



GODS WORD

FOR FAMILIES

Vol. 1

365

DEVOTIONAL
ACTIVITIES
TO ENGAGE
KIDS IN DAILY
DISCIPLESHIP



God's Word for Families

Pentecostal Publishing House
36 Research Park Court
Weldon Spring, MO 63304
Pentecostalpublishing.com
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Special thanks to this incredible group of designers, editors, and contributors who prayerfully helped bring this project together.

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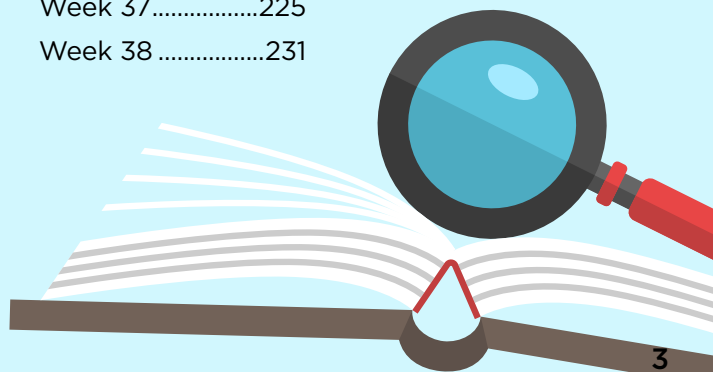
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Family Covenant and Goals

This year, we the _____s (family name) faithfully commit to daily moments of prayer and devotion, connecting as a family through God's Word. Our vow before God is to give our best to Him and believe God will meet with us, even on days or weeks when life's adversity might make it difficult to reach our expectations. We know God is with us and for us, and to receive the full extent of His blessings, we will attempt to follow Him wholeheartedly. As a family, we make a commitment to grow together as disciples of Jesus Christ.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

—Deuteronomy 6:4-7

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

—Proverbs 22:6



Members of Family

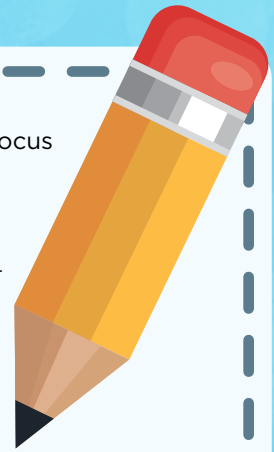
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Date: _____

As a family, prayerfully complete this page with a focus on discipleship.

Family Goals for the Coming Year



Personal Goals for the Coming Year

<i>Family Member</i>	<i>Goal</i>
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Prayer Focus for the Coming Year

<i>People</i>	<i>Situations</i>
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HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL

Why do we need *God's Word for Families*?

The Bible teaches us to make disciples of our children. Proverbs 22:6 encourages parents, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This verse establishes the principle and the value of properly planting the seed of God's Word into the hearts of children and trusting God will help them continue to grow, grow, grow in Christ for the rest of their lives and into eternity.

Deuteronomy 6:7 states, "And thou shalt teach them (God's commandments) diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." God wants His children to have their minds on Him from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to sleep. The Sunday school teacher should not be a child's only connection to the Word of God. Clearly, God wants discipleship to penetrate the home.

God's Word for Families is a wholly Apostolic discipleship tool designed to help your entire family grow in relationship to God and each other. By exploring a biblical passage from Sunday to Saturday, daily ten-minute activities use a variety of teaching styles to engage family members to hear God's voice and be transformed by His Spirit. Done faithfully, *God's Word for Families* will bring your entire family closer to God.



Scheduling Times of Family Devotion

For a family devotional to be effective, a family needs to be faithful and intentional. Prioritize God by greeting every day with prayer. Then as a family, determine a time or times during each day when everyone agrees to stop all other activity to come together for prayer and to discuss God's Word. It could be over breakfast, as part of homeschooling, after dinner, or as part of a bedtime ritual. Whatever time(s) your family agrees upon, attempt to be consistent, as faithfulness is a key to discipleship.

How does *God's Word for Families* work?

Each Sunday introduces a biblical passage that is then explored throughout the week. Every person has a preferred method of learning. Each day of this devotional addresses a different type of learner. Some will prefer Thursdays over Mondays or Tuesdays over Fridays. Because all learning styles will eventually be honored, encourage all family members to participate throughout the week, recognizing there will be something for everyone before the week is over.

Sunday: Introducing the Week's Lesson

Sunday provides an age-appropriate version of the week's Bible passage. Read through this story together, drawing special attention to the Truth about God (TAG) revealed by the biblical text. Consider writing this TAG in a prominent location, such as a whiteboard in the kitchen. It will be the guiding principle to be explored throughout the week.

If your church is using *God's Word for Life* for Sunday school, this lesson will match what your family is learning at church. *God's Word for Life* is a whole-church curriculum, so the adult, youth, and children's classes all teach from the same biblical text, though with different age-appropriate applications. *God's Word for Families* can be used as a powerful supplement to magnify what is being taught on Sundays at church.



☐ **Monday:** Why do I need to know this?

Monday's activities are designed to put purpose behind the lesson. Some people won't learn something until they recognize where to apply it. On Mondays, the Truth about God (TAG) is placed front and center, as your family discusses where this TAG is personally relevant. If your child(ren) prefer this learning style, let them talk until they find the contextual point of application.

☐ **Tuesday:** What do I need to know?

Tuesday's activities are designed for the analytic learner who enjoys discovering new things. In addition to the trivia provided by "Fun Facts!" and "Did You Know?," use this day to dig deeper into the text.

Reread Sunday's age-appropriate version of the week's biblical passage. If your child is willing, demonstrate how to use Bible apps like Bible Gateway to explore the passage in different translations. After reading the KJV text, the analytic learner will enjoy discovering how other versions (e.g., the *International Children's Bible* and the *New Living Translation*) translated the same passage.

☐ **Wednesday:** How can my worship reflect the lesson?

Because many families have a midweek service, Wednesday's activities are minimized. A QR code sends you to a featured lyric video and a few more Apostolic songs are suggested.

☐ **Thursday:** Where does this apply?

Thursday's activities are designed for application. How does this biblical truth impact our lives today? Starting with the Life Lesson statement, use the scenario provided to discuss and find common-sense applications.

☐ **Friday and Saturday:** What should I do with this?

As the weekend approaches, start looking for creative ways to apply what you have learned to real-life opportunities. Friday's devotion starts with Talk Time, providing discussion questions aimed at finding practical areas of application. Then Saturday suggests a Family Project that puts the Life Lesson into motion.

To be transformational, God's Word must be applied.

As you share your family's weekend activities on social media, connect with the *God's Word for Families* community by using #GodsWordforFamilies.



Who Made the World?

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 1-2:7 in your family Bible.

