



July Memory Verse

Matthew 18:14

At that time the disciples came to Him saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to Him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

July-Seeing God in Children

In July we will search through the scriptures and discover why God wants us to be like children. Throughout the Bible we read stories about childhood heroes who lived with great faith and accomplished amazing feats because they believed in the power of God. These little ones came into this world with the faith of a mustard seed and showed us all how to plant it and grow it. And why does God want us to come before Him as children? "Children full of innocence, come trusting their parents to completely take care of them, to protect them, to provide for them, to correct them when they are wrong, and to love and to cherish them." God wants us to have that same trust in Him and like children be filled with joy, love and laughter (all things that adults can lose sight of) that will allow those of childlike faith an open path to God. When we go before God as a child we go stripped of our sins and doubts. Children are full of inspiration that comes from a committed faith. Faith is a process that begins when we are children. Like a child we should come before the Father, completely open to His love and commandments, engaged in His Spirit, and trusting in His Word.

Many excerpts in July come from 15 Bible Verses About Children to Read to the Kids, Calvary Chapel-South Bay and 24 Bible Verses about Children.

Wednesday, July 1

Matthew 21:14-16 And the blind and lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant; and they said to Him, "Do you hear what these children are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast brought perfect praise'?"

The elders were upset that the children were praising Jesus and complimenting Him for what He had done. When they questioned Jesus about it He responded with a passage from the Greek Septuagint, Psalm 8:2: "Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger." Children, who sing praises to the Lord and spread His wisdom willingly and without fear, teach us that if we do the same in our life, sin and temptation will be defeated. Do you have a childlike faith? Briefly describe your personal faith and how it has grown since childhood.

Thursday, July 2

Psalm 127:3-5 "Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate."

Children are rewards from God. They are such a blessing in our lives. Children will carry on the heritage of God's family by learning from their earthly family that the Lord should be at the center of everything we do. God will bless us when we stay true to His word. We can live a lifetime of caring for our children or others, wearing ourselves out in our careers, or anything else but if God is not the center of all we do, it will all be for nothing. Where is God's place in your life? How do you share your relationship with God to others?

Friday, July 3

Matthew 11: 25 At that time Jesus declared, "I praise you Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children".

Jesus had returned from preaching to multitudes about John, the Baptist, and how they both had been rejected by the Pharisees, but received by the lowly and sinners. He gives praise and thanks to God recognizing Him as a "Father", as His own Father, and addressing Him as creator of all. The "things" He is referring to are the doctrines of the Gospel. The "wise and learned" do not see or accept the mysteries of the Gospel because they are bound by civil and worldly things. The little children, new Christians, are given spiritual insight because they see the suitableness in them, their hearts are impressed with them and they desire to seek the truth.

Children are curious about learning new and unknown facts. They love to solve a mystery or think outside the box. God gives wisdom and guidance to those who seek to know Him and be close to Him. Think about the mysteries God revealed to you as a child and make a timeline of all of them throughout your life.

Saturday, July 4

2 Timothy 3:14-15

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Paul is reminding Timothy that all who follow Jesus will be persecuted as he was. He is counseling Timothy by suggesting as adults we should remember what we learned as children, particularly in our faith. Through these sacred teachings we will find salvation and reignite our faith in Jesus. Who influenced your faith as a child and who does today? Think about finding an accountability partner as Timothy did in Paul.

Sunday, July 5

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

As Anglicans we believe that the scriptures have shown to be reliable, as the inspired true word of God. Knowing and studying scripture gives us a "manual" to live a productive life. The age of children is the "age to learn". True learning comes from the scriptures. God created the family to build trust in our earthly parents who are our first teachers. Are you giving your children, friends and others the gift that keeps on giving? Who in your life "completes" your study?

Monday, July 6

Luke 2:51-52 And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

God calls us to grow, in all ways, to be like Jesus. Luke is telling us that Jesus was a good kid. As he grew up, he was obedient and became smarter. He made God proud and was liked by others. His mother, Mary, stored all these memories in her heart. The son of God had to grow up and live a life of character in a family just like other children. There were no shortcuts for Jesus. His wisdom came as he grew. Sometimes I get tired and distracted in my spiritual development. Once I remember the journey Christ made on earth, I remember there are no shortcuts for me either! What tools do you have in your tool box to help you refocus when you get distracted? As a carpenter, Jesus had many "tools" he shared with the disciples and followers. Think about the journey of Jesus. What tools can you borrow?

