

DEVOTIONAL



WINTER SEASON 2019-2020

CHAMP Office – 704.341.5387
Weather Hotline – 704.341.5473
www.champsportsinfo.com

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Winter 2019/20 - Season Schedule

Practices Begin: Week of December 2
Game Schedules: Week of December 2
Uniform Distribution: Week of December 2
First Game Day: Saturday, December 14
Picture Day: Saturday, January 25
Holiday Break: December 16 – December 31
(No games or practices during the break)
Practices Resume: Wednesday, January 1
Games Resume: Saturday, January 4
End-of-Season Celebration: Saturday, February 15
Season Ends: Saturday, February 15

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Weather Hotline: 704.341.5473
Updated Mon-Fri. at 3:00 PM; Sat. at 6:30 AM

Join us weekly for Sunday morning
worship service at 9:45AM in
Calvary's sanctuary

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Week of December 2-6

Welcome to CHAMP Sports! We are excited that you are here! We are looking forward to a great season together! This season we will be talking about fruit—God’s fruit. God’s fruit is called “the fruit of the Spirit.” God’s fruit is God’s life. What is God’s life like? God’s life is “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Have you ever watched fruit grow? Have you seen an apple growing on a tree or a grape on a vine? The fruit starts out little and gets bigger day by day. First, the fruit is hard and bitter, but as it grows up, it ripens and become sweet. Watching fruit grow shows us a lot about what it means to be a Christian.

When we first become Christians, we have to learn how to let God’s fruit grow in us. Before we were Christians we were “in the flesh.” To be “in the flesh” is to be alone, separated from God’s life and power. People who are “in the flesh” have to use their own strength to do what’s right. People who are “in the flesh” have to try really hard to stop getting angry, thinking bad thoughts, getting jealous of what other people have, and saying mean things to others. The Bible tells us that it is impossible for those who are “in the flesh” to do what God wants us to do.

Think about it this way. Imagine an apple growing on a tree. Does the apple do anything by itself apart from the tree? No. An apple connected to a tree simply rests in the life of the tree. Now imagine an apple that was picked from a tree long before it was ripe. Will the apple keep growing? What if the apple tries really, really hard? The apple won’t grow! Why? Because it isn’t connected to the tree. The tree is the apple’s life. When it comes to human beings, God is our life. God designed us to be connected to Him by His Holy Spirit.

When we are connected to God by the Holy Spirit, God’s life flows into us. When we are connected to God, we will see God’s fruit in our hearts. When God is in us, God’s love is in our hearts and we can love others with God’s love. When God is in us, God’s joy is in our hearts and we will be supernaturally joyful. We can try to be joyful without being connected to God, but it will not go well. God doesn’t want us to try to be like Him. God wants us to allow Him to live in us.

As we talk about God’s fruit this season, will you think about whether or not you have God’s fruit in your life? If you, do, that’s great! If you don’t, all you have to do is ask. God will give you His Son, His Spirit, His life, and Himself. He’s generous like that!

Matthew 3:8

Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

Questions: Can you recite the fruit of the Spirit? Is God’s fruit growing in you? How do you know?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Love

Week of December 9-13

What is love like? In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 in the Bible, we read that, “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

Wouldn't it be great if the world was full of love? Yes, it would be wonderful. Just imagine if everyone was kind to each other and no one was rude. It would be a beautiful world! Why isn't the world like this? Why is the world so full of anger? Why are people so restless, resentful, and irritated? The answer is that there is a lack of God and His life in the world.

God has told us in the Bible that He is love. Guess who *isn't* love?! You and me. We aren't love because we aren't God. God didn't make humans to *be* love. God made us to be *filled with* love. God made us to be filled with *Him*. When we are filled with God, His love fills our hearts and flows out of us into the lives of others. When we are filled with ourselves, we can try to love others, but our love is a weak imitation of God's Almighty Love.