Week

1

☐ Sunday

God created everything. Before, nothing existed except darkness and water. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was! God saw that it was good.

On day two, God formed an atmosphere, separating the water above from the water beneath.

On day three, God said, "Let dry land appear called Earth, and let there be grass and trees." God said it was good.

Next, God made the sun to shine during the day, and the moon to shine at night. Then He created stars. As He finished day four, God said everything was good.

On day five, God filled the sky with birds and the water with sea creatures. Again, He said it was good.

On day six, God made land animals and insects. He designed an amazing world, full of unique creatures, and said it was good.

God saw that everything He had made was good, but He still wanted to create two more special things. That's when God made the first humans in His image—a male and a female. God put them in charge, because He wanted them to enjoy the good things He had made. God didn't just say this was good; He said it was very good.

On day seven, God saw His work was finished, so He rested, blessing this seventh day as holy. Yes, God created everything, including us, and thought it was very good.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God created everything in the world, including me, and said it was good.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 1-2:7 as a family.
This week we are learning about the creation of the world and everything in it.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- God could have made anything He wanted. Why do you think He created us?
- Why do you think that God created things in the order He did?
- Do you think it is important for us to know that we are created in His image?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God created everything in the world, including me, and said it was good.

As we read through this passage in Genesis, several times God said, “It was good.” God was very intentional about making His creation. He knew exactly what He wanted. He made thousands of varieties of fish, birds, and beasts. He put spots on the leopard and stripes on the zebra. He gave owls the ability to see in the dark and the hammerhead shark the ability to see 360 degrees. No detail was overlooked.

Knowing this, consider that God created one man and one woman, ordered them to be fruitful and multiply, and put them in charge over all of creation. We are truly special. From the beginning, God knew that one day you and your family would be reading His Word, and He wanted you to know something particularly important. On the sixth day, after completing His creation, He thought about all of us and said, “It was very good.”

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What are some things that are good about God’s creation?
- How can we help others know they were created in His image and are good?

PRAYER:

Focus on being thankful for God’s creation, including people.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will enjoy being with
God in His wonderful
creation.

Fun Facts!



- The blue whale is so loud that it can be heard almost 500 miles away.
- Horses and cows sleep standing up.
- Sheep have four stomachs.
- Hummingbirds can fly backwards.
- Giant Arctic jellyfish have tentacles up to 118 feet.
- Orcas (a.k.a. killer whales) are a type of dolphin.
- The average elephant drinks 55 gallons of water a day.
- Do you know any other fun facts about the animals God created?

☐ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 1-2:7 as a family. Find and highlight the instances where God stopped to acknowledge what He created.

Did You Know?

The Bible explains clearly that all things were made through the Word (John 1:1-4). It shows us that God made the Earth by His power and wisdom (Jeremiah 10:12). It also tells us that God used things that can't be seen to create things that are seen (Hebrews 11:3).



Do you know any songs about creation? Write your own song about God creating the world.



Create animals and people out of clay or play dough. Can your family guess what animal you made?



Journal about the many things that you enjoy about God's creation, or draw one of the days of creation.



☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 1–2:7.

- “God of Wonder”
by Urshan College
- “God Is Love” by Bryan Pound
- “Life” by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Thank You, Jesus (Genesis)”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

One at a time, pray for God to help us understand He created the world. Ask for wisdom to share the story of creation with others.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

See who can point out the most animals while traveling to church. How many birds did you see? What about cats? dogs?

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will enjoy being with God in His wonderful creation.*

It was time for the family trip to the park that Timmy’s parents had put on the calendar last week. “Put down that game, and come outside with us,” said his mom.

“If I have to,” groaned Timmy as he tossed down his game in frustration. All he wanted to do was play games . . . indoors.

When they got to the park, Timmy felt the warm sun on his face and noticed the aroma of flowers and fresh cut grass. His dad pointed out a family of deer, including a small fawn that couldn’t have been more than a few weeks old. Then his mom drew his attention to a large anthill and pointed out the teamwork between the ants. Timmy was amazed.

“Isn’t God’s creation pretty wonderful?” his dad asked.

Timmy replied, “Yeah, Dad. It really is beautiful. This is way better than that game I was playing. Thanks for bringing me.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How will you make time to enjoy being with God in His wonderful creation this week?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever made something and thought that it was good? What was it?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
For what purpose do you think God created you?

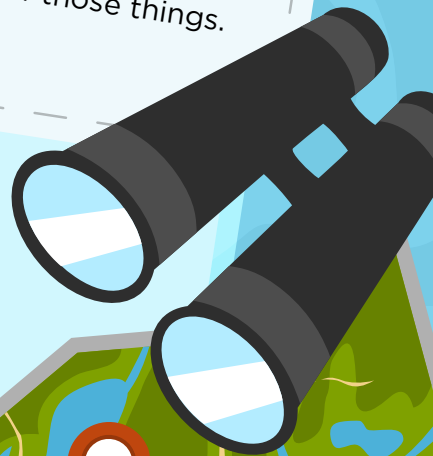
PRAYER:
Kids and parents, what parts of His creation has God put you in charge of? Pray for wisdom in tending to and taking care of those things.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a creation scavenger hunt. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.





□ Saturday

Family Project

Gather everyone together, and get ready to search! On the third day God created trees and plants. On the fifth day God created animals that swim and fly. On the sixth day God created land animals and people. As a family, can you find at least five different things that God created on days 3, 5 and 6? Make a list! Discuss God's amazing creation when you are done.

Hint: A trip to the pet store or zoo could help!

The Big Picture: Discipleship

As a parent, it is our responsibility to make sure our children understand that God created everything, especially them, and they are good. We do this by speaking words of life in the morning as we wake them up for the day, and during our family prayer and devotion time.

As a reminder of this week's lesson, consider buying a goldfish or a plant that you can care for as a family. Be intentional about acknowledging God's creation as you feed or water it. Draw a parallel between the way that God cares for us and the way your family will care for the fish or plant.

Kicked Out of Eden

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 3 in your family Bible.

Week

2

☐ Sunday

The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, lived in the Garden of Eden. God gave them one important rule: "Do not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil."

One day, a serpent wandered over to Eve and asked, "Did God say you can eat fruit from any tree you want?"

Eve answered, "Any tree except this one." Eve pointed to the forbidden tree.

The serpent hissed, "God told you this because He knows it will make you wise like Him."

Eve considered the serpent's words, and then took a big, juicy bite. *Crunch!* "Adam!" Eve called. "Try this." Adam also took a big, juicy bite. *Crunch!*

Suddenly, Adam and Eve were afraid! They knew they had disobeyed God. They spent the day trying to cover their sin. In the evening they heard God calling. "Quick," Adam said. "Let's hide."

