners with the Dayton Sewing Collaborative that teaches sewing and recruits volunteers as English conversation partners. Visit www.daytonsewing.com for additional information.

- **Invite an international student to your home for a meal**

Hebrews 13:2 encourages us to show hospitality. This is a unique opportunity for an international student to learn about our American culture. For more information: dayton.ifiusa.org.

1. How can serving others impact you?

2. What gifts, skills or talents had God given you that you can use to impact your community for His kingdom?

APPLICATION

Passion Project

Blair Cornell, Fairhaven member

I've had a passion for cars for as long as I can remember. Even when I was a kid, I enjoyed being around cars. I loved learning about them, riding in them, even washing them.

One day, my son, who has special needs, was having a rough day and we couldn't get him to calm down. I asked if he'd like to go for a car ride and he immediately snapped out of his mood. After seeing this help on several more occasions, I began to think that maybe this could help other kids with special needs, and JoyRide was born. As the idea of JoyRide began to grow, I knew it would take an army of people and resources to pull it off, so I began to pray. Through the process there have been moments of frustration and sacrifice, which constantly keeps me in prayer for the future of JoyRide. And staying in prayer renews my energy and excitement as we move forward.

JoyRide allows kids with special needs the opportunity to experience high-end cars and the chance to feel like a "big shot." It also has a huge impact on our volunteers, many of whom see their cars as nothing more than "tools" to help bring smiles to the kids' faces. My wife and I see it as a way to serve our community and love on families impacted by special needs. Our prayer is that through JoyRide we can develop connections with these families and point them towards our faith in Christ.



20 *Happy* 18

FATHER'S DAY

When men walk with God, lead their families, live with integrity, develop friendships and actively participate in their community and church, change happens! I am so grateful for all the courageous men at Fairhaven who care about the condition of their hearts. Way to go, guys!



Pastor David Smith