

Victory Sports Outreach

Spring 2010 Season

Weekly Devotions Overview

If you're new to Victory Sports, each weekly practice concludes with a short devotional time. Our passion is to make Jesus Christ known to the children and families that attend Victory Sports functions. In an age of confusion about spiritual matters, the Bible is our only completely reliable source of truth. We want there to be no mistake that we are presenting Jesus of the Bible. We use a fictional story to begin each devotional session which leads into a short Bible lesson. Each session ends with prayer.

If you missed either the fall 2009 or the winter 2010 season, the spring 2010 season is the conclusion to a three-part story the children have been hearing during their devotional time. **You can read or download the previous installments of the ongoing story on the victory sports website at victorysportsoutreach.org.** Just click on the "Devotions" link toward the bottom of the navigation bar on the left hand side of the home page. Once on the Devotions page, there is a "Visit Devotion Archives" button that will take you to a menu of the previous devotional stories.

Set in England in the middle ages, our story focuses on the lives of twins Richard and Elizabeth, who are given the chance at training to become a knight and a lady-in-waiting. Their training has been hard and they have learned to deal with some fellow trainees who have been troublesome at best. Now as young adults, their training pays off as they achieve the goals they set for themselves as children. But even in their new positions, Richard and Elizabeth are put to the test as an someone comes back to take revenge on the Weaver Hill manor.

Discipline, prayer, invasion, loyalty, suffering, and sacrifice...
What will happen to Sir Edward, Lady Anne, Richard, and Elizabeth as they prepare for battle?

The story and devotions are just a starting point. If you have a personal experience or can think of other verses that fit the topic, please feel free to share what is on your heart. Feel free to tailor the story (summary or easier words for the smaller children, etc.) to your age group. As with any lesson, the devotions work best when you have had a chance to look over them beforehand.

We hope you enjoy the story and Bible lessons as much as the children enjoy hearing them. **This season there is one less lesson due to the possibility of weather cancellations and that the last week of the season holds a game and not a practice.**

Here are the weekly topics:

Week 1: The Reward of Discipline- Hebrews 12:11

Week 2: Humble Prayer- The Lord's Prayer

Week 3: God With Us- Joshua 1:9

Week 4: Battle Plan- 2 Chronicles 32:8

Week 5: Who You Are in Christ- 1 Peter 2:9

Week 6: Living a Legacy- 2 Timothy 4:7

Week 7: Summary

Week #1- The Reward of Discipline

Hebrews 12:11, “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

Living a Legacy: Chapter 1~

Young James wiggled on his grandfather’s knee. “This is a really long story, Grandpa. Did Richard *ever* get to become a knight?”

His grandfather chuckled again. “Ah, all good stories must be told, but not all good stories are short,” he said with a twinkle in his eye. “Six weeks after the exhibition tournament at the Weaver Hill manor house, Sir Edward, Lord of the manor had made his final decision as to who was worthy of knighthood. And Lady Anne had known for a long time who would become her lady-in-waiting (personal assistant).

The time had come for the decision to be announced. Sir Edward and Lady Anne gathered all of the trainees together one morning.

“Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I suppose this is the moment you’ve all been waiting for, so I won’t delay. Lady Anne will first announce the ladies who have earned certain positions and then I will announce those who will be knighted in tomorrow’s ceremony.”

Lady Anne stepped forward and cleared her throat, which gave way to a slight cough. “Excuse me,” she said, “These names should come as no surprise.” She then read off the names for the positions of Keeper of the Vegetable Garden and the Cookery, Head Washmaid, and the new positions of Groundskeeper and Animal Care.

“And last, but not least, would Elizabeth step forward for the position of my personal lady-in-waiting?” As Elizabeth stepped forward, Lady Anne presented a large crimson colored silk scarf and matching pinafore. Elizabeth bowed to her mistress and accepted the precious gifts.