God asked, "Why are you hiding? Did you break My rule?" Adam blamed Eve; Eve blamed the serpent. God was disappointed in all of them.

First God cursed the serpent, "One day, Eve's children will crush your head. Now slither away!" Then God punished Adam and Eve. Eve would have pain when she had children, Adam would have to work harder to find food, and someday they both would die.

Because of their sin, God kicked Adam and Eve out of His beautiful garden. To keep them from returning, an angel with a flaming sword guarded the entrance. Even though God loved Adam and Eve, their disobedience brought consequences, and He had to correct them.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Because of God's love for us, He judges sin.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 3 as a family. This week we will be learning about God's love for us and how He judges sin.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Do you like rules? What are some good rules? What are some rules you do not like so much?
- What rule did God make for Adam and Eve in the Garden?
- Why do you think God put that rule in place?
- What does Adam and Eve hiding from God tell us about sin?
- Do you think the punishment for their sin was fair, too much, or too little?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Because of God's love for us, He judges sin.

When you love someone, you want to protect them. Parents put rules in place in order to keep their children safe. Often, children don't fully comprehend the reasons behind the rules, which makes them want to break them. For instance, wearing a helmet while riding a bike is a simple and understandable guideline. Doing so protects our head from injury if we crash. Because of the importance of the rule, consequences or judgment become necessary if the rule is broken, ranging from a conversation about safety to being grounded from the bike for a day. Bottom line, the consequences result from a parent's love for their child and their desire to protect them.

This is exactly what God did with Adam and Eve and still does with us. The Bible gives instructions to live by and God asks us to obey Him. If we sin, God will correct us because He loves us. He knows where those sins will lead us, and He wants to protect us. He judges sin to encourage us to follow Him.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How should Eve have responded to the serpent?
- How should Adam have responded to Eve?
- How did God show His love to Adam and Eve?

PRAYER:

Pray for God to give you strength not to give in to the temptation of sin.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will recognize and
repent of my sins.

Fun Facts!



It's a rare occurrence for animals to talk, even though it happened twice in the Bible! The first was the serpent talking to Eve (Genesis 3:1); the second was a donkey talking to Balaam (Numbers 22:28). Animals do communicate with each other, though. Birds sing songs to signal danger. Dolphins whistle and click to work together. Bullfrogs croak extremely loudly to get each other's attention. What other sounds do animals make to communicate?

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 3 as a family. Find and highlight the word *God* in this passage.

Did You Know?

God gave Moses a handwritten list of rules for people to follow. The 10 Commandments were written by God's finger onto a stone tablet (Exodus 31:18). Making a list is a great way to ensure you remember something!



Snap, clap, and tap as you write your own song about obeying God.



Using items from around your home, act out the serpent talking Eve into eating from the tree.



Journal about things that you have been tempted to do, but God helped you to make a good decision and avoid sin.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 3.

- “Thank You, Jesus (Genesis)”
by PPH Kids Music
- “Never Lost”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song
“Gracefully Broken”
by Urshan College



PRAYER:

As a family, search your hearts for hidden sin and repent. Thank Jesus for His blood to cover our sins.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Select one song as a family that you feel ministers to you regarding God’s love and record yourselves singing it together.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will recognize and repent of my sins.*

I was doing something I knew I wasn’t supposed to do, and I got caught. My mom had told my brother and me at least twenty times not to throw the football in the house. Her going to the neighbor’s house gave us an opportunity, and what she didn’t know couldn’t hurt her, or so I thought.

I grabbed the football from under my bed and ran into the family room. I shouted, “Heads up!” as I threw it to my brother. Unfortunately, I didn’t realize my brother had headphones on and he didn’t hear what I said. The ball sailed over his head and smashed into the lamp, knocking it off the stand, and shattering it into a gazillion pieces. I was faced with a tough decision. When I told my mom about the lamp, would I mention the football, or simply leave that part out?

I was honest and apologized. While I did get in trouble, my mom told me that my punishment was less because I told her the truth.

DISCUSSION TIME

- When we sin, does God see us? Why do we try to hide it?
- Why is it important to God for us to admit when we do wrong and ask for forgiveness?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
How do you stay focused on God and avoid temptation?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What are some things that you can do to follow God?



PRAYER:
Recognize some temptations you might struggle with. Pray to better understand the importance of following God.

BONUS ACTIVITY:
Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is an art gallery. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.





Family Project

It's time to get creative! Using art supplies from around the house, challenge each member of the family to draw or build an art piece showing what it feels like to be forgiven. Perhaps the artwork could recognize a time someone sinned and then repented of it. The art should represent the way we feel when God forgives us. When all of the pieces are complete, put them on display and discuss them as a family.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

It can be difficult for parents to consistently reprimand and correct a child for doing wrong. Often, we wait until we are angry to enforce rules. For long-term effectiveness, however, it is important to make our children aware of why a rule exists. Set clear boundaries and discuss the outcomes that might occur if the rule is broken. Lay out the consequences ahead of time, and then when the rule is broken, follow through. Doing so will result in a healthier relationship than when a parent is always disciplining out of anger and frustration.

Build a habit of expressing that God corrects sin because He loves us. If we are willing to recognize and repent of our sins, He will forgive us.

The First Family Fight

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 4:1-15 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain was a farmer; Abel took care of sheep and goats. Adam and Eve taught their sons to obey God and to bring Him offerings.

For his offering, Cain gathered fruits and vegetables from his garden. Although he gave an offering, he didn't give his best. Abel searched through his flock until he found the best lamb. Abel loved that lamb, but he loved God more. Abel gave his best offering.

When God saw Abel's offering, He was so pleased. However, God was not pleased with Cain's offering. It was not Cain's best. Cain noticed how God liked Abel's offering more and complained.

"Why are you mad?" asked God. "If you do what is right, I will accept your offering. Otherwise sin is crouching at the door and ready to pounce."

Cain stomped away. "How dare God not accept my sacrifice!"

Abel heard his brother and replied, "Don't you think God deserves our best?"

Furious, Cain hit Abel so hard that he killed him. Then Cain hurried back to his field, acting as if nothing happened. God asked, "Cain, where is your brother?"

Cain shrugged. "How should I know? Am I my brother's keeper?"

"Abel's blood cries out to Me from the ground. Your days as a farmer are over. You will be a fugitive—a murderer on the run."

Cain fell to his knees. "My punishment is greater than I can bear! People will try to kill me!"

"Not true," God replied. "I will give you a special mark to show you are under My protection. Now, go!" Cain ran away, weeping.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God desires our best offering.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 4:1-15 as a family. This week we will be learning that God wants us to give Him our very best.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What is an offering? Does God still expect offerings from us?
- Why do you think Adam and Eve taught their sons to give offerings to God?
- How should Cain have responded when he learned his sacrifice was not good enough?
- Why did God ask Cain where his brother was?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God desires our best offering.

