

CHAMP SPORTS DEVOTIONAL



SPRING 2024

CHAMP Office – 704.341.5387

Weather Hotline – 704.341.5473

www.champsportsinfo.com

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Season Schedule

Practices Begin: Week of March 4

Uniform Distribution: Week of March 4

Game Schedules: Week of March 11

Opening Day: Saturday, March 16

Spring Break: March 29 - April 4 (No practices or games)

Practices Resume: April 5

Season Ends: May 18

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Updated Mon-Fri. at 3:00 PM; Sat. at 7:30 AM

Join us weekly for Sunday morning
worship at 9:45 AM in person or via livestream.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Week of March 4 – 8

Welcome to CHAMP Sports! Each week during devotions, we will spend time talking about God and His Son, Jesus. This season during devotions we are going to learn about many of the miracles that Jesus did!

Jesus came down from heaven to tell us about His Father and show us the power of God so that we would believe in Him and be saved!

Jesus did all kinds of wonderful miracles while He was here on earth. He did so many wonderful things that the Apostle John said, “If every one of them were to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written”!

How does Jesus have the power to heal people, calm storms, and give anyone who believes in Him eternal life? He has this power because He is the Creator of all things and the Lord from Heaven.

God the Father, God’s Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit have all authority and power over this earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, and all created things.

What is “authority”? Authority is the right to be in charge. God is in charge of all things because He is God. God also has all of the power. He is what we call “omnipotent.” “Omnipotent” means all-powerful. So, God has the right to be in charge, and He has the power to be in charge.

When God speaks, His Word is powerful. God can do anything that He wants to do. When Jesus spoke and people were healed it was a demonstration of His authority and power.

If we want to live our lives correctly, we must look to God for direction. What can we do to find out what God thinks about things? Read the Bible! The Bible is God’s Word. This means that whatever God says in the Bible is true—100% true.

God wrote the Bible over the course of 1,500 years! Many people who lived before us only had the first parts of the Bible, but we have all of it! The last book in the Bible—the Revelation of Jesus Christ—tells us that Jesus is coming back to judge the world in righteousness. It doesn’t tell us exactly when Jesus is coming, so we must always be ready! Are you ready?!

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Questions: Why is God in charge? What is authority? How much authority does God have?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Paralyzed Man

Week of March 11-16

People have arms and legs. With our arms and legs we can walk and run and do many other things, which is wonderful! However, not everyone's arms or legs work properly. When someone's arms or legs don't work properly, we say that that person is paralyzed. It is very sad when someone is paralyzed! Imagine if you couldn't run across the field or catch or kick a ball!

One day Jesus was speaking God's Word in a particular house and there was a great crowd of people listening to Him. In fact, there were so many people listening to Jesus teach that there was no room left in the house, not even at the door!

As Jesus was teaching, a man who was paralyzed arrived at the house carried by four other men. These men wanted Jesus to heal the paralyzed man. They believed that Jesus could heal him, but the problem was that there were so many people around Jesus that they couldn't get to Him! So, what did they do? They carried the paralyzed man up onto the roof of the house and made a hole in the roof and lowered the paralyzed man down into the room where Jesus was teaching.

When Jesus saw how much these men believed in Him and His power to heal people, He said, "Son, your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5). At this, some of the religious leaders thought in their hearts, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:7). But, Jesus said to them, "that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he continued to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And what happened? The man "rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We never saw anything like this!'" (Mark 2:10-11).

What an amazing miracle! One minute the man couldn't walk. The next minute, he could! How? Because the same God who created Adam and Eve's legs from the dust of the earth has the power to heal legs that don't work!

What does God want each one of us to do? He wants us to walk through life with Him. Maybe our spiritual legs don't work. Maybe we haven't been walking with Jesus. How can we start? We can ask God for forgiveness for our sins and start getting to know Jesus and walking each day with Him!

Galatians 5:25

If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Questions: What does it mean to "keep in step with the Spirit"? Who in the Bible walked with God for 365 years before God took him? [Answer: Enoch]. Do you want to walk with God?

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The Centurion's Servant

Week of March 18-23

A century is 100 years. A centurion is a captain in the army who is in charge of 100 soldiers. A centurion understands authority. A centurion says, "Do this" to one of his soldiers and the soldier does it.

One day a centurion came to Jesus. He had a big problem, and he was very troubled and sad. His problem was that one of his servants was very sick and was about to die. The centurion had heard about Jesus, and he believed that Jesus could heal his servant. So, he sent messengers to Jesus to beg Jesus to come and heal his servant.