Sir Edward spoke again, “And now, each of the following young men are considered ready for knighthood.” He read off a list of several young men and ended with Richard’s name. “It is unfortunate that Apollo is not able to be knighted, but his character showed itself at the exhibition tournament. He and his friends have left Weaver Hill and returned to their homes in Southampton. On the other hand, we commend Hercules on his change of heart and his decision to be Richard’s personal assistant. Congratulations, men. Be ready at 8:00 a.m. sharp for the ceremony.”

Richard suddenly had a lump in his throat. He knew he had to talk to Sir Edward so he went up to him with his knees knocking. “Sir Edward, I...have something I mmmust tell you...”

“What is it, Richard?” Sir Edward replied

“Sir, I am not worthy to be a knight. I am nearly blind in my right eye.” Richard could barely get the words out.

“Richard, Richard,” Sir Edward began with a gentle voice, “I have known that from the beginning. Your father told me that before you ever came to live here at the manor. But you have shown yourself to be capable of fulfilling the duties of a knight. Now go and prepare yourself for the ceremony in the morning.”

Follow-Up Questions:

1. Are you excited that Richard and Elizabeth are finally getting to do what they set out to do as kids?
2. Was it easy for them to achieve their goals?
3. What did Richard feel like he had to tell Sir Edward?

Bible Thought~

It has taken Richard and Elizabeth about fourteen years to complete their training. That’s a long time isn’t it? Some things are worth taking a long time to achieve. Richard and Elizabeth spent a long time, but their effort paid off. They received their reward, didn’t they? It feels really good to accomplish something that takes a long

time, doesn't it?

What are some things in life that take a long time to accomplish?

(They may say things such as:)

- *Graduating from high school or college
- * Taking many years of music or art lessons
- *Training to be a professional or Olympic athlete
- * Growing up and getting taller!

Growing up in life takes a lot of discipline and hard work, doesn't it? The Bible has a few verses about that! Today's verse is: Hebrews 12:11, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

If we grow up and don't have someone telling us what to do or how to act, we grow up kind of wild, don't we? We end up getting in trouble a lot because we don't know how to act. That's why God gave you parents, teachers, and coaches to help us along in life. It's tough, but we eventually learn how to do things and then we can do them on our own.

Sometimes we don't do the right things, don't we? Then we have to be corrected. Hopefully, we will learn from our mistakes.

Prov. 10:17 reads, "He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray." Does anyone here want to lead others down the wrong path? So just how *do* we learn to live the way *Jesus* wants us to live?

The Bible is like the roadmap in life. It's the ultimate GPS! It is Jesus' book to us- like our very own personal letter from God. If we read it, we know how God wants us to think and act and speak. We learn what makes Him happy and what makes Him sad.

Most importantly we learn that we can't get to heaven on our own. We need Jesus' help. He died on the cross to save us from the punishment we deserve because of our own sin. And then He rose again! We'll hear more about that as we go over the salvation colors on the game days.

The Bible is the most important book we could ever read and this season, we're going to talk about lots of verses that will help us be the kind of person Jesus wants us to be.

The great thing about that is when we are brought into a relationship with Jesus, we begin a special kind of training with Him. He loves us so much, He wants us to become more and more like him and even show others the right way to live.

Let's stop and thank Jesus for loving us and not giving up on us!

Pray to close the session.

Week #2- Humble Prayer

The Lord's Prayer: A Blueprint for Our Own Prayer

Living a Legacy: Chapter 2~

Richard was grateful and humbled that Sir Edward still wanted him to become a knight. As Richard and his friends turned to go, Sir Edward handed them each the traditional white tunic (long shirt) and red robe.

Elizabeth also went to put on her new apron and scarf. She felt a little sad that she would not be helping to prepare the feast for tomorrow, but was excited to get to know Lady Anne better. The kitchen would be in good hands now. In fact, she was a bit concerned with Lady Anne's cough this morning. Perhaps she would run down to the kitchen and make her a cup of herbal tea.

Richard headed to his room and put on his tunic and robe. He would fast and pray today. In fact, he would stay up all night to pray. He already had a strong relationship with Jesus, his Lord and Savior, but it would be a challenge not to fall asleep.