Do you remember the Apostle Paul? Before he was Paul his name was Saul. Saul means “asked for.” Saul was the kind of leader that most people “ask for.” Saul tried really hard to do what was right. Saul didn't think he needed God; he only thought that he needed God's instructions for how to live life well. But God meant to save Saul from himself, so Jesus showed up in Saul's life and changed Saul into Paul. “Paul” means “small” or “humble.” After Saul met Jesus, he was an entirely new person! Paul understood that it was God in him who made all of the difference in the world!

Before Saul became Paul, Saul didn't have love in his heart for people. In fact, one of Saul's goals in life before he became Paul was to find God's children and put them in prison! *After* Saul became Paul, God's love filled Paul's heart, and Paul said to God's children, “God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:8).

Participating in God's love for others is a wonderful experience! Participating in God's life is what the Bible calls “knowing God and Jesus Christ” (John 17:3). If you want to participate in God's life so that God's love fills your heart and flows out into this world this Christmas season, all you have to do is ask. God will give you Himself in a heartbeat!

1 John 4:7

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

Questions: What is love like? Who is Love? [God is Love.] Have you been “born of God”?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Joy

Week of January 1-3

Welcome to 2020! The beginning of a new year is a time of great celebration and joy. It is a time when we thank God for all that He has done in the past year and look forward to all that He is going to do in the new year.

There is something wonderful about a fresh start. It is joyous. It is hopeful. It is exciting. Just imagine if you could have watched God create the earth! If you had been there, you would have seen, “the morning stars singing together and all the sons of God shouting for joy” (Job 38:7). Imagine if you could have been there the night that Jesus was born into this world as a baby and seen the heavenly host praising God! There are many other wondrous beginnings: a new baby being born, people being born again in Jesus Christ, the day God’s children see Him face to face, the creation of a new heavens and new earth wherein dwell righteousness!

God has created many new beginnings in each of our lives to teach us about what joy is like. Every day is a new beginning: “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23).

We ought to wake up every morning praising God for a new day, but most people don’t. Why not? Because joy is a fruit of the Spirit! Joy isn’t something that we can whip up in ourselves. Everybody experiences happy moments, like the beginning of a new year, or waking up on Christmas Day, or celebrating a birthday, but the happiness doesn’t last because the moment passes away.

In order to experience permanent joy, we need a supernatural joy. We need God’s own joy. In the Bible, there was a man named Nehemiah. God gave Nehemiah a job. Nehemiah’s job was to rebuild God’s city, Jerusalem, and teach the Israelites to know God. One day, when God’s Bible was being read, the people started to cry because they realized how little they knew God. However, that day was a special holiday in Israel when the people were to celebrate their God, so Nehemiah told the people, “Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10).

It is God’s own joy that we need in our lives when we are sad. God’s joy is permanent. How is God’s joy permanent? Because God is perfect. He is always delighted with Himself, His Son, His Spirit, and all that He does. God’s joy never fades because His perfection never passes away. If you will let Him, God will put His joy in you by His Spirit. Then, even when life gets hard, there will be the LORD’s supernatural joy deep in your heart and that joy—God’s own joy—will be your strength!

John 15:11

These things I [Jesus] have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Questions: Do you have Jesus’ joy in your heart? Why is Jesus so joyful? Is Jesus your friend?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Peace

Week of January 6-10

Do you want peace in your life? Most people do. Norman Vincent Peale said, "The life of inner peace, being harmonious and without stress, is the easiest type of existence." Francis de Sales said, "Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset."

How can we have peace in our lives? The world's wisdom says that we can work hard to find peace, but God's wisdom says that only in His Holy Spirit can we find true peace. Before Jesus left this world, He said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27). The Apostle Paul also spoke of God's peace, saying, "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

In the Bible, God calls Jesus "the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). What does it mean that Jesus is "the Prince of Peace?"

First, it means that Jesus is the One who created peace between God and man. At the beginning of history, man sinned by rebelling against God. Man's sin wrecked his relationship with God. Jesus fixed the relationship between God and man by becoming a man, living His life in perfect fellowship the Father, and then dying on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins.

