



October 24-30, 2011
Devotion Starters

Instructions:

Use these devotion starters privately, with your spouse, friend, or as a family. You choose. For families with children, there will be some suggested children's activities to go along with each day. Encourage your kids to read the Bible with you and discuss the questions for each day. Have fun with the activities and find more resources online at www.firstbaptisticard.org.

Monday, October 24:

- Read John 10:22-30. The Jews were still in doubt that Jesus was the Christ. Jesus told them the reason they did not believe was because they were not of His flock. Christ's sheep hear His voice and will come to Him to receive eternal life. (Optional - Play a game where you play recorded voices of people and try to guess who they are.) Talk about God's saving power and the assurance His people have.

Tuesday, October 25:

- Read Galatians 5:1-6. Paul reminds the Galatians to be on guard against works righteousness and its tendency to enslave us. Instead he cautions us to receive grace and freedom in Christ Jesus. Why is it hard to receive grace sometimes? Why would we rather earn our standing with works?

Wednesday, October 26:

- Read Ezekiel 36:26-27. God is speaking to his exiled people. These people have been exiled because of their sin yet they still sin even while exiled. Yet, God in His grace offers restoration for them with the promise of a new heart that is compelled to follow God's laws. (Play a game of "Mother May I" with your family.) Have you considered that our obedience to God's law is only done in His power and grace? We could not do it on our own. How might we seek God's direction in our lives for the steps we will take (at school, home work, etc)? (Online activity to print for kids.)

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Devotion Starters (cont'd)

Thursday, October 27:

- Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. Even in the Old Testament, it is clear that God intended more with the Law and Prophets than most understood. He did not want an external obedience alone but also a heart that loved Him and understood the purpose behind the law. Have there been times when you took God's law into your mind but not your heart? How does that work out?

Friday, October 28:

- Read Matthew 1:22, Matthew 2:15, Matthew 2:17. The Old Testament contains over 300 references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus. In his book *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, Josh McDowell mentions the work of the mathematician, Peter Stoner, on just eight of the 300 prophecies: "We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is one in 10^{17} (or 10 quadrillion)" In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that we take 10^{17} (or 10 quadrillion)" silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that "This is the right one." What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man. How does this change your view of Jesus?

Saturday, October 29:

- Read Ephesians 2:8-10. Paul hammers home the point that we are saved faith through grace, not by works. If he had stopped there, we might assume that we do not have to do good works but he adds in verse ten that we are God's workmanship created to do good works prepared in advance for us. Take a favorite electronic gadget in your house as an object lesson. Did that gadget come to exist by doing whatever it does? No, It was created then it fulfilled its function. This is the way it is with us as Christians. Life in Christ first, then fulfill our function. (Optional - online activity to print for kids.)

Sunday, October 30:

- Pray with your family for the services and activities of the day. Ask God to give you hearts and minds that can hear Him clearly.

