

"Morning" – Family Devotional
March 15, 2020

Psalm 5:3 -- "Lord, in the morning you hear my voice. In the morning I lay it all out before you. Then I wait expectantly." (CEB)

Psalm 30:5 -- "His anger lasts for only a second, but his favor lasts a lifetime. Weeping may stay all night, but by morning, joy!" (CEB)

There's something peaceful and fulfilling in sitting still and basking in the morning sun of a bright Summer's day. Before the intense heat, there's a calming coolness. Rays of sunshine begin peeking over trees, and the songs of birds, bugs, and beasts respond to the promise of a new day. Flowers bloom to receive their nourishment from above. What was hidden in the darkness of night is again made known in illuminated morning hours. There certainly is a calming presence of God revealed to His created world in the morning.

In these verses above, we can assume David felt the same way about mornings. David was intentional about starting His day with God. His morning began with prayer and Scripture, and a waiting on God's response to his cries.

David also reminds us of God's faithfulness revealed in every morning. In the beginning, when there was chaos and the Earth was without shape or form, God created order. In that designed order, God demonstrated consistency through time, light, and darkness. Evening came, but morning always followed without fail. This order serves as a symbol of God's consistency in our personal lives -- when evening comes, morning will always follow. When we experience a spiritual or emotional darkness, God reminds us that His light and newness will chase away that darkness. Night may bring about pain or sorrow, but in the morning, we can find joy and promises fulfilled.

In our own times of darkness and doubt, it often feels like morning won't come. It feels like the pain of now is too much to bear. But we know we serve a God of order, consistency, and love. He will not allow the darkness to remain. He pierces the night with His truth, and our doubt and sorrow cannot overtake that new light He provides.

In our world now, we are facing a time of great confusion, panic, and chaos. It feels like we are looking ahead and can't see two feet in front of our faces because the night is so dark. People are so uncertain and worried about their personal health, the health of others, toilet paper (for some reason), the economy, vacations, where their next meal might come from, and how long this will last. In this time, may we be people who offer hope to someone else that morning will come again. Let us be children of the Light and know that our light shines brightly in the darkness. Just as God established order in chaos in the beginning, His order and design again will prevail. Continue to praise Him each day, just as the birds, bugs, beasts, flowers, trees, rocks, and oceans continue to do!

Mornings remind us of God's promises every day -- of His order, His refreshing newness, His warmth, His kindness, how creation responds to Him in praise, and how His light brightly overtakes the darkness. Starting off our morning with these promises will allow us to remember His faithfulness as we traverse each encounter and experience throughout the day. Darkness is temporary, but consistent mornings promise new joy eternally.

Check out the next page for discussion questions and other activities!

Questions for Discussion

We encourage you to spend some time praying and talking through these questions together as a family!

1. How do you feel about mornings? Sometimes, sleep is just too good to interrupt! But mornings are a unique piece (and peace) of each day. Who in your family enjoys mornings? Why?
2. What's your favorite thing to eat for breakfast?
3. What concerns do you have right now regarding current events? It is important for us to trust in God, but we also don't want to ignore the ways we feel! What could help you feel better about these concerns?
4. Where have you seen God working through this situation? Where have you seen others show His love to someone else, or where have you seen some extra grace offered? Where have you seen communities support each other? How have your needs been provided for during this time? All of these provide opportunities to see God's goodness and promises fulfilled even in the chaos!
5. How can you continue to praise God, just as the birds, bugs, and beasts do? Here are a few songs you could listen to together, or sing along with!
 - a. Your Love Never Fails – Newsboys
 - b. So Will I (100 Billion X) – Hillsong Worship
 - c. Turn on the Light – Big Daddy Weave
6. Is there a friend from school, or another family member, that you know who might be facing more challenges than you are during this time? How can you help them? How can you provide hope to them?
7. What can you do to experience God's peace during this time? How do you rest? If you have been blessed with some extra time at home, how can you use that time to grow your own relationship with God?
8. What can you lay before God today? What can you release and give to Him? Will you wait expectantly on His response, or will you continue to hold tightly onto your own worries, doubts, and panic?
9. Pray together – if you need some help, here's a great way to start:
 - a. Everyone think of one other person (or group of people) who may have extra challenges during this time, and pray for them, and pray about ways you can help them.
 - b. Remember to be thankful! Each person should name one thing they are grateful for during this time.
 - c. Everyone should think of one thing they are especially worried about, and ask God to give them comfort and peace about it.
10. Just for funsies! Don't forget to laugh together during this time! God is still good, so we should remain joyful!! Here are some ideas of things you could do today:
 - a. Build a fort! Chairs, blankets, pillows, couches, beds, use anything!!
 - b. Play a board game together! How often do you have a chance to take time to gather around the table to play a game? (Don't forget to sanitize the pieces 😊)
 - c. Movie night! It's probably not the wisest time to go see a movie. So, think about how you could bring the movie theater home – pop some popcorn, make some messy food, set up a comfortable mega-seat, and settle in for a movie!