He knew the Lord's prayer from the Gospels in the Bible. He began to think about what the words really meant and how it applied to his life at the Weaver Hill manor. He was on his knees most of the night, only getting up when he or his legs started to fall asleep.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven... He honored and praised the Lord for being perfect, all-knowing, and all-powerful.

Give us today our daily bread... He thanked Him for providing for his needs and giving him the chance to train to be a knight.

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors... He confessed that he didn't always have the right attitude and was even upset when Hercules and Apollo tried to get him into trouble, but he forgave them and miraculously he had been able to share Jesus with Hercules. Now Hercules had a relationship with Jesus also.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one... This phrase fell heavy on Richard's heart during the night. It seemed like the calm before the storm. It was something he couldn't quite put his finger on, but he prayed for strength for himself and all the Weaver Hill staff, especially Sir Edward and Lady Anne, who were getting older now. He, too, had noticed Lady Anne's cough this morning.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen... He prayed that he would represent the Lord well and glorify Him as a knight for the Weaver Hill manor house.

When the sky changed from black to deep blue, Richard got up and bathed and put on his best clothes for the ceremony. He went down to breakfast. It was 8:00 a.m.

His family was all waiting in the courtyard of the manor to see him become a knight. Soon it was Richard's turn. Before he knew it, he had bowed in front of Sir Richard and heard the famous words as the sword touched both shoulders, "I dub thee, Sir Richard, knight of Weaver Hill. May God go with you. You may rise."

Richard's mother and father had tears in their eyes as they remembered how young Richard had first called himself "Sir Richard" to Sir Edward many years ago.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. What did Richard do all night?

Bible Thought~

In our story today, Richard prayed the Lord's Prayer from the Bible. It is called the Lord's Prayer, but it is really a pattern or blueprint of the way we ought to pray. In fact, in Matthew chapter 6, Jesus' disciples were asking Jesus how to pray. Jesus answered their question with the words we call the Lord's Prayer today.

It is certainly fine to pray those exact words because Jesus used them and it's in the Bible, but we don't have to use those exact words each time we pray, do we?

Let's use the acrostic **ACTS** to help us remember what things we should include when we pray. The A stands for Adoration.

This is when we tell Him how great He is to us and all that He means to us. We praise Him for being holy and perfect and righteous and the creator of everything.

The C stands for Confession. This is where we confess to Him the wrong things we've done. These are the things that make Him sad. We ask Him to forgive us of those things.

The T stands for Thanksgiving. This is where we thank Him for loving us and dying for us and rising again. And whatever else is going on that is good that we want to say "thank You" for.

The S stands for Supplication. That's just a big word for your requests or the requests of others- the things you would like to ask God to do for you or your friends or family.

Let's stop and talk to God using our new model. (You might want to take a few prayer requests if you feel led to do so.)

You might pray something like this simple prayer:

Dear Jesus, We love You and praise You for being so holy and perfect. We're sorry for the times we have made You sad today. Please forgive us for our sins. Thank You for being so good and loving to us even when we don't deserve it. Help us to obey our parents and to try our best on our teams. Please be with us as we go home tonight. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Week #3- God With Us

Joshua 1:9, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged. For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Living a Legacy: Chapter 3~

The ceremony and feasting were over and the staff was busy cleaning up. Elizabeth was busy tending to Lady Anne, who was grateful for her help. Lady Anne soon realized that what she really needed was a good nap. She gratefully accepted the cup of tea that Elizabeth brought up for her. It quieted her cough so she could get to sleep.

Richard mounted his horse and took a ride out into the countryside. Evening was almost here. The sky was splashed with brilliant colors of red, pink, orange, and purple. Though he was tired, he thanked the Lord for the perfect ending to the perfect day.

Suddenly he saw movement in the distance. He led his horse behind some trees so he could watch without being seen. So much for the perfect day. He recognized Apollo and some of his friends that were sent away from the manor house a few weeks before. They had called themselves the “Knights of the Golden Circle” even though they weren’t really knights at all. They had acted very foolishly during their training and were considered unworthy to be knights. Richard supposed they were planning their revenge for not being allowed to be knighted.