The centurion couldn't command Jesus to come because Jesus wasn't a soldier, so the centurion had to beg. What do you think Jesus did when he heard about the centurion's servant? Jesus went with the messengers to the centurion's house. But before Jesus got to the house, the centurion came out to Jesus and said, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Therefore, I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it" (Luke 7:6-8).

Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith. The centurion believed that Jesus had so much power to save that all He had to do was say the word and his servant would be healed! Jesus said of the centurion's faith, "I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" (Luke 7:9).

When the messengers got back to the centurion's house, they found that the servant who had been sick had been made well!

What does God want us to do? He wants us to have faith in Jesus like the centurion did. God wants us to believe that every word that comes out of the mouth of God is powerful and able to do whatever God sends His Word to do.

Has God spoken to us? Yes, He has. He has spoken to us in the Bible and by His Son. The Bible is God's written Word. Jesus is The Word of God who came down out of heaven to heal us of our spiritual sin disease. Do you want God to heal you?

Matthew 28:18

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Questions: What does it mean to have faith in God? Do you have faith in God?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Man with a Withered Hand

Week of March 25-28, April 5-6

Birds have wings. Birds are good at flying, but not at catching balls. People have hands. Hands are a wonderful gift. With our hands we can write, type, hold a fork, and help someone up who has fallen down.

God is spirit. He doesn't have physical hands, but He does talk about His hands: "The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them" (Exodus 7:5). God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt by His outstretched hand.

One day, Jesus met a man who had a hand that didn't work. This man's hand was withered or, we could say, curled up and useless. His hand didn't have any strength. He couldn't use it to work or play. It was broken.

When Jesus saw the man with the withered hand, the Pharisees asked Jesus if it was lawful to heal a man on the Sabbath Day. What is the Sabbath Day? According to God's Old Testament law, the Sabbath Day was the day in which Israel was to do no work. Instead of working, they were to worship God and enjoy getting to know Him better.

Jesus is very wise. In fact, Jesus is "the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24). What did Jesus tell the Pharisees? He asked them a question. He said, "Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:11-12).

Then, Jesus turned to the man with the withered hand and said, "Stretch out your hand." And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other" (Matthew 12:13). Another miracle!

Are your hands ready to do good? What is *good*? *Good* is whatever God says is good. In the Bible we learn about what God loves and what He hates—what is good and what is evil. God says it is good to believe in Him, obey His voice, and listen to His Son, Jesus. God is able to save you by His outstretched hand. Will you give your life to God and use your hands to do His will?

Psalm 139:14

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

Questions: About how many cells are there in the human body? [Around 30-40 trillion!]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Deaf Man

Week of April 8-13

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve walked with God and talked with God. They heard His voice. They were getting to know Him better and better, but then they listened to Satan's voice, and when they followed Satan's advice, their relationship with God was broken. Ever since that terrible moment, people have had a much harder time hearing God.

God has spoken to people over time through prophets and through the Bible, and in the last days He has spoken to us through His Son!

When Jesus came into the world, He taught us many things. He taught us about God the Father. He taught us about how we can have eternal life. He taught us about what God loves and what God doesn't like. But, not everyone could hear what Jesus was saying. Some people couldn't hear Jesus because their ears didn't work. Others could hear the words that Jesus said, but they couldn't understand what He meant because their hearts were deaf.

One day, Jesus met a man whose ears didn't work. He couldn't hear any sounds. He was deaf. Not only was the man deaf, but he also couldn't speak well. The people who brought this man to Jesus begged Jesus to heal him. Jesus took the man aside and, away from the crowd that had gathered, Jesus touched the man's ears and his tongue and said, "Be opened." Can you guess what happened? The power of God healed the man. After he was healed, he could both hear and speak! The people who saw it were shocked, and they said, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak" (Mark 7:37).

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit came down from heaven and stayed upon Him. At that time, God spoke from heaven saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" (Luke 9:35).

God wants each one of us to listen to Jesus! He wants us to have ears that are able to hear and understand what Jesus tells us. When you read the Bible, do you understand it, or is it just words on a page? If you don't understand God's Word when you hear it, all you need to do is ask God for wisdom. If you ask God for wisdom, He will give you wisdom (James 1:5-6) and He will give you the Holy Spirit to help you understand His Book—the Bible.

John 8:47

Whoever is of God hears the words of God.

