

Have An UP Day December 6, 2020

The English language is constantly changing. Words evolve. They take on new meanings. For example the word “bad” in some contexts, and said with the right inflection of voice, can mean “good.”

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more uses than any other two-letter word in the English language. That word is “UP”.

Basic meanings of the word “up” include the following: **1. from a lower to a higher place; 2. away from or out of the ground; 3. in a direction or place thought of as higher or above;**

You get the idea. For example, when we finish sleeping, we wake UP and get UP. These uses of the word UP maybe came about because we rise off of the bed from a horizontal position to a vertical one. Most people sleep with their heads at a lower elevation than when standing.

But the word “up” is used in lots of ways that don’t match any of the three basic definitions. If you look Up the word UP in the dictionary, you will find a long list of uses. My paperback dictionary had more than forty.

In a conversation, why does a topic come UP? Why do we speak UP in a conversation? In an organization why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report? We call UP our friends. We open UP the curtains to brighten UP a room. We polish UP the silver. We warm UP the leftovers. We lock UP the house. Someone may fix UP an old car. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses. To be dressed in our best is to dress UP.

Get this one: a drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night. Why do we both mess UP something and clean UP the same something? When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP. When it rains, it wets UP the ground. When the sun comes out, it dries UP the ground.

If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways YOU use the word UP. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don’t give UP, you may wind UP with even more than forty uses of UP.

One way we use the word UP is for a happy mood or pleasant experience, as in today’s title. So I want to build you UP with some suggestions about how to have an UP day. Let’s get started.

Start your UP day the night before. Rest up in the Lord.

I have found that any day is better when I end the day before with prayer. I encourage you to do the same. Before you go to bed tonight, briefly review the day with God. Give Him the credit and thanks due Him for the blessings you experienced this day. Ask for a good night's sleep as you rest up in Him. Then entrust yourself to Him for this night and tomorrow.

We never know what is going to happen while we sleep. Several things might disturb our sleep. We might be awakened by the phone, the weather, a cat fight outside the window, or our bladder. One big sleep interruption is worry. Worry is the opposite of faith. So practice faith to defeat worry.

During the second world war, in London, England, the people were being subjected to almost nightly bombing by the German planes. Everyone's nerves were frazzled as they got little sleep at night. Doctor's offices were jammed with people. One doctor gave out this prescription to his sleep-deprived patients: "Take two aspirin, drink a glass of warm milk, read the twenty third psalm, and go to bed." The 23rd Psalm is about faith in God.

Practice faith to defeat worry. So, as far as it depends on you, determine that you will put your life into God's hands for the night and the morrow, and then go to sleep.

John 14:1 (NIV) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

So the first part of having an up day is to rest up in the Lord the night before.

In the morning, assuming that you wake up and get up (Proverbs 6:9), do the following for an UP day.

Start by spiritually looking up to God. Start your day with God. Start your day in prayer. Like the psalmist prayed...

Psalms 25:1 (NIV) To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul...

I encouraged this in last Sunday's sermon. There is no better way to start your day. Today, I suggest that you include several elements to this morning prayer. You want to...

Fuel up on spiritual truth. Again we turn to the Psalms.

Psalm 119:11 (NIV) I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:105 (NIV) Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

In-other-words, God's word provides guidance in how to live. There are lots of things you could read in the morning, like the newspaper, a magazine, or a novel. There are lots of things to watch or listen to, such as secular music, the news, or a podcast. But there is nothing better for putting you in the right attitude for an UP day than spiritual truth. Reminders of what you have in Jesus Christ set the tone for looking up to God all day long.

Fuel up on spiritual truth.

You also want to... **Clean up.** (in slang known as **fess up**)

Confession of sin builds humility. Humility helps guard you against pride and ego. Confession of sin also keeps your relationship to God on the right track, as the following verse reveals.

1 John 1:9 (NIV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

If you don't do this regularly, your prayer life, and your obedience, will deteriorate. Rod Cooper illustrates this with a personal story. He said that at one point as an adult, he had to move back into his mother's home. She stipulated that as part of this he would be expected to take out the trash each week. So he did, faithfully removing it from the house.

He says that one week he forgot to put out the garbage, which had already been in the can several days. Garbage has a way of making itself known. It began to smell. Still, he resisted taking it out. "I'll get it later today," he'd tell himself, but would forget. He said you would smell it every time you came in the back door of the house. Soon the aroma began to seep into the rest of the house and infected the atmosphere. He writes, "It started to infect my relationship with my mom. Every time she looked at me, it was as if she were saying, 'Why don't you take out the garbage?'"

"Finally, I did take out the garbage. The atmosphere cleaned up. Our relationship was better."
(Rod Cooper, "Beholding the King," Preaching Today, Tape No. 150)

This illustrates what sin does in our relationship with God. If you don't take out the garbage of sin on a regular basis, it piles up. It begins to stink. It pollutes your relationship with God. So confess to God, and to yourself, your sins.

Give yourself up to God.

We call Jesus Lord because he is our master. He purchased us with his blood. We must acknowledge that each day and then live it out. So acknowledge that to him in prayer as you begin the day.

Matthew 16:24 (NIV) Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Commit yourself to obedience to Jesus. That is what it means to take up our cross.

Dress up for spiritual warfare.

Each day we dress ourselves for the conditions of the day. If it is raining you wear a raincoat and closed toe shoes. If it is snowing you wear some boots. If it is 15 degrees outside, you wear all the warmest socks, pants, and coat you have.

If you are dressing for work, you wear the normal attire for work. Maybe it is a uniform, coveralls, a dress or suit. If you normally dress more casual for work, but the big bosses are coming in today or you are giving a presentation, you may dress up a bit. We dress to fit the circumstances, the conditions of the day.

In that same way we have to dress for the spiritual conditions you will face this day. You have to dress to face temptations and accusations from the evil one. So we must dress appropriately for that.

Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

Ephesians 6:16 (NIV) ... take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Do this because the devil wants you to have a rotten day, a down day. So start your day in prayer and in the Word of God. Start your day looking up to God.

**Then the rest of the day live up to the blessings you have in Jesus. -
Philippians 3:16 (NIV) Only let us live up to what we have already attained.**

Don't neglect obedience. Look to the Holy Spirit all day to guide you in living this day with Jesus.

Do these things and you will an UP day. Even if it is a bad day in many ways, it can still be an up day. And right now we all need some of those.

Jesus knew about UP too. - Ephesians 5:2 (NIV) Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Trusting God with your life starts with trusting His promise of forgiveness. This promise is based on the death and resurrection of Jesus. Are you ready to put your faith in Him today?

One last thing. No matter how tired you get of what we are living through right now, don't give up.

Galatians 6:9 (NIV) Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.