Tuesday, July 7

2 John 1:4

I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children following the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father.

3 John 1:4

No greater joy can I have than this, to hear that my children follow the truth.

As believers, hopefully we are living according to the truth of God even in difficult times. Whatever problems may be caused by poor examples those followers of Christ will lead believers. In Christ, we have faith because we received him and followed the truth of the Gospel since we embraced and professed it. We hold firm in the faith through worship, discipline and following the ordinances. Parents and mentors receive joy when their children/mentors walk in paths of faith, truth and holiness. Think of a life you mentored. How did you do as an example?

Wednesday, July 8

1 John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so, we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.

Jars of Clay recorded a wonderful song. "They Will Know We are Christians", that explains how we will be known. If we are children of God we must know Him and be like Him.

*We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that our unity will one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yeah, they'll know we are Christians by our love
We will work with each other, we will work side by side
We will work with each other, we will work side by side
And we'll guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yeah, they'll know we are Christians by our love.*

To imitate God, we must spend time with Him and walk in His ways, be prayerful and walk in love as Christ did. If we don't spend time with Him, we can't know Him. Actions speak louder than words. Are you a "Doer" of the Word or only a "Hearer"? What is your action?

Thursday, July 9

Isaiah 11:6-9 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters over the sea.

These verses describe the peace that will come with the Messiah. The future hope of Israel is that peace shall be multiplied on earth among all of Christ's sheep. I'm seeing the day when Jesus is once again walking around all the earth and there is harmony among all people. The people will be led by the Good Shepherd who came as a baby boy. He has always been our shepherd and our spiritual leader. As children we all played "follow the leader". How do you imagine this game when Jesus returns for us to follow?

Friday, July 10

1 Samuel 17:33-37 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"

This was one of my favorite Bible stories as a child and still is. We all know how the story ends. King Saul thought Goliath was too big to fight. David thought he was too big to miss! This is a lesson of courage, faith, and overcoming what seems impossible. In times of doubt and fear how do you load your slingshot? Think about those times in your childhood when you needed to find courage, faith and overcome what seemed impossible. All these experiences were preparing us and strengthening us to stand firm in our faith. My slingshot is loaded with _____.

Saturday, July 11

Matthew 5:43-48

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in Heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The church is like a big family, where the members can be hurt or feel mistreated. Every group of human beings experiences conflicts and misunderstandings. It is difficult to love, bless and pray for people who hurt us. Jesus teaches us to forgive those who trespass against us. He urges us to strive to be as perfect as our Father in Heaven who forgives us. Through this example, God is showing His children what He wants us to become so we can be with Him eternally. Are you willing to weather the storms with love, love your enemies and let Jesus take care of the rest? As you pray the Lord's Prayer today listen for His voice.

Sunday, July 12

Ephesians 4:11-16 And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.

God wants to build a community of people that wholly love, trust and serve Him. Until this truth has encompassed our souls, we can become victims of the world's philosophy of life. Unless we as a body work together we cannot show what Christ is like to the world. God gifts us each with a gift in order to grow into mature Christians. As children of God we will grow into maturity so we can collectively build each other up. Maturity is growing up in Christ's likeness. Unless we as a body work together we cannot show what Christ is like. Our example as "the body" may be the only example of Christ some see in the world. Do you feel equipped to be part of this body? What gifts do you feel God has given you?

Monday, July 13

Ephesians 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

As followers of Jesus we enjoy a Father-child relationship with God. Children naturally seek to copy what he or she sees in a loving father. Another translation reads like this, "Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are His dear children". The late Dr. Albert Schweitzer was once asked, "What is the best way to raise children?". He replied, "There are three ways: 1. By example, 2. By example, 3. By example." As children of God, we are to imitate Him in loving one another, just as Christ sacrificially loved us. To imitate God means to mimic him. How do we mimic someone? We watch them. We pay close attention to them. Do you do what God does and walk in love? The point Paul is making is love shouldn't be short lived and occasional, it should be natural and consistent like walking. Anyone can love once, but can you love constantly? Read 1Corinthians 13 and think about that kind of love.

Tuesday, July 14

Psalms 139:13-16

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Jeremiah 1:5

God says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you."

God is deeply and intimately involved in our growth and development. God's call to His children is to grow and develop as human beings as well as to develop in body, mind and soul throughout our lives. He is not finished with us yet. If you were to write a "life plan" for yourself what would it include? We often have life coaches. Who is yours?

