



[TOP](#)

Daily Devotions: Take My Son

APRIL 05TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

Daily Devotions: Take My Son

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art...

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands.

He said, 'Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly... He often talked about you, and your love for art.' The young man held out this package. 'I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.'

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. 'Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift.'

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection.

On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. 'We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?'

There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, 'We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one.'

But the auctioneer persisted. 'Will somebody bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?'

Another voice angrily. 'We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Gogh's, the Rembrandt's. Get on with the Real bids!'

But still the auctioneer continued. 'The son! The son! Who'll take the son?'

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. 'I'll give \$10 for the painting...' Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

'We have \$10, who will bid \$20?'

'Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the master's!'

The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections.

The auctioneer pounded the gavel. 'Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!'

A man sitting on the second row shouted, 'Now let's get on with the collection!'

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. 'I'm sorry, the auction is over.'

'What about the paintings?'

'I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will... I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate,

including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!

God gave His son over 2,000 years ago to die on the Cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is: 'The Son, the Son, who'll take the Son?'

Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything!

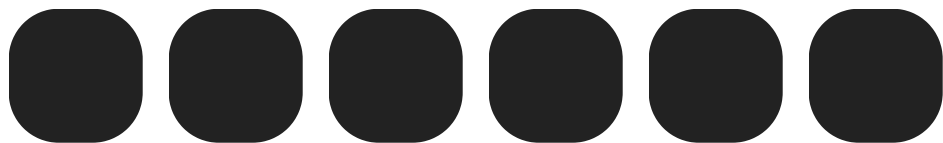
FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, WHO SO EVER BELIEVETH, SHALL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE...THAT'S LOVE.

God Bless.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uope/Daily-Devotions-Take-My-Son>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Daily Devotions: Too Busy to Pray

APRIL 04TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

[Daily Devotions: Too Busy to Pray](#)

Mark 1:35 NKJV (35) “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.”

Most of us aren't evil. We aren't trying to stay away from God on purpose. We race from morning to night to keep up with the pace of our lives. We are just too busy to pray. Can you identify with this?

Have you ever had a conversation with God like this?

God: I'd like to spend some time with you today, Jim.

Jim: Great, I'd love to.

God: How about right now?

Jim: Right now? Uh, I'm already late for an appointment. I'll catch you later, though. I promise.

God: OK, I'll be waiting.

Jim: Maybe, I'll have some time during lunch.

God: OK, I'll be waiting.

God: Hey Jim, I missed you at lunch. Your body was there but your mind wasn't.

Jim: I know. I'm sorry. I've got so much to do and so much on my mind. I just forgot to pray.

God: Are you ready to spend some time with me now? I know you only have a few minutes before your next meeting.

Jim: Well, uh, I'd like to, but I need to review my agenda. I'll have to catch you later.

God: Okay, I'll be waiting.

(Before bed)

God: Jim, I love you and I miss you. I've been waiting all day to be with you. Let's just focus for maybe five minutes.

Jim: I know. I'm sorry. I really feel bad. I'm so busy. Thanks for being so understanding, God. Thanks for... (Jim falls asleep.)

God: Oh well, maybe he'll have time for me in the morning.

Are you too busy to pray?

If you are, then you are simply too busy. God loves you and wants regular time with you because you are so special in his eyes.

When is your special appointment with God?

This may seem overly simplistic but it is true: People who spend a regular time with God will have a closer relationship with Him.

1. What did Jesus do in Mark 1:35?

2. Do you have a set time and place to meet with God daily? If not, set an appointment with God today.

Psalms 1:1-3 NKJV

(1) Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

(2) But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

(3) He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uopa/Daily-Devotions-Too-Busy-to-Pray>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Chick-Fil-A Hosts Leadercast

APRIL 02ND 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

Chick-Fil-A Hosts Leadercast

Written by

Beth Farrah, SMT Writer

Atlanta, Georgia - Chick-Fil-A is sending a shout out to leaders of all kinds. For the past thirteen years, Chick-Fil-A has held their annual Leadercast Conference in places all over the country. They have called out leaders in the church ministry, bosses and employees from both large and small companies and businesses, leaders in the community, and any other person who is willing to step up.