Second, it means that Jesus is God's pick to be King of kings and Lord of lords. Right now, God is calling each one of us to let Jesus be King in our hearts so that He can rule over our lives. Someday, Jesus will return to this world and establish His kingdom for all to see. In that day, there will be great peace in all the earth!

Jesus' first disciples experienced His peace. Before Jesus gave them His peace, Jesus' disciples were often scared by life's storms. After they received Jesus' peace by the Holy Spirit, Jesus' disciples were totally transformed! Rather than losing their minds, they were of a sound mind. Rather than running from people in need, they pointed people to the God who can heal all of our hurts. Rather than worrying about their futures or what man could do to them, they trusted God for their daily bread and boldly proclaimed the Gospel to all people everywhere.

As Jesus said, the world has a peace to give, but the world's peace is not strong like God's peace. The world's peace will let us down; God's peace never fails!

Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

Questions: Is your heart resting in Jesus? How can we learn to trust Jesus better?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Patience

Week of January 13-17

A long time ago, it would take months to send a letter halfway around the world. Now we can send a text to someone exactly halfway around the world from us in Margaret River, Western Australia, in a split second. We used to have to go to the library when we wanted to learn something new. Now we can just ask Google. We used to have wait for our food to grow in order to eat. Now we can just hit the grocery store 24/7. In our modern world, patience is not valued. We want things *now*.

While we can get a lot of things now, there are a lot of things for which we need patience. To become great basketball players takes a lot of patience. We have to practice dribbling, passing, and shooting. We have to learn how to set up plays and play as a team. We aren't born great basketball players. We have to practice, which takes patience.

In life, parents have to be patient with their children. When a child is just born, the baby doesn't know how to do anything. The baby can't feed itself, dress itself, or walk. The parent must be exceedingly patient with the baby as the baby learns to do the most basic things of life.

God wants us to be patient with everyone around us. Maybe we are upset and we try to explain why we are upset to our parents, but they just don't get it. This might make us angry, but this is an opportunity to patiently help our parents understand our feelings.

Can we make ourselves be patient? We can certainly try, but patience is a fruit of God's Spirit. Any patience that we can muster up will be incomplete and halfway.

Do you remember the Apostle Peter? Before Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, he was often saying things he hadn't thought through and doing outrageous things (like cutting someone's ear off, which Jesus healed). Peter, the *natural* Peter, was not a patient man. But, Peter, the *Holy-Spirit filled* Peter, had God's own patience filling his heart. The new Peter said things like, "And count the patience of our Lord as salvation" (2 Peter 3:15), by which he meant that God's patience gives us time to repent from going our own way and be saved by Christ through being born again by the Holy Spirit.

Do you want to be a patient person? If you do, ask God to fill your life with His patience! God's patience is strong. God's patience is supernatural. God's patience is a beautiful thing!

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Questions: Why is it so hard to be patient? How is God so good at being patient?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Kindness (Invitation Week)

Week of January 20-24

“What is desired in a man is kindness” (Proverbs 19:22). “The righteous care for the needs of their animals, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel” (Proverbs 12:10).

There is something beautiful about a kind person. According to Webster’s 1828 dictionary, a kind person is a person who “delights in contributing to the happiness of others.” A kind person is friendly, generous, cheerful, considerate, and hospitable. A kind person genuinely cares about providing for the needs of others.

Who is the best at caring for the needs of others? God is! God has demonstrated His kindness towards us by first considering our need for salvation and then providing for that need. How did God provide for our salvation? God provided for our salvation by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to live a perfect human life, take our sins upon Himself, be sacrificed on the cross for our sins, and be raised from the dead. Through Jesus, God has forgiven us for our rebellion against Him and all the bad things we’ve done because we rebelled against Him. In Jesus, we have a new beginning for life. In Jesus, we become part of God’s eternal life, which is full of all of the fruit of the Holy Spirit!