Wednesday, July 15

Mark 6:30-44 The apostles returned to Jesus and told Him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of them. As he landed he saw a great throng, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the hour is now late; send them away, to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat." But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?" And he said to them, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." Then he commanded them all to sit down by companies upon the green grass. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

The feeding of the five thousand is an amazing miracle. This should be a reminder to us that God always provides, no matter what. What we forget is that the person offering the five loaves and two fishes was a child. In John 6 it is revealed that it was a young boy who asked if it would be enough. This small offering fed five thousand people. We often think some of the things we do for Christ may seem small to us, but God may be using it to nourish and bless many others. We are called to have the faith of a child and give without limits, even when it seems out of reach. In times of need, Jesus always turned to God. Think of a time when you were in need. Did you turn to God? What was the answer?

Thursday, July 16

Luke 18:17

"Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

Jesus says that we must learn from children. They tell us important things about our own spiritual health. This is how we learn to become "children of God". Children give back to us what God's Kingdom is really like. Their trust and faith teach us the means of our inheritance and adoption as "children of God". We all come into this world being needy and at the end of our lives we are also needy. Life is a full cycle of trust and faith. What have you learned from a child recently?

Friday, July 17

Matthew 18:5-6 "And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea."

Jesus is telling us that when we receive His disciples, that are meek and lowly, into our houses, or into our hearts and affections accepting His ministry and message with cheerfulness, readiness, love and faith we are receiving Him. I think about those who need our help and acceptance in the world today recalling His words in Matthew 25:35-40.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Then the righteous will answer Him, "Lord when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and you?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

There are so many opportunities today to minister to others who need our help and support. As we support one another we are not only sharing kindness with our fellow man but also with God. Have you ever been given a nudge to help someone in distress or need? Have you ever received such a blessing?

Saturday, July 18

Galatians 4:6-7

Because you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father". So, you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir.

When we come to Christ by faith we are freed from slavery to the law of Moses as well as our own sinfulness. God adopts us as His own children which gives us the right to call Him our "daddy". We can live with God as little children do with a trusted father. Believers in Christ are protected and loved and included in the plans and purpose of our God. Sometimes our earthly fathers are not present for several reasons. As a child of God, I have the assurance that He is always with me. I find comfort in this and strive to spend time alone with Him throughout each day. He makes His presence know to us in the world through nature, music, meditation, conversations and the scripture. Do you recall a special time when God, the Father, revealed himself to you when you were not expecting it?

The Beatitudes

The next few days we will study the Beatitudes and how they relate to the Christian life. St. Augustine called them the ideal for every Christian life. Pope John Paul II wrote that the Beatitudes in a sense are a self-portrait of Christ! Jesus says the pure in heart shall see God. Their message suggests they are a means to be free of all selfish intentions and self-seeking desires. Such an act is pure love. Pure love brings happiness to all.

Sunday, July 19

Matthew 5:1-3

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and taught them saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven".

Jesus is teaching us about humility. We should be satisfied with what we have and share the good things we have with others. This is what God wants. It is not always easy to share with others. Can you recall a time that you were humbled in order to share good things with others?

Monday, July 20

Matthew 5:4

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

To comfort those who are suffering helps others feel better about themselves after a loss or disappointment. Children are often the first responders to their peers when they fall and scrape a knee or get their feelings hurt. God is our comforter and cares for us in our grief. In times of sorrow where do you turn? Sometimes helping others through sorrows is best practiced through the ministry of presence. Walking beside those who mourn is reflective of God's constant presence and care for us.

Tuesday, July 21

Matthew 5:5

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Jesus calls us to practice self-control and get our egos out of the way. Once we rely on God we have a true sense of who we really are. These words imply that those who do away with worldly power will be rewarded in the kingdom of heaven. Is it good to be meek? How hard is it?

Wednesday, July 22

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be satisfied.

We often think in troubling circumstances "What Would Jesus Do"? Jesus teaches us to be just and practice brotherly love at all times. The Golden Rule is often quoted when mediating a dispute. We all want to be treated fairly and should do so to others. We should love others as we love ourselves, never put ourselves above them. What makes us feel that we have been mistreated? How to you respond to times like that?

Thursday, July 23

Matthew 5:7

Blessed are the merciful, for they will show mercy.

Jesus asks us to forgive those who are unkind to us. Most significantly for Christians, Jesus shows us what it means to be merciful when He healed the sick, welcomed the stranger and pardoned those who persecuted and killed Him. Everyday we should look for ways to show others kindness. What feelings do you have when you forgive and show kindness?