The idea of the Leadercast Conference is to not only teach basic leadership principals and valuable qualities, but it also reenergizes the participants and inspires them in more ways than one. Leadercast is more than just a conference to improve things in the work place or to make short-term changes. It was created initially to continually inspire and to spark a chain of growth in more ways than one.

In 2000, John C. Maxwell wanted to bring leaders from all different backgrounds and groups together in an affordable and accessible way. Later that same year, Maxwell created Maximum Impact Simulcast. GiANT Impact began producing the widespread event and has recently teamed up with Chick-Fil-A to expand their efforts. After celebrating their ten year anniversary in 2010, the internationally-acclaimed leadership convention began to soar even higher as crowds began to grow at nearly every location.

This year's theme is: Simply Lead. The plan is to bring out traits in each and every leader to reach potential and build leadership skills to learn how to Simply Lead. Life is full of ups and downs along with many other things, but our world is complex enough as it is,

which is why simplicity is one of the best tools to use. Leadercast will show different areas and offer advice, inspiration, and ideas in simple yet realistic ways that all leaders will understand and thrive for.

This humongous nationwide event takes place on Friday, May 10th, 2013. This one-of-a-kind-event will broadcast live from Atlanta, Georgia and will simulcast to communities, churches, and other places all across the globe. More than 125,000 leaders from all different backgrounds will be encouraged, empowered, and inspired to Simply Lead. There are many local places to attend this convention such as: the Poplar Bluff Chamber, St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Cape Girardeau, Paducah, and the Jonesboro Chamber.

This year's Leadercast Convention will be hosted by Michael Hyatt in Atlanta. Joining him on the stage includes many famous and well-known athletes, authors, politicians, and CEOs.

The Secretary of State from 2005 to 2009, Condoleezza Rice, will be one of the inspirational and moving speakers who will speak about being the first African American woman to hold both the positions of Secretary of State and National Security Advisor.

Mike Krzyzewski, better known as "Coach K", is a Basketball Hall of Famer and has been the head coach of the Duke Blue Devils for more than thirty years and has motivated people while he has been on the sidelines and while he is on stage.

Olympic gold medalist Sanya Richards-Ross will be joining these powerful people on stage to give an inspirational speech and outlook of the obstacles she has overcome not only on the track or field, but also in life.

LCDR Rorke T. Denver, a former Navy SEAL and star of the recent movie Act of Valor, has been through basic training, has led special operations in the Middle East, Latin America, and in Africa. He has also received his Master's Degree from the University of San Diego in Global Business Leadership.

If you would like more information on this event you can visit chick-fil-a-leadercast.com to order tickets, find an event, and see the full list of speakers.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/u000/ChickFilA-Hosts-Leadercast>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

A Devotional Story

MARCH 20TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

A Devotional Story

Dexter, Missouri - It is always fun to watch God in action. Julie Holden and I really love the clothes ministry that started from our prayer group at the First Baptist Church.

Our prayer group that has been meeting since 2006 and this idea was only started last year; however it is pretty neat when you can visibly feel that God is blessing your life.

Julie, several others and myself had spent most of the day Sunday preparing for the clothes give away. In deep fervent prayer, we were seeking God to reveal Himself through this ministry idea. That's when God confirmed His presence 2x over.

FIRST: Giving God His time on Monday morning, Julie's March 18 daily devotion subtly confirmed the work of the previous days work. The daily scripture for the day was:

Luke 3:10-11. And the crowds asked Him, "What then shall we do?" And He answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."

Can you imagine how we felt that the Lord, our Savior spoke to us in such a way. Not just a coincidence, but a true message from Him.

SECOND: Evaluating the amount of clothes that had been prepared for the Monday only event. We were disappointed to find we were low on kids clothing. Taking our desires of more kids clothes to God ... We agreed to pray for kids clothing.

God again revealed Himself through one of His Angels by providing through an unknown person at an unknown time during the night. This unknown Angel dropped off a multitude of multiple bags of incredible quality kids clothes. So many clothes in fact that the one-day event was extended to another full day on Tuesday.

How wonderful a feeling this was to know He heard our prayers and answered them so we may help others.