God, because He is kind, has saved us from the penalty of our sin through Jesus, and He has provided eternal life to us in Jesus. God is delighted to “make us happy” in Jesus. Jesus cares about us so much that He was willing to die for us so that we might live! That’s kindness!

Do you want God to save you? If you do, you must believe that Jesus is your salvation. You must believe that Jesus is the only Way. You must let go of your life and let God take control of you. God wants to be God in your life. God wants Jesus to be your King. Will you let the God be your God? Will you let God’s Son be your King?

If you want to receive Jesus as your Savior and King, you can pray this prayer with me today. Everyone please close your eyes and bow your heads. **“Father, I know that I have sinned by going my own way and doing my own thing. I am truly sorry. I now want to turn my life over to you. Please forgive me and give me the nature of Christ Jesus. Please cause me to pass from death into life. I believe that your Son, Jesus Christ, died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite you, Jesus, to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey you and do your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.”**

If you said this prayer and have surrendered your life to God, you are now a child of God! You have been born again in Jesus Christ and you shall live forever with Him! This is fantastic news! Thank you, Jesus!

Coaches, please complete a Decision Card for each one of your players. Please turn them in at the box in the equipment closet. Thank you for your help!

Luke 5:32

I [Jesus] have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Goodness

Week of January 27-31

In Mark 10:18, Jesus said, “No one is good except God alone.” *Ouch!* Usually, we want to think of ourselves as good people, but Jesus told us that only God is good.

Can we ever be good? Yes and no. We can never be good in ourselves, but we can be filled with God’s goodness until His goodness spills out of our lives and into the world around us.

Goodness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Like all of God’s fruits, we can try our best or produce goodness in our lives, but we won’t be able to do it. The harder we work to be good like God, the more we will find out just how bad we are because “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

God’s laws are perfect, but when we try to do God’s laws in our own strength, we fail. Why? Because God is good and we are not. God wants to give us His Holy Spirit. When we have God’s Holy Spirit in us, we will find that goodness is in us because God is in us. We can never have a goodness of our own, but we can certainly be filled to overflowing with God’s goodness!

What does it mean to be good? It means that you are right in every way. For God, He is perfect in Himself. For us, we can never be perfect if God is not in us. God designed us to be the house in which He lives. If God isn’t in us, then we aren’t what we are supposed to be!

There are many examples in the Bible of people who tried to be good in their own strength instead of in God’s strength. Do you remember Job? God said of Job that he was “a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil” (Job 1:8). That sounds pretty great! But in another place, God says, “There is none who does good, not even one” (Psalm 53:3), not even Job. At the end of the Book of Job, Job realized just how imperfect he was when compared to God, and so Job said, “I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:6).

There you have it. Even Job, who was one of the best among us, realized that he was not even close to being good like God is good. When we realize that we aren’t good and never will be good by ourselves, then we are ready to be filled with God’s goodness.

When we each realize that we aren’t good people, then we are ready to be totally filled with God’s goodness.

Acts 3:19

Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out.

Questions: What are some of the good things that God has done for you? Have you been “filled with all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:19)? Is your relationship with God refreshing?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Faithfulness

Week of February 3-7

What is faithful to rise every morning and go down every evening? The sun. The sun is faithful to its purpose day after day, year after year. The sun's faithfulness to rise every morning and set every evening is due to the power of God's Word.

On the fourth day of creation, God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars." (Genesis 1:14-16).

Ever since God spoke the sun, the moon, and the stars into existence, they have faithfully done as God commanded them according to God's power. Their faithfulness is from God.

Faithfulness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. That means that in our strength we can't be faithful to God. In the Bible, in Romans 7:15-19, Paul writes, "For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing."

Each one of us must face the fact that when we are not filled with the Holy Spirit, we cannot do the good that we find written in the Bible. The Bible is full of God's instructions, but only God's own life can do all that He commands. We are commanded to love, but we must be filled with God's Spirit in order to love. We are commanded to be faithful to God, but we must be filled with God's own faithfulness if we are to be faithful.