Friday, July 24

Matthew 5:8

Blessed are the pure (clean) of heart, for they will see God.

The pure in heart know what it means to be really happy. Their hearts are pure toward God and, as a result are pure toward their fellowman. In possessing Him who is All in All, God's children do not envy the things of the world. The result is peace with God and the world. Are you known as a person of integrity and honesty? What does it mean to have a pure heart today?

Saturday, July 25

Matthew 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

As peacemakers we try to bring God's peace to the world. We know them because they are the ones who seek to be peaceable and to spread the gospel of peace. They are willing to listen first and seek to understand. Peacemakers control their behavior so others can see Jesus in their reflection. They have the potential to change a child's life and the lives of those around them. Have you had the experience to help bring peace to others and be a mediator for Jesus?

Sunday, July 26

Matthew 5:10

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

As God's children we are willing to stand up for God's laws even if we are teased or insulted. Jesus warned that His followers would face persecution in John 15:20. "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." This beatitude is a promise of blessing for those who suffer for doing the right thing. It is important to speak the truth in love and not in a wrong way that will bring negative attention to ourselves and our brothers and sisters in Christ. 1Peter 3:15 tells us, "but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence;" How do you prepare yourself for such "battles"?

Monday, July 27

Philippians 2:14-16

Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

Our testimony as God's children requires that we be known, not disputing or grumbling, but by joy, even during tough times. Our testimony, what our lives communicate about our Savior, should be uppermost in our thinking. All of us should bring glory to God in our attitudes, our behavior and our words. As children of God we are to shine forth as lights in a dark world. I am reminded of the song, "This Little Light of Mine". Just for fun today look it up on YouTube or google it or sing your own rendition! Is your light bright for Jesus or is it hidden under a bushel? How does it feel to be in your childhood? :)

Tuesday, July 28

Isaiah 40:11

He will feed His flock like a shepherd, He will gather the lambs in His arms, He will carry them in His bosom; and gently lead those that are with young.

One of the most beautiful expressions in scripture is, "He will gather the lambs in His arms". This speaks to the care of God, the Savior, for the feeblest and weakest of His children. When the tender lamb becomes weary and exhausted the Shepherd will carry them. The shepherd signifies the care, leadership and provisions that the Lord will bring to His people. Look to God at all times. Without Him we are weak and frail; with His presence we find everlasting peace and righteousness. There have been times in my life when I fell off a cliff or got lost in the meadow. How lucky I was that the Shepherd searched until He found me. I heard His voice and He rescued me. I encourage you to read Psalm 23 and see what we receive through Jesus Christ.

Wednesday, July 29

Philippians 1:6

And I am sure that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Paul was certain that the God who began a good work in us when we were saved would finish it. God never starts anything that He cannot finish. He will see it through to completion. Once we have come to know Jesus we cannot say, "Stop the process-I want out." Paul's faith in God's ability to finish what He starts did not waiver. When we reaffirm our faith the Bishop lays his hands on us confirming that God will see us through. Do you have confidence and trust that our Jesus will intercede for us in whatever we are facing?

Thursday, July 30

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Throughout our lives from beginning to end we have had examples at home, at school, at church and in the work place. As children of God we are to look to Him and hopefully our models have guided us in the challenges of life. When we look to God through our Christian faith we affirm, "My God knows what is going on, He is in control and I trust Him." This proverb instructs us to look less at ourselves and more to God trusting Him completely. During our childhoods we all go through phases when we think we have all the answers and are invincible. Did you? How long did it take you to go back to the feet of Jesus and get back on track? What's your story?

Friday July 31

Isaiah 2:5

O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

The house of Jacob is referring to the family or nation of God. The word "walk" is often used to describe human life or conduct. "In the light of the Lord" suggests that we obey the commandments and follow the Law. To walk in the light as it respects Christ is to walk by faith in Him, to go on believing views of Him, to walk in imitation of Him, accept the Gospel and to walk as children of light, wisely, in fellowship with one another. And so I leave you with a song to keep in your heart. Good walking.

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

I want to walk as a child of the light
I want to follow Jesus
God sent the stars to give light to the world
The star of my life is Jesus
In Him there is no darkness at all
The night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus
I want to see the brightness of God
I want to look at Jesus
Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path
And show me the way to the Father
In Him there is no darkness at all
The night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God

Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus