

9-LESSON
FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

AWAKEN BELIEVERS

Finding God Amidst Distractions



GROWING KIDS FOR THE KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

For several years, I have had the privilege of writing devotionals for the families of our children's school, Legacy Preparatory Christian Academy, based on the school's spiritual theme for the year. The 2023-2024 theme was 'Awaken,' and our verse came from Romans 13:11.

"And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed."
(NIV)

The other monthly verses came from Colossians chapter one and discuss the supremacy of Christ and continuing strong in the faith. Each lesson of this devotional discusses part of Paul's teachings to the church of Colossae. Paul wrote to this church made up of both Jews and Greeks around AD 60 during his first imprisonment in Rome. He had never actually visited Colossae, which was located in modern day Turkey, but one of Paul's converts, Epaphras, helped start and lead the church in Colossae. Paul was warned that many false teachings were beginning to infiltrate the believers at Colossae causing them to believe that they must also follow certain philosophical and pagan ideas in addition to following Christ. Paul sent a letter to set the record straight that Jesus is truly God, and His death on the cross has reconciled them and made them complete through Him. Paul knew the importance of staying awake and alert to God's truth and recognizing anything that could try to come against it. He reminded the Colossians of the truth of Christ in order to keep them focused on what really matters and not distracted by worldly ideas and pursuits.

As I have studied these scriptures to create a family devotional for you, I have come to the conclusion that, like the Colossians, it is time for us also to wake up from our sleep in a spiritual sense. There are many worldly views around us the enemy tries to use to get us off track, such as moral relativism, emotionalism, and progressive Christianity. The enemy knows that if our hearts are truly awakened by the hope and truth of the gospel, and we realize the power we have to impact the world around us, the enemy's plans will fail. So his best point of attack is to put us into a hypnotic sleep where we are distracted from God, our identity, and our purpose. If we are hypnotized by the world around us through things like money, material items, activities, people, entertainment, vocations, vacations, and ideologies, we won't see clearly how amazing God truly is and take seriously our calling as believers.

This devotional is meant to *awaken us all* from the distractions and lies of the world. It is also a reminder to *fix our gaze on the amazing truths about the God we serve* and the precious promises and callings we have as believers. Let us not get distracted by the lure and busyness of the world to where we become spiritually asleep, but let us live with our eyes wide open, focused on Jesus and His Word and wholeheartedly serving Him.

A special thanks to Lora Craft and Kristine Zell who helped me develop this devotional. Their insights and feedback were invaluable in creating this resource for parents.

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LESSON 1

“We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God’s people- the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel that has come to you. In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world- just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God’s grace.”

Colossians 1:3-6 (NIV)



Tip: Consider using New Living Translation (NLT) or New International Readers Version (NIRV) to help younger kids understand each scripture verse.

AWAKEN TO THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL

AROUND THE TABLE

Think of a gift that you treasured when you first received it, but now it sits on your shelf and you rarely think to use it. (share as a family)

Just like these precious, forgotten gifts, the truth of the gospel can become unappreciated if we are not careful. When we first understood the gift of salvation through Jesus, like the Colossians, we received it with joy. The hope we received led to strong faith and a love for God’s people. But slowly other things in life creep in and become more important to us than this most treasured possession, and we forget to be grateful every day for our salvation and the hope we have in Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Colossians 1:3-6.

1. Where does our faith and love come from? (Wait for answers) How does the gospel give us faith and love?

2. What is the gospel? (Take turns sharing in your own words and then read the verses.)

(Read John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

See *Equipping Kids with the Gospel* for video resources to teach your kids the gospel.

3. The word ‘gospel’ means ‘good news,’ and it’s actually the best news one could ever receive! What are some of the reasons why we have so much hope in the gospel? (e.g.: new identity, forgiven) (Read Ephesians 1:13, Colossians 1:12, Titus 1:2)

4. What worldly substitutions distract us from the gospel? (e.g.: money, entertainment)

PRAYER

Lord, just as Paul reminded the Colossians where their hope comes from, help us to remember all the amazing blessings that come from receiving you as our Lord and Savior. May we recount the benefits to awaken our appreciation, faith, and sincere love for others. Give us creative ways to share the gospel with those around us. Amen.

TAKE ACTION!

Brainstorm some ways you can share the gospel individually and as a family with those around you. See ‘Equipping Kids with the Gospel’ for ideas for different age groups.