The sun, the moon, and the stars are faithful to God because God's Son holds them in their places by His power. Of this, the Bible says, "And he (God's Son) is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:17). Just like Jesus holds creation together, we need Him to hold our lives together. Without Jesus, the sun, the moon, and the stars would spin into chaos and dissolve into nothing. Without Jesus, our lives spin out of control and become meaningless. Let Jesus be your God and let His Spirit be your faithfulness!

2 Corinthians 7:10

Godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

Questions: How has God been faithful to you? Is your faith in God or do you trust in yourself?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Gentleness and Self-Control

Week of February 10-14

Thank you so much for being a part of this season at CHAMP basketball! We've done a lot of learning and growing together! As we celebrate this season, think of all of the great moments—the baskets you and your teammates scored, the great passes, the cheering of your friends and family... These were all great moments, but there were even greater moments!

If you met Jesus and were born again by God's Holy Spirit, all of heaven cheered. "I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Jesus in Luke 15:7). If you learned something of how to let the Holy Spirit live and rule in your heart so that God's "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23) have filled your life, then you have grown in the Christian faith and God is tremendously pleased with you!

The last two fruits of the fruit of the Holy Spirit are gentleness and self-control. Both of these things come from God into our hearts when the Holy Spirit plugs us into God's life.

Do you know what it means to be a gentleman or a gentlewoman? A gentleperson is honorable, refined, and polite. A gentleperson has good manners and is courteous to others. This noble way of living comes from God's Spirit. God is a perfect Gentleman. When God lives in us, His gentleness fills our hearts and we become gentlepersons.

Gentleman and gentlewomen have great self-control. Self-control is the last fruit of the Holy Spirit. What is self-control? Self-control is when we are in complete control of what we think, say, and do. Can anyone completely control everything that they think, say, and do? In the Bible we read that "We all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body [...] but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:2, 8).

According to God, none of us can control everything that we think, say, and do. We can never be what we are supposed to be without God living inside of us! We need the fruit of the Spirit! We need God Himself! Will you let God have your life? Will you let God make His home in your heart? Will you let the God be your God? I pray you will!

John 14:23

Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

Questions: What are some gentlemanly/gentlewomanly things that you can do for others? Have Jesus and His Father made their home in your heart?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Rule	5/6 coed	7/8 g, 7/8 b	9-11 g	9-11 b
Game time	36 min/6 periods	36 min/6 periods	36 min/6 periods	36 min/6 periods
Time between periods	1 min.	1 min.	1 min.	1 min.
Ball Size	25 in.	28 1/2 in.	28 1/2 in.	29 1/2 in.
Goal Height	8 feet	8 feet	9 feet	10 feet
Coaches on court	Yes	No	No	No
3 second violation	No	No	No	No
Full court press	No	No	No	No
Halftime	8 min.	8 min.	8 min.	8 min.
Time outs	No	No	No	No
Score is kept	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stealing of pass	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stealing of dribble	No	No	No	No
Double dribble called	No/Teach	Yes/teach	Yes	Yes
Block shots	No	No	Yes	Yes
Traveling called	No/Teach	Yes/teach	Yes	Yes
Fast breaks	No/Teach	Yes	Yes	Yes
Back court violations	No/Teach	No/Teach	No/Teach	No/Teach
Man to man Defense	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Double teaming	No	No	No	No
Switch goals halftime	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ties allowed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fouls	No/teach	Yes/teach	Yes/turnover	Yes/turnover/6 fouls results in a foul out
Technical fouls	No	No	No	No
Play clock	No	No	No	No
Wristbands	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Color System: A -player (Blue), B -player (Yellow), C -Player (Red) D -Player (Light Blue) E -player (Green)				
20 pt. diff score restart (halftime only)		Yes	Yes	Yes

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!