Now, Apollo and his men seemed to be gathering supplies and putting on armor. But where would they have gotten such things? Those items were only for knights, and they certainly weren’t knighted this morning. Apollo and his team must have raided another manor and stolen their armor and battle supplies. That was why it didn’t seem to fit very well. It had not been cleaned since the last battle it had been used in.

Richard heard bits and pieces of their conversation and it was not what he wanted to hear. He knew he must ride back at once and warn Sir Edward of Apollo’s plot to invade Weaver Hill at sunrise! He turned and rode furiously back to the manor.

Breathless, Richard ran into the manor and told Sir Edward of the plot of Apollo and the Knights of the Golden Circle to invade the manor in the morning.

Wise Sir Edward replied, “Then let us pray and be prepared at sunrise. We can do nothing to stop it.” And that’s just what the staff and the knights did. They prayed and they knew that God was on their side. They had done nothing wrong and yet they were under attack.

Just before the break of day, some of the knights stood at the top of the manor house so they could see Apollo and his men coming from a long way off. They rest stood on the ground waited, ready to put their knighthoods to the test, ready to defend their home and the lord and lady of the manor.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. Why is Elizabeth having to take care of Lady Anne?
2. What did Richard find out that was going to happen to the manor?

Bible Thought~

In our story today, Richard heard of an attack on Weaver Hill. There was going to be a battle. We have many “battles” or hard times in our lives too. What are some of the hard things or “battles” we have to face?

(They may say things like:)

- *Bullies at school
- *When your friends tempt you to do wrong
- *Getting along with older brothers/sisters
- *Obeying our parents or teachers

If we have a personal relationship with Jesus, He tells us in the Bible that He will be with us even in the hard times.

Today's verse is Joshua 1:9, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged. For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Isn't it amazing that God is with us wherever we go? He is with us: * at school

- * when we go to bed
- * at the grocery store
- * when we are watching TV
- * when we're playing sports
- * when we're doing our homework
- * when we're worshipping God at church
- * when we're tempted to do the wrong things.

Not only is He *with* us in our battles, He is there to *lead* and guide us:

- * to do the right thing at the moment of temptation, or
- * when we need to hold our tongue, or
- * when we need strength to obey our parents even when we don't want to.

When we have asked Jesus to be our Lord and Savior, His Spirit comes to live inside of us. Again, we'll be talking more about that during the game days when we go over the salvation colors.

God will not leave us to do battle by ourselves. Philippians 4:13 reads, "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength." And we wear the Victory Sports theme verse on our t-shirts:

1 Corinthians 15:57 reads, "But thanks be to God. He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Let's stop and thank God for being with us and leading us in our "battles."

Pray to close the session.

Week #4- Battle Plan

2 Chronicles 32:8, “With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.”

Living a Legacy: Chapter 4~

Elizabeth knows where her place is this morning. Lady Anne is getting worse and Elizabeth knows it. She heads down to the kitchen to get some dried herbs to make a fresh cup of tea. She has heard of Apollo’s plot to invade, but Sir Edward has told her not to upset Lady Anne with the news. Obeying his orders, she remains quiet about the attack and brings the cup of tea back to her mistress.

It took a while to get everything ready for the battle. Horses were saddled and armored. The men helped each other get into their own armor. The catapult was pulled over to the piles of rocks and logs that would be used as ammunition. Lances, bows and arrows were gathered. Hearts were beating quickly from adrenaline and a bit of fear.

Once again, the sky went from black to a deep blue, but the Weaver Hill knights were ready for battle. The first arrow whistled through the trees. Then another quickly followed. Suddenly there were sounds of shouting, footsteps, and catapults being loaded.

The battle raged on for several hours and Sir Edward was about to collapse from exhaustion. Richard ran over to him and as he bent down to keep Sir Edward from falling down, he himself felt a stinging pain in his shoulder from an arrow piercing his armor. They both fell to the ground, neither being able to help the other.