Questions: Are you listening to Jesus? Do you read the Bible? Do you pray? What percent of the words in the Gospel of John are Jesus' own words? [About 48%.]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Blind Man (Invitation Week)

Week of April 15-20

God has created many beautiful things. When we look up into the night sky we can see the stars and the moon. When we travel around the world, we can see breathtaking waterfalls, majestic mountains, great forests, beautiful flowers, and so many more awesome things!

But there are even more beautiful things to see. Things not of this creation. Things in heaven. God Himself! How can we see God? We can see God in the face of His Son, Jesus Christ: "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

What can prevent us from seeing Jesus? Blindness. There are two kinds of blindness. Physical blindness; people who are physically blind can't see balls, trees, or the light of the sun. And Spiritual blindness; people who are spiritually blind can't see God's truth; they don't understand who God is and what life is all about. Which is worse? Physical blindness or spiritual blindness?

One day, Jesus met a man who had been born blind. His physical eyes had never worked from the time that he was born! When Jesus saw this man, He said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5). Then, Jesus "spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing" (John 9:6).

Do you remember when Jesus made Adam out of the dust of the earth? Now, Jesus took the dirt of the earth and anointed a man's eyes, and all of a sudden, a man who had been blind from birth could see!

Most of us can see the world around us, but what about your spiritual eyes?! Can you see that Jesus is the Son of God who came down from heaven to save you? Can you see that Jesus came into the world to forgive sin, wash God's children clean, and give all who believe in Him eternal life? Jesus is able to save us! He is able to fill us with God's Holy Spirit and make us perfect! All we have to do is believe in Jesus and we will be saved! (Acts 16:31).

****Coaches, please present "The Gospel" devotion on the next page. If any players on your team respond by praying to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior, have them sign their name in their own handwriting on the card provided. Please return signed cards to the equipment shed. When we follow up with players we will give them their signed card to take home. Thank you!*

Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made them both.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Gospel

Invitation Week Continued (April 15-20)

What is the Gospel? The Gospel is God's good news about His Son Jesus Christ.

What is the good news? The good news is that God sent Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners.

How did we become sinners? By disobeying God. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Each one of us has also disobeyed God.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

The bad news is that:

"The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23a).

The good news is that:

"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23b).

How do we receive God's free gift?

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

What does it mean to "believe in the Lord Jesus"?

It means that we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died to pay the penalty for our sins, that He was buried, and on the third day God raised Him from the dead. It means that we receive Christ as our Savior and surrender our lives to Him as our personal Lord and Master.

Jesus promised, "Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). Today, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

If you want to believe in Jesus and confess Him as your Savior and Lord today, please raise your hand. If you have raised your hand, please pray this prayer with me.

Heavenly Father, today I believe in your Son, Jesus. I believe that He died to pay the penalty for my sins and that He was raised from the dead so that I could be justified and receive eternal life in His name. Today, I surrender my life to Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and acknowledge Him before men. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me! Amen.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Woman Bent Over Double

Week of April 22-27

Maybe you've heard someone tell you, "Stand up straight and tall." Don't slouch! Good posture is something that helps us. It is good to strengthen the muscles in our core and the muscles of our upper backs. These muscles help us run and play sports. Imagine if you couldn't stand up straight. It would be almost impossible to play most sports!

In the Bible, we read of a woman who had a health problem that caused her to be bent over so that she couldn't stand up straight. For eighteen years she struggled with this problem. It was probably incredibly frustrating for her and those around her.

"When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, 'Woman, you are freed from your disability.' And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God" (Luke 13:12-13).

This was a wonderfully kind thing for Jesus to do. Imagine how great this woman felt after Jesus laid his hands on her and healed her back! Imagine how wonderful it would be to see the world while standing straight up—to be able to look at people's faces instead of their feet!

However, not everyone was pleased with what Jesus did! The ruler of the synagogue (a place where Jewish people worshipped God) was not happy because Jesus had healed this woman on the Sabbath Day. The ruler of the synagogue felt that Jesus was out of order!

Could Jesus really be out of order? Did Jesus not honor the Sabbath Day?! Of course He did. Jesus never broke any law of God. He always did what is right in God's eyes. So, the Lord Jesus said, "'You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?' As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him" (Luke 13:15-17).

God loves people. He wants us to love one another and be kind: "If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday" (Isaiah 58:10). Will you love others in the love of God?

John 15:12

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Questions: What are some ways that we can show love to our friends and families?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Lazarus

Week of April 29 – May 4

Do you know the story of Lazarus? Lazarus was one of Jesus' closest friends. Jesus loved Lazarus, but Lazarus died. This made Jesus very sad—so sad that “Jesus wept” (John 11:35).