When we give any form of offering to God, we are expressing to Him what we believe about His worth. Whether we offer our time, money, worship, or anything else, He deserves and expects our best. When we make the decision to give less than our best, our offering is no longer a sacrifice.

An offering that does not cost us something is an empty gesture toward God. We might as well give Him nothing. Before we give anything to God, we must ask if it is our very best. If we are holding something better back for ourselves, God will not honor our offering.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will give my best
to God.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What would be an example of an acceptable offering to God?
- How can you be sure that you are giving your best to God?



PRAYER:

Pray that every offering you give to God will be an expression of how worthy He truly is.



Fun Facts!

People in the Old Testament gave several types of offerings:

- *Burnt Offering*: forgiveness of sin and show of devotion to God
- *Grain Offering*: voluntary expression of love to God
- *Peace Offering*: meal between people expressing peace
- *Sin Offering*: atonement for unintentional sins
- *Guilt Offering*: reparation for sins using money

Important! Because this Old Testament system was not a sufficient way to cover our sins, Jesus gave Himself as the ultimate sacrifice. Through His offering, He conquered death and gave eternal life.

□ Tuesday

Because the Old Testament system was not a sufficient way to cover our sins, Jesus gave Himself as the ultimate sacrifice. Through His offering, He conquered death and gave eternal life.

Did You Know?

God asked Abraham for a sacrificial offering like no other. God asked Abraham to present his very own son, Isaac, as a burnt offering. Instead of balking at God, Abraham demonstrated his willingness to obey and truly offer his best. Imagine how happy Abraham was when, a moment before he was going to go through with it, God stopped him, providing a ram for the sacrifice instead.



Sing "I Will Give You All," or write your own song about giving God your very best.



Using blocks, toy vegetables, and a stuffed animal, build a sacrificial altar like Cain and Abel. Aren't you glad Jesus paid the price so we don't have to do this anymore?



Journal about ways that you could give sacrificially to God. What does giving your very best look like?

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 4:1-15.

- “Thank You, Jesus (Genesis)”
by PPH Kids Music
- “Unto the Lamb”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Overflow” by Cortt Chavis
- “Meet Us” by James Wilson

Featured Song

“Give It Away”
by David and Stephanie Hutton



PRAYER:

Pray that God will honor your family’s sacrifices and draw you closer to Him.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Make a deluxe salad using a variety of vegetables. Discuss why God didn’t accept Cain’s offering of vegetables.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will give my best to God.*

Tryouts for the chess club were at the same time every year. Samantha was so confident she was the best chess player that she didn’t feel the need to study or practice. She just walked into this year’s auditions expecting to be the best once again.

The tryout didn’t go as planned. While she had been the best chess player the year before, many students had really practiced and put in a lot of work to get better in the off season. Samantha barely made the team, only as a replacement when the other students couldn’t make it to the tournaments. She was devastated and considered quitting.

Instead of giving her best, Samantha only gave the amount of effort she thought was needed. Now she had to work twice as hard to try to get an opportunity. She spent the next months working as hard as she could. Eventually she became the state chess champion. She learned a valuable lesson and will never give less than her best again.

DISCUSSION TIME

- Is there ever a good time to give less than your best?
- What are some things you are doing for God? Are you giving God your best?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever given less than your best to God? What happened?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What are some areas in life where we may not be trying to give our best? Should we try harder?



PRAYER:
Pray that God would help your family give your very best to Him every day.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a talent show. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.





□ Saturday

Family Project

Everyone has giftings. Have every family member select something they do best and would like to share for a family talent show. Before the performance, give time to practice and prepare. Have fun by introducing each family member with bravado. After they share their talent, applaud wildly. Encourage them to give their very best because that is what God expects of us.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

In Luke 16:10, Jesus commented how a person who is faithful in little things will also be faithful in large things. While outcomes may not always turn out as expected, God knows how hard someone prepared. If we expect more and better opportunities from God, then we need to give Him our best, especially in the little things.

Every person's best looks a little different, but one thing is certain, our best requires full effort. As your family engages in ministry opportunities, make a vow to give God your best effort. After each occasion, discuss as a family to evaluate ways that you could have done better or tried harder. As a family, make it a habit to give God your all.

Noah's Obedience

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 6:5-9:17 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Week

4

In Noah's day, everyone was disobeying God. God looked down with great sadness. The world was so evil, and evil has consequences. He designed a plan to fix His creation.

God noticed Noah—the only person trying to obey Him. “Noah, I'm going to bring destruction, but I'm giving you and your family a rescue plan. Build a large boat—an ark—according to the specific instructions I have provided.”

“Yes, Lord.” Noah listened and obeyed. With the help of his sons, Noah gathered supplies and built the ark according to God's exact, detailed plans.

When people stopped to gawk, Noah warned, “This boat will save us from the coming flood. Do you want to join us?” The people laughed and called Noah crazy.

Finally, after many years of building, the ark was nearly complete. God told him, “Take seven pairs of animals approved for sacrifice and one pair of all other animals.” God helped Noah gather the animals. Then God told Noah, “It's almost time for your family to enter the ark too.”

Once Noah, his family, and all the animals were safely aboard, God shut the door of the ark. Then water rose from the depths of the earth—bubbling springs of water. *Tip, tap, drip, drop.* Faster and faster, drops of rain fell from the sky. The flood covered the entire earth.

Only those who obeyed God's instructions were saved. Noah submitted his thoughts, imaginations, and ideas so he could do things God's way. He worked hard for a long time, determined to follow God's plan.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God saves those who obey His Word.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 6:5–9:17 as a family. This week we are learning that God will save us if we listen and obey Him.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- How does God speak to us? Does He ever ask us to do things? What are some things God might be asking you to do?
- Why did God choose Noah?
- If you were Noah, how would you have responded when God told you to build an ark?
- Do you think it was easy for Noah to obey God?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God saves those who obey His Word.

Everyone around Noah probably thought he was crazy. Imagine being his wife or one of his sons. As friends and neighbors mocked Noah, do you think they came to his defense?

This Bible story shows how it can be with people who don't know God or understand His Word. Sometimes people might think we are crazy for believing in a God who speaks to us and asks us to do things, but the Holy Spirit is real, and God does speak to us.

In these times, we can't worry about what others think. God only saves those who obey His Word; everyone else will be lost. We must stay focused and set our minds to obey Him.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How can we follow Noah's example of obedience?
- What are some ways we can listen to what God is telling us?



