



USE YOUR PLATFORM

This should be your first week in your summer home for baseball. As a baseball player, God has given you an automatic platform to share His love. You will have a platform with your fellow players and coaches, as well as the people in the community in which you are playing. Make a point each and every day to reach out to someone with God's love. Use your platform to talk about Him and what God means in your life. Use your platform to live for God on and off the field. Something as simple as signing each autograph this summer with your favorite Bible verse reference. Brian Roberts, Baltimore Orioles second baseman, signs his autograph with Proverbs 3:5-6. Make a commitment to pray each day for your teammates and coaches. God has great plans for you this summer to use the platform he has blessed you with to be a blessing for Him.

I can't wait to hear how God will use you this summer.

Sunday: Read Acts 1:8

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, He spoke these words to the disciples. He spoke to them about the power of the Holy Spirit that would enable them to be a witness for Him no matter where they were. The same Holy Spirit who gave the original disciples the power to be a witness for Christ empowers us to do the same for Him today! Notice Jesus did not say we might become a witness or only some of us would be a witness, he said you WILL be my witnesses.

- 1. How can we be witnesses for Christ on the field?**
- 2. How can we be witnesses for Christ off the field?**
- 3. Will you make a commitment to Christ right now to be a witness for Him daily? If so, sign and date this devotion and ask Christ to remind you daily to be His witness.**

Monday: Read Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus' call for us today is to be salt and light. Salt had two major functions in Jesus' day. It was used as a preservative and also as a flavoring agent. If salt lost its ability to preserve and to flavor, it was of no use and was thrown out. A Christian who does not make a difference is of no use to God. We are called to bring His love and His ways to this world, to make a difference for Him. Jesus calls us the light of the world. How crazy is it to light a lamp and cover it up with a basket. We should not cover up our faith, our light. Live the example of Christ. It is not our light we share, but a reflection of who He is in our lives. When people see Jesus living through us it brings glory to God.

- 1. Just like salt makes popcorn better, how can we make those around us better by being Christ's salt?**
- 2. What kind of light are we for Christ? Do we reflect Him on and off the field?**
- 3. What would cause us to hide our light this summer? How can we make sure to keep our light shining bright for Christ?**

Tuesday Read Acts 4:23-31

Peter and John had been arrested. They spent a night in jail because they had healed a man in Jesus' name. Peter preached a sermon after the healing and 5,000 believed in Christ. The next day Peter and John were brought in front of the Jewish court and told not to speak anymore in the name of Jesus. They said they would obey God not man. The verses we read today are the prayer of the early church. They prayed for great boldness to so do miracles and speak in the name of Jesus. Verse 31 is the key verse, for through the power of the Holy Spirit they spoke the Word of God boldly.

- 1. How does God want us to be bold witnesses for Him this summer?**
- 2. Can we rely upon our strength? Whose strength enables us to be a bold witness for Christ?**
- 3. Boldness comes to those who ask, are we willing to ask for boldness to share Christ when the opportunity comes this summer?**

Wednesday Read Acts 16:16-34

Things don't always go well in the game of baseball. Have you ever took an O-fer or gave up a bunch of runs? Sometimes things just go bad, strikeouts, errors, caught stealing, passed balls, giving up a ton of walks or runs, baseball can be a very humbling game.

In the Christian life things don't always go well either. Sometimes hardships come. Our Scripture lesson today deals with such a time. Paul and Silas were thrown into jail in Philippi. They were imprisoned for healing a slave girl of an evil spirit, thus taking away income from her owners. Not only were they thrown into jail, they were flogged (whipped). Paul and Silas were put into the center of the prison, the area that was reserved for the worst of prisoners. Their feet were put into stocks, restricting their movement. I would say that would classify as a bad day. Beaten, imprisoned, feet in stocks, yeah that was one bad day.

But notice, Paul and Silas did not moan and complain. They did not cry out to God woe is me! No! They were praying and singing hymns. After a day like they had just endured, they were praising God!

About midnight an earthquake hit. The earthquake was so strong the doors to the prison flew open. In ancient times a jailer was responsible for each prisoner. If a prisoner escaped the jailer had to pay with his life. After the earthquake the jailer went to check on the prison and saw the doors wide open. The jailer drew his sword and was going to kill himself, why wait he must have thought, I am a dead man anyway. Paul shouted to the jailer, "Don't harm yourself we are all here."

It was a miracle none of the prisoners had escaped. The jailer knew so and fell at the feet of Paul and Silas and asked what must I do to be saved? That night not only the jailer, but his entire household believed in the Lord Jesus Christ! God was able to turn a bad day for Paul and Silas into a day of salvation for the jailer and his household.

Even when we have a bad day on the diamond, and those days will come, God can still give us the opportunity to make a difference for Him. God can take our bad day and make something good for His kingdom. This happened to Paul and Silas because they still were able to praise God for who He was and what He had done even on the worst of days. Even in the midst of an O-fer or a ton of runs given up, God can use that for His glory when we have the right attitude. God deserves our praise and glory for who He is and what He has done for us!

- 1. Have you ever had a bad day on the field? Did it carry over after the game to our mood and attitude? How?**
- 2. Even when we don't have the best of days, our platform for God remains. How do we insure that even on the bad days we use our platform for Him?**
- 3. Can you think of a time God used a bad day for His glory? Describe the experience.**
- 4. What kind of attitude must we have in order for God to use us even on a bad day?**
- 5. Ask God for the right attitude and strength to use our given platform for Him even when things don't go well.**

Thursday Read Luke 24:13-35

Today's Scripture lesson comes from Resurrection Sunday. As you read these verses put yourself in the sandals of the two men walking with Jesus. Try to imagine what they must have felt with their hearts so heavy after the death of Jesus on the cross. Pay specific attention to what the two men did when they realized it was Jesus who was walking with them and went to their home for supper. They immediately returned to Jerusalem to share the good news Jesus was alive!

- 1. How can we feel the presence of Christ in our lives?**
- 2. What difference has Jesus made in our lives?**
- 3. The two men went back to Jerusalem to tell the story of Jesus being with them, they shared their testimony. How can we share to others what Jesus has done for us? What is our testimony?**

Friday Read Ephesians 5:1-2

Imitation has been called the highest form of flattery. Paul in writing to the Church at Ephesus, calls the church to imitate God. Today as we read these words may we realize how God wants us to be like Him, to live like Him this summer. The key to imitating God is to live a life of love.

- 1. What are ways we can imitate God as we play this summer?**
- 2. How can we be more like Him on and off the field?**
- 3. What are some ways we can show His love to those we see on and off the field?**

Saturday Read Matthew 28:18-20

These words of Jesus are commonly referred to as the Great Commission. The call is to make disciples. The last part of verse 20 is the part I want each of us to key in on. Jesus has promised He will be with us always. What an assurance, Jesus is with us as we strive to use our platform to make a difference in this world for Him! We will have opportunities to use our platform this summer for God. But we are never alone or apart from the indwelling presence of Christ. Be bold, use the platform for Him. Jesus will always be there for us, showing us the way!!

- 1. How does it feel to know that Jesus is always there for us?**
- 2. Spend some time right now and ask Jesus to show the way we can make a difference for Him.**
- 3. Don't forget to thank Him for always being there for us!**