

Study Guide

Monday, August 9—Read Matthew 6:10. When we pray the Lord's Prayer do we stop and think about verse 10. "May your Kingdom come, May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Do we really want His Kingdom to come? When you pray this, you are inviting the Messiah himself to walk into your world!! Take your throne in our land. Be present in my heart. Be present in my office. Come into my marriage. Be Lord of my family. Be Lord of my fears and doubts. This is a bold appeal for God to occupy every corner of your life. Can you pray this each day?

Tuesday, August 10 –Read Philippians 4:8. We make choices each day that reflect our values, that reflect what is important to us. Paul reminds us our choices should be true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and admirable. As a family each member notices decisions that are made. What are they seeing? When we turn to a television station, how does that program reflect our values? When we choose a movie, what message does that send? **Re-read Philippians 4:8.** Notice the first part of the verse – it all starts with your thoughts! Before we take action, before we turn on the TV, before we go to a movie, before we choose any other entertainment venues, we first THINK. How do your thoughts match up with Paul's challenge? That's a little more difficult isn't it. Sometimes choosing the right path is difficult. Didn't the King of Kings say, narrow is the path?

Wednesday, August 11 – Read Psalm 122:1. In this Psalm, David was describing stepping into the presence of God. For the Israelites, Jerusalem was the place that represented God's presence. Most Christians feel this way about the church building. But the New Testament tries to remind us that God's presence is always with us. For someone looking for help for their family, it's more than just coming into a building or coming to a worship service. How does the church help keep families on the path that is true, honorable, right, etc? By being the 'church.' By being the hands and feet (and ears) of God. Through counseling. Through children's small groups. Through youth small groups. Through Adult small groups. Through Celebrate Recovery. Through Stephen Ministry. Each of us can encourage others when we see a need or see a family that might be in distress. Or we can take advantage of the church being the church!

Thursday, August 12 – Read Joshua 24:14-15. Joshua reminds us we make choices each day. The choice is simple. Serve God or serve something else. By making God a priority in our families we are making a difference in our world the only way we can – one person at a time. It is the primary responsibility of parents to pass the baton of faith to their children. Sure it is nice to pass along an inheritance, a family business, land, or houses. But if our children "catch" our faith, we then begin making a difference not just in 1 or 2 lives, but in the lives of their families for generations to come. Choose today whom you will serve.

Friday, August 13 – Read Galatians 6:9. Sometimes we can get discouraged in our families. We seem to bang our head against the wall – especially when we have teenagers or strong-willed children. Paul encourages us to not get tired of making the right choice. Keep on doing good. Keep on making true, honorable and pure decisions for our families. We are not guaranteed immediate results. We are promised at the appropriate time will there be a harvest of blessings. We don't know the appropriate time. It is not for us to dictate. We must believe it will come if we stay faithful.

Saturday, August 14 - Today you are challenged to be a family of one book. Three things are required: 1) Husbands and fathers must renounce passivity and take the initiative to lead their families spiritually. (Single mothers must stand in the gap for absent dads) 2) The Bible must be read and family discussion held on how to apply its teachings to life. 3) Parents must establish a family time that highlights Scripture. This means everything is turned off – all electronic devices – for a period of time. We must pick up the Book. We must read the Book. We must personally apply the Book. (Adapted from *One Home at a Time* by Dennis Rainey)