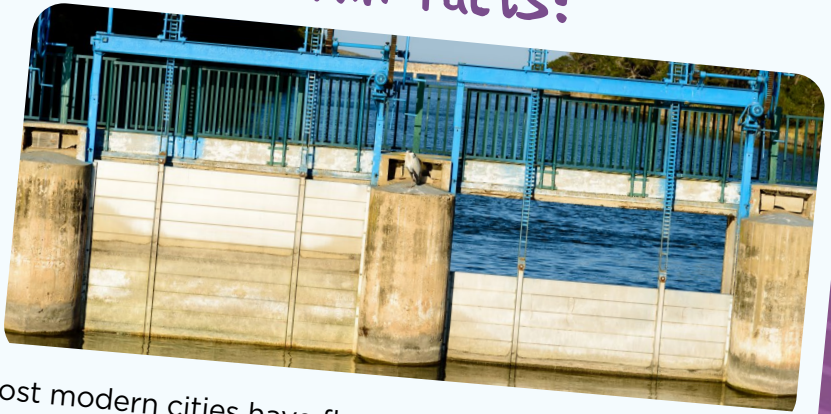
PRAYER:

Pray for God to give your family a mindset like Noah and a willingness to do whatever God asks.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will listen to and
obey God's Word.

Fun Facts!



Most modern cities have floodgates that prevent destructive waters from washing away homes and other buildings. Floodgates are also used to protect farmland from being flooded and ruining crops. A floodgate is an adjustable wall or gate that can be used to control water flow for streams, rivers, flood barriers, or levees. When someone says, “open the floodgates,” they are saying that they are ready for an outburst or a large flow to come forth.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 6:5–9:17 as a family. Find and highlight instances of God’s instruction to Noah.

Did You Know?

Methuselah lived 969 years, the longest recorded lifespan of any human. We learned all about his grandson in this week’s Bible Lesson. Yep, that’s right! Noah’s grandpa was Methuselah, and Noah himself lived to see the ripe old age of 950!



Sing “The Arky Arky Song (Rise and Shine),” or write your own song about building an ark.



Gather stuffed animals and pretend they are getting ready to board the ark.



Journal about a time when you chose to obey God instead of worrying about what other people thought.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 6:5–9:17.

- “Thank You, Jesus (Genesis)”
by PPH Kids Music
- “Everything and Nothing Less”
by Urshan College
- “Show Me Your Glory”
by The Pentecostals of Katy
- “My World Needs You”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Go On, Noah”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray a prayer of thankfulness to God for saving us.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Do some internet research to determine the highest the water level has ever been in your area. Consider driving past a local stream, river, or dam and discussing what it would look like if the water levels suddenly surged.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will listen to and obey God's Word.*

Bella was not very nice to Erica at school. For example, one time Bella told Erica there weren't any open seats at her table during lunch, but Erica could see that there were. Bella also made fun of Erica's clothes and the way she did her hair.

One day as Erica came into the cafeteria, she noticed something different about Bella. Bella was sitting alone and looked like she had been crying. Even though Bella was usually mean to her, Erica knew what she needed to do. Erica remembered something her Sunday School teacher had taught last week. The Bible tells us to treat others the way we want to be treated. Erica would want someone to show that they cared and ask her how she was doing, so that's exactly what she did.

Bella was shocked that Erica was being nice to her. Bella was going through something rough at home and shared it with Erica. They became good friends, and Bella ended up coming to church with her.

DISCUSSION TIME

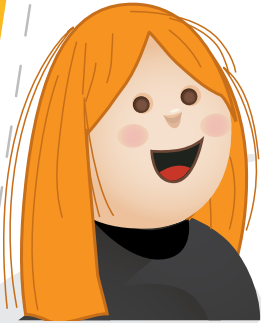
- What advice do you think Erica's friends would give when they saw Bella crying?
- How did listening to and obeying God's Word end up helping Erica? How could it help you?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
Has God ever spoken to you? How? Did you obey? What did others think?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Do you ever feel like God is trying to get your attention? What is He asking you to do? What will your friends think?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to be sensitive to hearing and obeying God's Word.
- Parents, pray for God to open your children's ears and hearts to His Word.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is building a fort. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project

□ Saturday

As a family, sit down and devise a plan for building a blanket fort (or other building project). Before building, map out the supplies, develop a plan, and give each family member responsibilities. Then build the ultimate fort in your home. Be sure to give it a name.

Just as Noah listened to and obeyed God's instructions when building the ark, you will follow the plan and work as a team to make the fort. Once it is complete, use it to play a family-favorite board game and sing a song together.

Take a picture of your family posing in your completed building project. Whenever someone in the family mentions listening to and obeying God's Word, remember the picture and what it means. When we obey God's Word and follow His instructions, He has promised to save us.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

While the rainbow was God's promise never again to flood the earth with water, it also serves as a reminder that God only saves those who listen to and obey His Word. Long-term discipleship involves capitalizing on teaching moments whenever possible. When your family sees a rainbow, intentionally pause to thank God for His plan of salvation.

A Towering Problem in Babel

Week

5

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 11:1-9 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

After the flood, God told Noah and his family to go have children and scatter across the earth. Noah's sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—had many children, and by the time of Genesis 11, Noah's family was huge. Everyone spoke the same language.

As one group traveled east, they came to an open area, a plain in Shinar. Someone proudly suggested, "Let's stay right here and build a tower that reaches into the sky. We can bake bricks and attach them together with tar."

Everyone thought this was a great idea. Up, up, up—they built a tower intending to reach into the heavens. They thought they were doing something marvelous, but is this what God asked them to do?

God came down to see what His children were building. The structure was incredible, but not part of His plan. He determined to scatter them across the earth to stop their pride and disobedience.

One day, as the builders were working hard on their tower, God confused the people by making them speak different languages. Suddenly, no one could understand each other. They tried to continue building, but eventually in frustration, the project came to a complete stop.

After God humbled the people, they moved to different areas of the earth, just as God had planned.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God honors obedience and resists the proud.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 11:1-9 as a family. This week we are learning the importance of allowing God to be in control.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Have you ever been proud of something? What was it?
- What ways did the people show they had pride?
- Why did God make it so that everyone did not speak the same language?
- How would you respond if you were working with someone and their language suddenly changed?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God honors obedience and resists the proud.

Noah set one of the best examples for his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren about being obedient to God and resisting pride. There was no excuse for them to ignore God and begin to think of themselves as their own master. Pride is an ugly thing, and God will not tolerate it.