Why are we surprised when God shows us His true power over all circumstances? We serve a mighty incredible God that we should always trust and have faith He will provide and take care of those that love Him.

We pray for His strength to guide us and hope we can do this again in the fall for a back to school giving. I know in He will hear our prayers and give us direction to go forward with our ministries.

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<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/uom8/A-Devotional-Story>

[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

Youth Groups Travel to Nashville for Acquire the Fire

FEBRUARY 25TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

Youth Groups Travel to Nashville for Acquire the Fire

Nashville, Tennessee - A few local youth groups from the Stoddard County area traveled to Nashville for a nationwide youth conference called Acquire the Fire. The weekend was filled with praise and worship music, theatrical skits and plays, contemporary Christian bands, well-known speakers and preachers, and thousands of other kids and youth pastors from all over the country.

Acquire the Fire has been around for nearly twenty years and has developed into a total of twenty-seven hours of time with God over the span of one weekend. There are several locations across the United States but the one held in the Municipal Auditorium in Nashville is one of the larger sessions.

The main idea of Acquire the Fire is to get the younger generation on fire for God. This year's theme was "The Relentless Pursuit: Captured by the Fierce Love of God", so all of the sermons and lessons were easily related to God's relentless chase after us and his amazing grace that so gently covers all of us.

The youth conference offers more than great music, amazing speakers, and life changing sermons. It also provides education on different options that the teens are able to choose after they graduate high school. Many representatives from Regent University, The

Christian Honors Academy, and Teen Mania Ministries all set of booths and talk one on one with students or teens that are interested in pursuing God after high school.

“Acquire the Fire is a decision making, pattern breaking, future shaping, life transforming experience that effects over 200,000 kids in a 2-day event.” This is just one quote from Ron Luce, the opening speaker for the 2013 conference. He delivered several messages throughout the weekend but his most memorable was “The Gold Rush History Lesson”, where Luce rode through the stadium on a horse while speaking about our desire for worldly possessions just like the miners’ desires to strike gold.

Mike Guzzardo was another preacher that joined the Acquire the Fire team and he prepped the teens with his sermon called “Level Up”. Guzzardo was an energetic speaker that taught the crowd about growing spiritually and not just staying in one place.

The music was a key part of the fantastic weekend. Multiple bands either opened or closed the daily sessions, but the School of Worship Band (Acquire the Fire Live) played worship music throughout the session during alter calls. The contemporary bands include: Disciple, Lecrae, Rapture Ruckus, and the Desperation Band.

Keeping thousands of teenagers interested and awake after long night sessions is quite a challenge. So, the Acquire the Fire team put together a skit that was written in three different parts and was performed at three out of the four sessions. There were also many videos and slideshows involved with the sermons and lessons so that the crowd always had a visual picture.

Teen Mania’s Global Expeditions Team also attended the conference and spoke about the need of missionaries and support for the many unreached places in the world that contain people who have never heard the name of Jesus. Many youth groups and teens attended the seminar about fundraising and attending mission trips all over the globe.

For the youth pastors and/or parents that attended the conference, they too had their own session where they were able to break away and be taught different things while their youth groups enjoyed another concert or lesson.

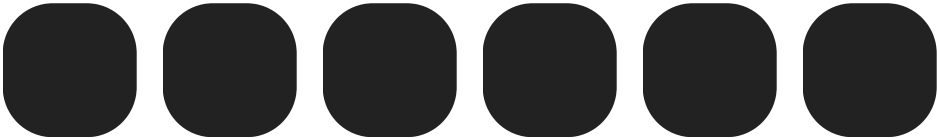
The weekend was filled with renewed hearts and youth groups that were knit together tightly by God’s hands. As the teens grew closer to God throughout the weekend, the Acquire the Fire team took it upon themselves to create an app that is available for smart phones that include information, music, lessons, and bible verses to keep the teens’ spark alive. The team also sent out “The Relentless Pursuit” books, which contained highlights of the lessons and even more Bible verses.

Acquire the Fire will take place again on February 22-23rd in Nashville in 2014. Each youth group that attends is counting down the days until they get to return. Tickets are on sale now at acquirethefire.com. It's one weekend that you won't want to miss!

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