Someone managed to come along and drag them both to the safety of the back porch of the manor house. Meanwhile, in another part of the property, Hercules came face to face with Apollo.

“Hercules, my old friend. What are you still doing here? Don’t you know Sir Edward could never give you the recognition you deserve? Come and join me and we can rule the whole area together.” Apollo asked in a last ditch effort.

“Apollo, you have it all wrong. Richard and Elizabeth taught me all about the Truth- God’s Truth...” Hercules tried to explain. But at that instant, a large boulder came crashing down right next to Apollo.

“Retreat!” Apollo called out to his men as he ran toward the open fields. Soon the rest of his men followed and all was quiet again at Weaver Hill. As the knights came back to the manor house, they noticed Richard and Sir Edward being tended to by Elizabeth and several younger girls in training.

“Quickly, send a page down to Richard’s house to get his parents. Richard is badly injured.” Hercules ordered.

Only Elizabeth knew that she was the brave one who brought Sir Edward and Richard to safety.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. What has happened to Sir Edward and Richard?
2. Who was the one who pulled them to safety?
3. What do you think is going to happen to Richard and Sir Edward?

Bible Thought ~

In our story today, we read about the battle between Apollo and his men and the knights of Weaver Hill. The Weaver Hill knights planned and prepared, but they also prayed. Apollo and his men were out for revenge. They did not have the Lord on their side. Our verse today is 2 Chronicles 32:8, “With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.”

When we go through hard times, or “battles,” we may even get hurt or have bad things happen, but if Jesus is living inside of us, *He will always use those things for our good.* Romans 8:28 reads, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him who have been called according to His purpose.”

Sometimes the situation doesn’t look good, but God is sovereign; He is in control- you hear Coach P say that a lot. It’s true. There is nothing that happens in this world that God is not in control of. Nothing comes as a

surprise to God. He never says “*Oops.*”

So how can we be prepared for the battles we will have? There is a passage in the Bible in Ephesians 6. Verses 10 through 18 even use the symbol of armor to tell us how we can be prepared. It talks about:

*The belt of Truth- read the Bible so you can know what is true and what is not.

* The breastplate of Righteousness- the best defense against evil is to do good. Obey the Truth and confess sin.

* The shoes of Gospel of Peace- we need to be on the right side- God’s side. God will help us fight our battles.

* The shield of Faith-raising a shield is how we defend ourselves. Our faith is what sustains us in the heat of the battle.

* The helmet of Salvation- protect your head/mind- this protects us against doubt and discouragement.

* The sword of the Spirit- this is the only offensive weapon in the Full Armor of God. This is when we use our Bible correctly to help us in specific circumstances. The Holy Spirit helps us use the Bible correctly.

* Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers- that pretty much sums it up. Pray, pray, pray!

Do what we can do ourselves- be prepared. And pray- trust God to do His part in the battle.

Let’s stop right now and pray that the Lord would help us be prepared, keep us strong, and use the Bible correctly in our own battles.

Pray to close the session.

Week #5- Who You Are in Christ

1 Peter 2:9-10, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him Who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

Living a Legacy: Chapter 5~

In no time at all, Richard’s parents were running up the hill to the manor house with tears in their eyes. Richard was still conscious, but very weak.

When they were all together in a small room off the kitchen, Richard’s father began to speak while Elizabeth comforted her mother.

“Richard, I need to tell you something while you can still hear me,” he began. “I want to tell you how very proud I am of you. You have been a great knight even if it has only been for one day. You have earned your knighthood. I was given a chance at knighthood myself fifty years ago, but my story ends very differently.”

“You see, when Sir Edward’s father was still alive, I was a young man. One day some people from Southampton, invaded Weaver Hill also. I was in my field when I saw the commotion and I ran to help. I saw a knight about to be ambushed. So I ran to him and helped fight off his attackers. I thought I was just doing my duty, but as a reward, Sir Edward’s father wanted to make me a knight, too. I thought that was too much of a reward, so I told him I couldn’t accept the offer.”

Richard spoke very weakly, “Why are you telling me this, Father?”