Simply going to church with great men and women of God who are sterling examples does not mean that we will automatically do what we should. We must have made-up minds to resist pride. If we do that, God will honor our obedience. If we do not, He will resist our pride.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

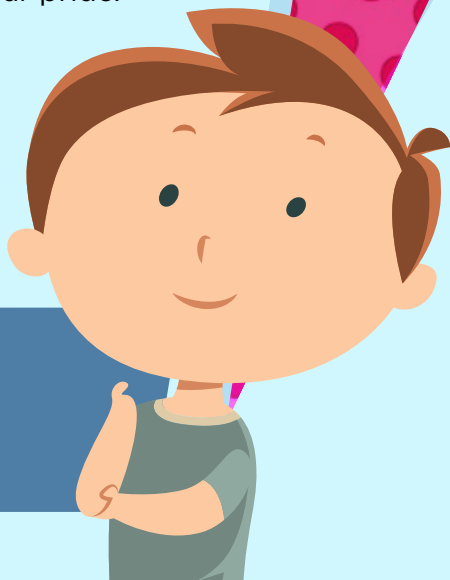
- How can we make sure pride doesn't take hold in our hearts?
- What does it mean when we say, "God honors obedience"?

PRAYER:

Pray for God to reach deep into our hearts and remove any potential seeds of pride.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will allow God to be
in control.





Fun Facts!

- The first skyscraper was built in Chicago in 1885 and was ten stories tall.
- The term *skyscraper* existed before buildings, referring to anything sticking high into the air, such as a sail on a boat, a tall horse, a tall person, and even a tall hat.
- The fastest elevator is in the Shanghai Tower and travels 45.8 miles per hour.
- One World Trade Center in New York used 200,000 cubic yards of concrete in its construction. That's enough concrete to build a sidewalk from New York to Chicago.
- It only took 410 days to build the Empire State Building.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 11:1-9 as a family. Find and highlight any actions taken by the Lord.

Did You Know?

There are several instances of men in the Bible who were full of pride and disobeyed God. King Saul is perhaps the saddest example. He became the first king of Israel and had God's blessing on his life. However, he refused to obey God and eventually was replaced as God's chosen king by David.



On the internet, find popular Christian songs in different languages. See if you can identify the song and the language. Consider writing your own song about God confusing men's languages.



Using blocks or boxes, build a tower as tall as you can. Can you make it touch the ceiling?



Journal about a time when you were too proud and God helped you to overcome it.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 11:1-9.

- “Thank You, Jesus (Genesis)”
by PPH Kids Music
- “Hope for All Nations”
by Hodgenville Pentecostal
Church Choir
- “Grace” by Cortt Chavis

Featured Song

“Wait on the Lord”
by James Wilson



PRAYER:

Pray that your family would allow God to be in control of everything you do.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

While driving around your city, find the tallest building. If possible, take a walk around it and discuss this week's Bible lesson.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will allow God to be in control.*

James wanted to be in control of what he did in church. For many years he ignored what God wanted. He had several talents, but there was one thing he loved doing more than anything—James loved to sing. Instead of letting God be in control and open doors for him, he tried to use his talent alone, without asking God to help. Even though he had the ability, God did not bless his singing.

One Sunday, James heard his pastor preach about being obedient to God, getting rid of pride, and ultimately letting God be in control. He was so miserable being outside of God's will. He knew the pastor's message was for him. When he finally gave God full control, James realized that his true calling was another God-given talent that he was ignoring—preaching. James went on to minister to countless people and found true happiness. God blessed James because he let God be in control.

DISCUSSION TIME

Have you ever tried to ignore something you knew God was telling you to do because you wanted to do something else instead?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever been full of pride and made a bad decision? How did you make it right?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Is there something specific you think God is calling you to do?



PRAYER:
Kids and parents, pray that God will help you to keep the focus on Him and not yourself. Ask God to remove pride and to take control.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is roller coasters. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

An illustration of four children riding a roller coaster. The children are a girl with brown hair, a boy with glasses, a girl with orange hair, and a boy with dark hair. They are all smiling and waving their hands. The roller coaster car is blue and red, and is on a track that is part of a tall drop. The background is a pink pattern of red circles.

□ Saturday

Family Project

Together, take a trip to an amusement park to ride a roller coaster or watch a Point of View (POV) video of a roller coaster. When you are done, discuss the difference between driving a car versus being on a roller coaster. With the car, the driver has full control of the speed and direction of the vehicle. On a roller coaster, you are relying on the operator and track. You have no control.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

A person's pride can often be spurred by family members who are prone to flatter each other and push one another to be the best they can be. Like the tower of Babel, the possibility for fame and fortune can result in willfully ignoring God's commands.

Removing pride and giving God control of one's life is not a one-time thing. It's an ongoing choice and a sacrifice. As with anything that requires consistency, having someone to hold you accountable can help with success. As a family, recognize areas where you might be tempted by fame and fortune, and then hold each other accountable. Yes, we want to be the best, but nothing should become more important than pursuing God.

Scared Speechless

Week

6

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 1:5-25 and 57-66 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Zacharias was a priest. Elisabeth was his wife. Zacharias and Elisabeth were old enough to be grandparents, but they had no children.

As a priest, Zacharias helped at the Temple. Each priest took a turn going inside the Temple to burn incense on the altar. It was an honor to do this task.

The day came for Zacharias to burn incense. He entered the Temple, and as he stepped to the altar, he saw an angel. Zacharias was afraid, but the angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zacharias. Your prayer is heard. Your wife Elisabeth will give you a son. You will name him John." God had a plan for Zacharias and Elisabeth—to give them a baby.

This news surprised Zacharias. He asked, "How will this happen? We are too old to have children."

The angel replied, "I was sent by God to tell you this good news, but because you don't believe me, you won't be able to speak until the baby is born."

After the angel left, Zacharias exited the Temple. The people outside wondered why he was taking so long. When he tried to tell them, he was speechless.

Just as the angel said, Elisabeth became pregnant. As the baby grew in her womb, Zacharias could not speak.

After nine months, a baby boy was born. The family wanted to name him after his father, but Elisabeth said, "No, his name is John." The family argued with Elisabeth, expecting Zacharias to step forward.

When Zacharias wrote, "His name is John," immediately he could speak again, praising God and prophesying. Zacharias and Elisabeth were happy that God had a plan for their lives.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God has a plan that includes me.

Read or review Luke 1:5–25 and 57–66 as a family. This week we will learn the importance of listening for God’s voice.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Has someone ever told you something you found hard to believe?
- Why was it so amazing that Zacharias and Elisabeth had a baby?
- How would you respond if an angel came and gave you a message that was hard to believe?
- Do you think it was hard for Zacharias to agree that the baby should be called John?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God has a plan that includes me.

Prior to Zacharias having the encounter with the angel, he was a good man following what he knew to do. That morning, there was no way to know that by the end of the day his life would be permanently changed and that his name would be recorded for generations to learn about obedience. Elisabeth gave birth to John, who is regularly called John the Baptist. John the Baptist would go on to pave the way for his cousin, Jesus. What a legacy!