Why did Jesus weep? Jesus wept because death destroys people's lives. Jesus wept because He saw Lazarus' friends and family weeping. Jesus wept because He felt sorrow and pain.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God they began to die. Why? Because they had cut themselves off from God and God is life! How can we live if we are disconnected from the God who is life?

When God sees us in our broken, sinful state, He weeps. When He sees the chaos that death causes, He is moved with compassion. God wants His children to live!

When Jesus knew that Lazarus had died, He waited four days before He went to the town where Lazarus had lived. When He arrived, Lazarus' sister Martha said to Him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” She believed that Jesus could have healed Lazarus before he had died. But, did she believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the dead? Yes!

Martha said, “But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha said to him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ She said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world’” (John 11:22-27).

After Jesus said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out,” and, “The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go’” (John 11:43-44).

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He had power and authority over death! Death is no match for the power of God's life. God's life is eternal, endless, and everlasting. If we believe in Jesus, God will give us the free gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23). Do you want to live forever in the life of God—free from sin and death?

John 6:63

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Questions: How much does Jesus love you? How much do you love Jesus?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Leper

Week of May 6-11

Have you ever been “on the outside looking in”? If you have ever seen a movie where someone stands out in the cold looking into a warm, cozy, lit room, you know the feeling. Imagine always being “on the outside looking in.” Imagine that your friends and family didn’t ever want to get near you. Imagine that no one ever gave you a hug or a high five or held your hand when you needed someone to tell you that it would be “ok.”

What you are imagining is the life of a leper. A leper is someone who has a contagious skin disease. In the Old Testament Bible times, lepers were told that they had to live apart from the people. They had to stay outside of the city. They couldn’t be a part of normal life. They were unclean.

One day, a leper came to Jesus. He was probably very afraid that Jesus would reject him and send him away. The leper said to Jesus, “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean” (Matthew 8:2). This leper had great faith! When Jesus heard the man’s request, He “stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, ‘I will; be clean.’ And immediately his leprosy was cleansed” (Matthew 8:3).

It is amazing that Jesus touched this man! The life that Jesus has to give can’t be infected with disease! The life that Jesus has to give destroys disease!

What is humanity’s greatest disease? Sin. Sin is a disease that has taken hold of our hearts. Sin makes us think that we can live our lives without God. Sin makes us think that we can be like God. Sin makes us think that we can be good without God living in us.

We must each come to Jesus and ask Him to touch us and heal us of sin. Just like leprosy, sin is not easy to get rid of, except by the power of God. People have tried to get sin out of their hearts through following rules and trying very hard to beat sin, but God has told us that the only way to be cleansed from unrighteousness is by the blood of His Son, Jesus. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin, and the life of Jesus heals us spirit, soul, and body! If you want to be clean, ask God to make you clean!

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions: What is sin? Why does God want us to be clean? How clean is your heart?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Malchus

Week of May 13-18

Sometimes we get excited and do the wrong thing. Maybe we get mad about something at a soccer/football/baseball game. Maybe we don't act in a way that is kind. Maybe we do something that we know is wrong and then we feel bad about it.

What should we do when we do, say, or think things that we know are wrong? We must go to God and confess our sins: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). We must also go to our brother/sister/neighbor/friend whom we offended and make it right with them: "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Psalm 133:1). And, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

Just before Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He was betrayed by Judas to the religious leaders of Israel. The religious leaders hated Jesus because the people loved Him and they were envious (Mark 15:10).

When the soldiers came to get Jesus, Peter, Jesus' friend and disciple, got angry, and he pulled out his sword and "struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)" Was what Peter did right? Of course not! Why did Peter do it? Peter did it because he loved Jesus and what was happening to Jesus was wrong. However, two wrongs don't make a right, and what Peter did was definitely wrong!

What did Jesus do? Jesus said, "Peter, put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?" (John 18:11). And Jesus said, "'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him" (Luke 22:51).

It is amazing that in this moment when Jesus was incredibly sad because He was being betrayed into the hands of sinners, He took the time to touch Malchus and heal his ear! Jesus truly loves people. He wants people to live together in peace! Will you work hard, as much as it depends on you, to live at peace with everyone around you?

Romans 12:18

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Questions: Do you work hard to get along with other people? Are any of your relationships broken? If so, is there anything you can/should do to fix that broken relationship?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!