His father replied, “I want you to know your story, son. You see, the knight I saved was Sir Edward. His father was so grateful that he wanted to find some way to repay me. He spoke with his daughter and she agreed to be my wife. We were married soon after. Your mother is Sir Edward’s daughter. She is royalty but was happy to live with me in our home and run our farm. That is why she always wanted her children to be able to read and be educated. Richard, do you know what that means for you?”

Richard didn’t know what to say, and Elizabeth spoke up, “Does that mean we’re royalty, too?” She asked shyly.

Richard’s mom spoke this time. “Indeed, that means you are royalty, too. I am sorry I never told you, but I didn’t want you to become prideful about it. You always had every right to begin your training here at Weaver Hill.”

A smile came across Richard’s face. “I always knew you were special, Mom.” And he closed his eyes.

Follow-Up Questions:

1. What did Richard and Elizabeth find out about themselves?

Bible Thought~

When we are brought into Christ’s family, we have been adopted into royalty. God wants to develop godly character in us, so that we begin to act like children of The King. So we begin training- a spiritual training to make us more like Jesus in our thoughts, words, and actions. We also grow to learn who we are in Christ.

So who are we? Here are just some of the many things we are:

*We are children of God- John 1:12

* We cannot be separated from the love of God-Rom.8:35

* We are confident that God will finish His work in us-

Phil. 1:6

* We have been given a spirit of love, power, and a sound mind- 2 Tim. 1:7 (not confusion or fear)

* We are a branch of the True Vine- John 15:5

* We can approach God with confidence- Eph. 3:12

* We can do all things through Christ- Phil. 4:13

We must be very careful on these points though. Just because a parent or family member has a personal relationship with God, that is not automatically true of us. We each need to make that decision for ourselves. All of those things we just listed can be ours if we are brought into a relationship with Jesus. That's why adoption is such a great picture of the life we live in Jesus. If we are adopted into a family, many things become ours, but we must be taught about them and trained to live a certain way in that family. The same is true when we become a member of God's family.

Let's stop and thank God for all that we are in Him!

Pray to close the session.

Week #6- Living the Legacy

2 Timothy 4:7-8, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

Living a Legacy: Chapter 6~

Nothing was ever heard from Apollo or the Knights of the Golden Circle again, but some suspect that they fled to the north. It was quite a long time before Sir Edward and Richard recovered, but they did. Elizabeth helped run the manor along with Hercules and the other knights. Lady Anne did not recover, however, and she was greatly missed by all the Weaver Hill staff. She had known Jesus as her Lord and Savior and they all knew she was waiting for them in heaven. Sir Edward lived to the ripe old age of 88.

Elizabeth finally questioned Hercules one day about his real name. He said it was Paul and Elizabeth thought that was pretty cool, remembering the dramatic transformation Paul underwent in the Bible. But Elizabeth couldn't get used to calling him Paul, so the name Hercules stuck.

Hercules and Elizabeth worked side by side for so long caring for the other members of the household that they eventually got married and had ten children of their own. They became lord and lady of Weaver Hill manor when Sir Edward died.

Legends soon spread about Richard's bravery and wisdom for alerting Weaver Hill to the attack. He was given the nickname “Richard the Lionheart” after the good king of England. Richard soon met and married Lady Rebecca of a neighboring village and they became lord and lady of Witherspoon Manor. Richard and Rebecca went on to also have ten children like Hercules and Elizabeth. Sir Richard loved to tell his family's story to anyone who would listen.

Young James wiggled down from his grandfather's knee. He glanced around again at the family coat of arms. “Thanks, Grandpa. Are we done yet?”

“Yep, we're done.” his grandfather laughed a gentle laugh.

“By the way,” James asked, “How do you know so much about this story?”

“Because it's *our* story; *I'm Richard!*” he said with a twinkle in his eye.

“Wooooooowow!”

The End.

Follow-Up Questions:

1.

Bible Thought ~

Today we got to find out what happened to all the characters we have been reading about throughout the last three seasons. It has been fun seeing what has happened to Richard and Elizabeth, hasn't it?