God’s plan includes every single one of us. It might be hard to imagine or understand, but everything God does has purpose. To become part of His plan, we must listen for His voice and do what He says. Let God show you His plan for you.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Is there anything God has spoken to you that you have questioned?
- What are some things that you think might be part of God’s plan for your life?

PRAYER:

As a family, write down prayer requests just as Zacharias wrote John’s name. Pray as a family over every need.

This Week’s
Life Lesson

I will listen for God’s voice and do what He says.





In modern times, it is extremely rare for a human mother over 50 years old to have a baby. In the animal kingdom there are some old moms that might surprise you.

- Even into their 40s, harbor seals can have tiny little baby seals.
- A 64-year-old albatross bird named Wisdom had a baby.
- Into their 60s, Asian elephants regularly have babies.
- The Galapagos tortoise wins with the ability to have babies at the age of nearly 100!

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 1:5-25 and 57-66 as a family. Find and highlight any parts of God's plan revealed by the angel.

Did You Know?

Elisabeth was old enough to be a grandparent when she had John, but she was not the oldest woman in the Bible to give birth. Abraham's wife, Sarah was 90 years old when she gave birth to Isaac! When God gives a promise, you better believe that He will come through!



Sing "Trust and Obey," or write your own song about God having a plan for you.



Write out the words, "His name is John" on your dining room table using different food items.



Journal about the plan that God has for your life.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Luke 1:5-25 and 57-66.

- “He’s Coming Soon”
by The Discipleship Project
- “Thy Kingdom Come”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Make Me Clean”
by Jasmine Corcoran

Featured Song

“Name Above All Names”
by Indiana Bible College



PRAYER:

Have family prayer asking God to speak. Have at least sixty seconds of silence.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

How many babies are among your family and friends? While driving to church, ask everyone in the family to list the names of babies you know.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will listen for God's voice and do what He says.*

Isabel was involved in a lot of activities, but Bible Quizzing was not one of them. She had heard all about it at camp last year, and it seemed interesting. She just wasn't sure she wanted to make the commitment. One evening during family prayer time, God impressed upon her heart that she should join the Bible Quizzing team. If Isabel understood anything, she knew that when God speaks, you listen!

Isabel talked to her parents. They were thrilled! They had both been Bible quizzers as teens and had been praying she would feel a desire to participate too. To give Bible Quizzing her all, Isabel would have to give up some activities she had done before, but she knew it'd be worth it. God blessed her decision, and she discovered the thrill of spending time learning the Bible. She learned that you will never regret listening to God's voice.

DISCUSSION TIME

- Has God ever spoken to you like he did to Isabel? What did He say?
- Is there anything God has asked you to do that causes you to hesitate? What is it?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



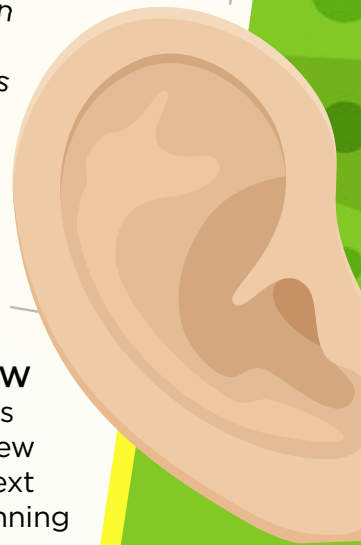
ASK YOUR PARENT:
How can we tell when our plans match God's plans? Has God ever asked you to make a change in your life?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What do you think is God's plan for your life? What do you need to do today to put God's plan into action?



PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to have an open ear to listen to what God wants them to do.
- Parents, pray for your children to be sensitive to the voice of God.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is making a plan. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

□ Saturday



Family Project

Has God spoken to you this week? As a family, agree on a specific action item that you can do for God. Examples include a cleaning project at church, witnessing to a neighbor, or making a meal for a family in need. Work together as a family to accomplish the task that God has told you to do. Afterward, pray and worship together as you celebrate what God has helped you do.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Following God's plan takes prayer and preparation. Make it a spiritual discipline to pray together, and then discuss what God is asking your family to do. Strategize and then put God's plan into action.

Designate a family calendar where you can share events and common goals. Use it to document things you do as a family, and then evaluate monthly whether your family activities are bringing you closer to or further from God's plan. Remember that God has a plan that includes every single one of you. If we listen to and obey His voice, ministries will be birthed, and lives will be changed.

Blessed Art Thou

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 1:26-45 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



When Zacharias's wife Elisabeth was six months pregnant, God sent an angel to a teenager named Mary in the city of Nazareth. She was engaged to marry a man named Joseph from the family of David.

"Greetings!" said the angel. "God is pleased with you. You are blessed among women." Mary felt confused and afraid, wondering what was happening. The angel continued, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God has chosen you for a special purpose. You will have a baby boy. Name Him Jesus. He will be great, and He will be called the Son of the Highest. His kingdom will never end."

Mary felt more confused. "How can this happen? I'm not married."

The angel explained, "Through the Holy Spirit, God will conceive a baby in you. Your cousin, Elisabeth, is also pregnant with a miracle baby. Though she is too old, she is six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible with God!"

Mary bowed her head. "I am a servant of God. I trust Him. I will accept His purpose for my life."

Mary traveled to visit Elisabeth. As soon as Elisabeth heard Mary's voice, the baby inside Elisabeth's belly jumped. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, Elisabeth cried out, "Blessed are you among women, Mary! Blessed is the baby inside you! You are the mother of my Lord. I'm so honored you have come visit me. As soon as I heard your voice, the baby inside me jumped for joy."

"I don't understand everything," said Mary, "but I trust God."

"Mary, you are blessed because you believe what the Lord told you will really happen."

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God blesses those who follow His plan.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Monday

Bible Focus

Read or review Luke 1:26–45 as a family.
This week we are exploring how God blesses us if we follow His plan.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What do you think it means to be “highly favored” by God?
- Why do you think Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus?
- What emotions did Mary experience as the angel spoke to her? How did she respond to those feelings?
- What would you do if you were in a situation where God told you something was going to happen that seemed impossible?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God blesses those who follow His plan.

Things in the world will always be pulling at you, trying to get your attention. The enemy knows these things will hurt you, but tries to convince you that they are enjoyable.

We must guard our hearts and be willing to follow the plan God has laid out for us. When our hearts waver or doubt God’s plan for us, that’s when we need to return to Him in prayer. The blessings of God are immeasurable. When we follow His plan, He promises to keep us, provide for us, and give us favor.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How did Mary show that she was willing to follow God’s plan for her life?
- How will you show that you are willing to follow God’s plan for your life?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will obey God and
follow His plan.

