

NBCC KIDS NEWSLETTER

September 2025

“Before you created the whole world and the mountains were made, from beginning to end you are GOD.”

-Psalm 90:2 (NirV)

I don't know who needs to hear this, and I doubt many of you even *want* to hear this, but Christmas is officially less than 100 days away. Now, that statement can do one of two things, either it fills you with dread and anxiety, or like me fills you with joy and excitement! I think either way some of the emotions we feel about the holidays comes from one simple word. One little word can either give us a panic attack or put a giant goofy grin on our face. Family. I wish I could see your faces. Some of you may have smiled at just the mention of your family. And I am sure others of you cringed at the word. But holidays inevitably remind us of family.

Families are tricky. Even if we have great memories of sitting at a big table with all of the aunts and uncles and cousins, laughing and eating and hearing family lore, somehow *family* can cause us a little grief. Sometimes our memories are more painful, especially if those holiday memories are saturated with things best left in the past. But usually, it tends to be a little bit of both. Family dynamics are tricky, and as I have gotten older I am realizing that family gatherings bring out the best in people. And I will leave it to you to determine if I am being sarcastic or not! Either way, by the time January rolls around and the Christmas decorations have been stored away for another year, we can all take that collective sigh of relief.

This month the children are learning what it means to be in GOD'S FAMILY. The first week we learned that GOD made a promise to Abram. God told an elderly, childless couple that they would have numerous descendants. In fact, God promised Abram that he would have more descendants than stars in the sky (Genesis 15:5). Abram believed. Sounds so simple, and yet Abram struggled. He was old, and he wanted children. But GOD, (2 of the best words ever uttered!) made a covenant with Abram, now called

Abraham that he would have “countless descendants (Gen. 17:2). GOD made a promise, but it didn’t happen overnight. Abraham’s faith had to be developed and things in Abraham’s life had to be prepared, but also GOD was going to demonstrate that the fulfillment of his promise was going to be miraculous, not of human effort.

Our next lesson brought us to when Abraham, now 100 years old and Sarah, now 90 had their miracle baby. Isaac, whose name means “laughter” because Sarah laughed at the very thought that she would birth a baby in her old age. But GOD (there it is again!) is bigger than that! Nothing is impossible with GOD (Genesis 18:14)! We learned that GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISE. Even when it seems impossible, even when the wait is painful and even when we try to do things our own way (remember Ishmael anyone?)

Our third lesson was a little tougher to understand. Esau and Jacob. There are those tricky family dynamics again. 2 brothers who competed against each other their whole lives, who desperately wanted to receive their father’s blessing. Esau was his father’s favorite, the oldest of the 2 who was rugged and outdoorsy, not to mention overly hairy. And Jacob, who was a thinker, and a little bit devious, and his mother’s favorite. Can anyone else relate to these two? Siblings, rivals, favored by a parent, this sounds like a modern family. But perhaps the next bit is where similarities to your family end...I hope. As their father Isaac was growing older, he knew his time left was short and he asked his favorite son to go and hunt for him and prepare for him a tasty meal from what he would hunt. Esau, wanting to please his dying father and also wanting the inheritance that would follow, didn’t argue as he left. His mother, who played a large role in this deception, overheard Isaac telling Esau what to do. So she convinced her favorite son Jacob to wear Esau’s clothes and put on goatskins, so as to trick her ailing and blind husband into thinking that *he* was Esau. She even went so far as to prepare the tasty meal for Isaac so he would be convinced that it was Esau who made and served Isaac this meal. Thus, securing the blessing meant for Esau to go to Jacob instead.

Maybe some of those more *unpleasant* details are missing in your family dynamics. But treachery, deceit, foolishness and favoritism are certainly prevalent in some family dynamics. Hopefully what happens next is the end of the similarities though. Esau was furious that his birthright was stolen from him. He decides he wants to kill his brother Jacob. So at Rebekah’s insistence, Jacob flees to his uncle’s house, and the rest is as they say...history.

Next week we will finish the series on GOD'S FAMILY with Jacob wrestling with GOD. Jacob goes on to have a very large family. 12 sons and a few daughters as well. And he knows he has to go back and face his brother again. He was afraid, after all, he did deceive Esau and stole what did rightfully belong to his brother. But he goes back and in a move no one saw coming, Esau forgives him (Genesis 33:4).

Being a part of any family is tricky. Every family has some good, and some ugly, and some *really* ugly. Every family has hurts and broken promises and things best left unsaid. But in GOD'S family, promises are kept. It might take a few decades, but God's promises are never broken. In GOD'S FAMILY forgiveness abounds. Even if we feel like we are undeserving, we are forgiven and redeemed. In GOD'S FAMILY we are loved unconditionally. We have a heavenly Father who knows what's best for us, wants what's best for us, and even when we stumble, we will receive what's best. The best is a relationship with Jesus. The best is knowing that we can go to HIM and seek forgiveness and be granted forgiveness, not because of who we are, but because of who HE is, and HIS incredible love for us.

I know the mere mention of holidays brings up something, whether it's good or bad for all of us. We all have messiness that we don't want to pass on to the next generation. But instead of focusing on what we don't want to pass on, look at what we are passing on. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. Focus on the fruit we are cultivating in the next generation. In my own family there are a few things I don't want to pass on to my boys. But honestly, there is so much more that I do want to pass on. And every year when we gather for holidays, or even for a random meal, there are memories and laughter and joy. Yes, sometimes, there are tears for the ones no longer with us, and that will be felt this year for sure. But, when I think about some of the wonderful things that I can pass on to my boys, things that my parents passed on to me, and my in-laws passed on to my husband, that we *get to* and *want to* pass on to the next generation, instead of dread, I am only filled with hope. My hope is in the One who gives life, the One who makes unbreakable promises, the One who loves me unconditionally, even at my worst. The One that my family, despite their dysfunction taught me about. That's the legacy I want to remember, and that is the legacy that I am leaving for my kids, to teach to their kids (someday, but not any time soon!!).

I hope the upcoming months remind you of what's important, and in whose family you really belong. And remember to give yourself a little credit for all the good you are giving your children. I love each and every one of them! I love their questions, and I love their stories. I love hearing about their success and their shortcomings. I love that they trust me enough to share with me and that they want to tell me about their weeks.

Although I did hear a lot this week about their football games and sacking the QB, and now I know I need to do some homework and learn about football! I didn't even know sacking someone was a thing! I adore your children and I am honored that I get the privilege of being a part of their lives. Thank you for allowing me to serve your family. I pray for you all everyday and I look forward to each day that I get to spend with you, and your kids.

UPCOMING DATES:

CHOCOLATE SUNDAY is September 28. This month it is for the big (not the biggest bar!) The 2 verses are ***“Before you created the whole world and the mountains were made, from beginning to end you are GOD.”***

-Psalm 90:2 (Nlrv)

“You are majestic and holy. Your glory fills me with wonder. You do amazing things.”

-Exodus 15:11b (Nlrv)

The Pumpkin Patch is coming next week! Come and get your pumpkins! We have lots of slots to fill if you want to help us sell pumpkins. And of course Trunk or Treat is coming soon! More information will be coming out soon!

And finally, thank you to all my amazing leaders who serve each and every week. We have a lot of fun, and I know I am biased, but children's ministry is the most fun. Where else do you get to play with play-doh and use sticky hands (a toy, not always a child's sticky hands!!) in your day to day life? I am always looking for more people to hold babies, or play with toddlers, learn from preschoolers or have incredible conversations with elementary children! Unlimited animal crackers and goldfish crackers are a given!

~Miss Amy