But what would've happened if they had gone only part-way through their training and quit? That would have been very disappointing and would not have made a very good story would it? It is much easier to begin something than to finish it, but it is so much more rewarding when we finish well.

When we have a relationship with Jesus, He starts working on us. But He doesn't quit, does He? In Philippians 1:6 states, “being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” Once He starts to grow us, He keeps going until we get to see Him in heaven.

We shouldn't quit on Him, either! We should, as the saying goes, “Keep on keeping on!” Today's verse is 2 Timothy 4:7-8, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day- and not only

to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

Let's fact it- life isn't always easy or fair. But Jesus is with us, and when we have lived it all and go to heaven to be with Him, He will give us a crown of righteousness. Of course, we will be so humbled by His presence, we will cast it at His feet as we bow to Him in worship!

That is the perfect ending to the perfect story-

*the story of how God saved us;

*what kind of person God made us into;

*how we glorified the Lord in what we said and did; and ultimately, *that we got to see Him face to face in heaven.

That is the legacy we will leave on this earth- to friends and family and maybe even our children if it takes that long for Jesus to come back.

*Keep going, don't give up,

*live the legacy,

*keep on worshiping, and

*keep on obeying Jesus even if your friends think your crazy!

It is all worth it!

Jesus is **CRAZY** about you and He wants you to know it and believe it and live like it!

Let's pray and thank Him for not giving up on us!

Pray to close the session.

Week #7- Summary

Give a summary of the various story and lessons that were covered each week.

You can then ask the kids what their favorite part of the story was.

<p>Week 1 Richard and Elizabeth find out they have been successful! Richard is to become a knight and Elizabeth is to become a lady-in-waiting.</p>	<p>Hebrews 12:11, “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”</p>
<p>Week 2 Elizabeth takes care of Lady Anne as Richard stays up all night to pray before his knighting ceremony.</p>	<p>The Lord’s Prayer</p>
<p>Week 3 Richard finally becomes a knight and finds out about Apollo’s plan to come back and attack Weaver Hill.</p>	<p>Joshua 1:9, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged. For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”</p>
<p>Week 4 The battle at Weaver Hill leaves both Sir Edward and Richard injured.</p>	<p>2 Chronicles 32:8, “With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.”</p>
<p>Week 5 As Richard recovers, he and Elizabeth are told by his parents of his royal heritage.</p>	<p>1 Peter 2:9-10, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him Who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”</p>
<p>Week 6 The rest of the story: When Lady Anne and Sir Edward pass away, Hercules and Elizabeth become lord and lady of Weaver Hill. Sir Richard earns the nickname “Richard the Lionheart” and marries Rebecca. They become lord and lady of Witherspoon manor. Nothing is ever heard from Apollo again. We find out Richard is telling the story to his grandson James.</p>	<p>2 Timothy 4:7-8, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”</p>

Appendix~ A Fuller Understanding of Salvation

The Gold, Black, Red, and White color sections are based on Chapter 2 entitled “Conversion” (pages 54-64) from *Desiring God* by John Piper Copyright 1986, 1996, 2003.

The term “Glory of God” in the Bible generally refers to the visible splendor or moral beauty of God’s manifold perfections. God’s ultimate goal and our ultimate goal are the same: to glorify God. At the same time, He desires to satisfy the hearts of those who live to glorify Himself. He joins us in the pursuit to glorify Him. Of course, this does not apply to everyone, for not everyone will make Christ their ultimate treasure.

Mere “belief” is not enough. Many sinful folks say they “believe in Jesus” but it is not enough to change their lifestyle. Even Satan and his demons believe in Jesus. A more appropriate question is “Do you receive Jesus as your treasure? Do you treasure Him more than anything?” Note our season theme verse- Philippians 3:8, “I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.”

Note some key truths outlining our need and God’s provision:

Gold

1: We were created in His image so we would act as prisms, reflecting God’s glory. “The proper understanding of everything in life begins with God. No one will ever understand the necessity of conversion who does not know why God created us.” (p.56)

2: It is the duty of every person to live for the glory of God. Our duty comes from God’s design. That means to value Him/His glory above all else and make it known with implicit thanksgiving. Nature and conscience provide the witness for all men, so all men are without excuse (Rom. 1:20, “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities- His eternal power and divine nature- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”).

Black

3. All of us have failed in some way to glorify God as we should. (Rom. 3:23, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”) This does not mean we are to be as glorious as God, but that we have exchanged the glory of God for images. (Rom. 1:22-23 states, “Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.” This is how we “fall short” of God’s glory. We have exchanged something of supreme value for something of lesser value. All sin comes from not putting the supreme value on God’s glory. This is the very essence of sin. (p.57) We have dishonored His glory by trusting in ourselves. The evil of sin is not so much what it does to us or others, but what it does to God. But we do not just choose to sin, we are sinful by birth.

4. We are all subject to eternal condemnation by God for falling short of His glory. Hell is not just a temporary place of judgment and rehabilitation. It is eternal torment and separation because we have acted against our duty to glorify Him Who is eternally holy, righteous, excellent, and beautiful. (Rom. 6:23, “The wages of sin is death.” 2 Thess. 1:9, “They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might.”).

Red

5. In His great mercy, God has made a way for sinners to enter into His righteousness by dying on the cross in their place and rising from the dead. (1 Peter 3:18, “Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God.” Rom. 6:5, “If we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.” Also note 2 Corinthians 5:21, “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”)

The good news is that God Himself has decreed a way to satisfy the demands of His justice without condemning the whole human race. The wisdom of God has ordained a way for the love of God to deliver us from the wrath of God without compromising the justice of God- through the death of the Son of God for sinners.

White

6. The benefits of the death of Christ belong to those who repent and trust in Him. (Acts 3:19, “Repent, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out.”) Think of it as heads and tails- turn tail on the fruit of unbelief and head straight for Jesus and His promises. Conversion is a miracle of God. Repentance and faith are our acts, but it is made possible because of God’s work of regeneration.

Regeneration is where God takes our hard, rebellious hearts and replaces them with a heart that desires Him above all (Ezekiel 36:26-27, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.” Also note Ephesians 2:4-5, “But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions- it is by grace you have been saved.” And Eph. 2:8-9, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast.” Lastly note Romans 9:16, “It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.”).

So when we repent (turn) from our sin and place our faith in Christ alone for our salvation, we are in fact responding to the work of God already done in our hearts. Saving faith, then, is the confidence that if you forsake all sinful pleasures, the hidden treasure of holy joy will satisfy your deepest desire. Saving faith is the heartfelt conviction not only that Christ is reliable, but also that He is desirable. It is the confidence that He will come through with His promises and that what He promises is more to be desired than all the world.

Green

Although not addressed in this particular chapter of *Desiring God*, we know that a close relationship with Christ is the key to real spiritual growth. John chapter 15 refers to this wondrous relationship as “abiding” or “remaining” in Christ. The chapter is a word picture of Christ as the vine, the Father as the gardener, and we as believers as the branches. The only way to live a fruit-laden, joy-filled, God-glorified life is to stay connected to the Vine. John 15: 5 states, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.”

As we grow in our relationship, we begin to bear fruit much like a real branch bears real grapes. This fruit comes in the form of attitudes, actions, and words born from a heart that is becoming increasingly more like Christ. Galatians 5:22 gives us a list of some fruit that we will produce when we abide in Christ- love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The G-R-O-W acronym mentioned in the weekly devotion section helps the children to get a better understanding of the actions which take place as a result of our new relationship with Christ. They will want to **Go** to God in prayer, **Read** the Bible, **Obey** God and parents, and **Witness** to others as a result of what has happened in their hearts.

Also, in John 15:9-11, “As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father’s commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” This joy Christ is speaking of is the joy we find in knowing and glorifying Christ, which ultimately leads us back to the gold color- God’s glory. As a regenerated believer, we will have that new desire to give Him glory the way it should be.