PRAYER:

At a chair or couch, bow on your knees and pray that God would help you and your family to follow the plan He has for your life.



Fun Facts!

- Michael and Gabriel are the only two angels specifically mentioned by name in the Bible who are sent by God to deliver a message. Gabriel was sent to Daniel, Elisabeth, and Mary. Michael is mentioned in Jude 1:9 and Revelation 12:7 and was sent to speak with Daniel.
- Angels live forever. (See Luke 20:36.)
- There are thousands upon thousands of angels. (See Hebrew 12:22.)
- We worship God, not angels. (See Colossians 2:18.)
- There are angels watching out for us. (See Psalm 91:11.)

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 1:26–45 as a family. Find and highlight the words spoken by the angel.

Did You Know?

It was no small trip for Mary to go visit her cousin Elisabeth and Elisabeth's husband Zacharias. Mary had to travel over one hundred miles and took nearly a week to make the trek. They didn't have phones or the internet, so the only way that Mary knew Elisabeth was pregnant was because of the angel.



Sing "Mary, Did You Know," or write your own song about Mary's encounter with the angel.



Role-play what you think it looked and felt like when John jumped inside Elisabeth's belly.



Journal about your desire to follow God's plan so you can enjoy His blessings.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Luke 1:26–45.

- “Name Above All Names” by Indiana Bible College
- “King of Glory” by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Jesus, So Worthy of Love”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray for the person next to you to be what God has called them to be.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

As you drive to church, point out and discuss where you think the angels are that are protecting you.

☐ Thursday

Life Lesson: *I will obey God and follow His plan.*

Role-play the following scenarios with your family. Remind them that their portrayals should reflect obedience to God and following His plan. Let each member demonstrate both sides of each interaction. Be creative and add to the stories.

- A friend is thinking about not coming to church anymore.
- At a family reunion, a cousin wants you to do something your parents told you not to do.
- A friend made a mistake and isn't sure what to do.
- A friend feels like God told them to witness to their neighbor. They are nervous.

DISCUSSION TIME

How do we know what God wants us to do?



☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
When and how did you first know what God had planned for your life? Was it hard to follow Him?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What can you do this week to make sure you are following God's plan for your life?



PRAYER:
Kids and parents, pray that you will obey and follow the plan God has for your entire family.

BONUS ACTIVITY:
Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW
Tomorrow's project is a scavenger hunt. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Have one person put together a scavenger hunt in your home. Relate the clues to obeying God and following His plan. The final thing on the scavenger hunt should be the Bible. Open the Bible and read Luke 1:26-45 again. Reflect on everything you have learned and felt this week. What direction is God leading you? What is He trying to show you? Be intentional about putting His plans into action.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

In our homes, the things we celebrate help build a culture. If success in sports is celebrated, children will strive to be athletes. If good grades are celebrated, children will strive to succeed in school. While there is nothing wrong with either of those things in moderation, how much more should we celebrate when children show a desire to obey God's calling?

It will require intentionality on your part to look for opportunities to celebrate. Getting a grade card makes us stop, evaluate, and celebrate. Pay attention and talk to their Sunday School teachers. When your child helps with any type of ministry, make sure you talk about it and tell them they did a great job.

The Amazing Baby Dedication



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 2:21-40 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Throughout the Old Testament, God promised to send a Savior. Centuries passed. People waited for this promise to be fulfilled. Finally, under a star in Bethlehem, Jesus was born.

As was the custom, Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus, at eight days old, to the Temple to dedicate Him. When they arrived, an older man named Simeon was waiting for them.

Years earlier, the Holy Spirit had told Simeon he would personally see God's promised Savior. That morning, the Holy Spirit led Simeon to the Temple, telling him that this was that day. When Mary and Joseph presented their baby, Simeon took the child in his arms and said, "Lord, now I can die in peace. Just as you promised, I have seen Your Savior. He is a light to reveal Your plan to the nations—the glory of Your people Israel."

Then Simeon blessed the young couple, saying, "Many people in Israel won't understand how this baby will fulfill God's promise. Though He is a sign from God, many people will reject Him. Along with joy, you will also feel sadness."

Nearby, an elderly woman rose to her feet to peek at the baby. "My name is Anna. I'm eighty-four years old, and I've stayed at the Temple every day since my husband died many years ago. God has shown me that this baby is very special." Anna turned to the other people in the Temple. "This baby is God's promise. He will bring salvation to Israel and to all the people of the world."

Anna, Simeon, Mary, and Joseph finished the baby dedication in amazement and thankfulness. They had seen God's promises come true.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's promises always come true.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Luke 2:21-40 as a family.
This week we will be learning to wait faithfully for God's plan to occur.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What is a baby dedication? Have you ever been to one?
- Has someone ever made you a promise that you had to wait for?
- If you were Simeon, how relieved would you have felt to finally experience the promise of God?
- After everything they had just experienced, do you think Mary and Joseph were surprised by what they heard from Simeon and Anna?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's promises always come true.

No matter how big or small a promise from God might seem to be, it is always important and always comes to pass. People can sometimes get frustrated as they wait for God to fulfill His promises. God is not bound by our calendar or planning schedule. In His infinite wisdom, He works things out in ways that we cannot possibly understand. The next time you are unsure how a situation could possibly work out for good, keep this truth in mind and let the peace of God encourage you.



FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Can you think of a time that you have had to wait on God for an answer?
- What promises has God made to you for which you are still waiting?

PRAYER:

Pray as a family for strength to wait faithfully on God's plan.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will faithfully wait for God to complete His plan in my life.



Fun Facts!

According to babycenter.com, the most popular names for 2020 were as follows:

Girls

1. Sophia
2. Olivia
3. Riley
4. Emma
5. Ava
6. Isabella
7. Aria
8. Aaliyah
9. Amelia
10. Mia

Boys

1. Liam
2. Noah
3. Jackson
4. Aiden
5. Elijah
6. Grayson
7. Lucas
8. Oliver
9. Caden
10. Mateo

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 2:21-40 as a family. Find and highlight examples where God's promises came true.

Did You Know?

An example of dedicating a child in the Bible is Samuel. Hannah prayed desperately in the Temple for a son. She promised God that she would dedicate her son to serve Him. The priest Eli was moved and blessed Hannah. When her son Samuel was old enough, she followed through on her promise. Samuel became one of the greatest prophets in the Bible.



Sing "Wait on the Lord" by James Wilson, or write your own song about God's promises always coming true.



Time for role-play: Boys dress up and act like Simeon; girls dress up and act like Anna. Reenact the Bible Lesson. Remember how old your characters are!



Journal about something God has promised you for which you are currently waiting.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Luke 2:21-40.

- “Perfect Masterpiece”
by Katina Manchester
- “Wisdom” by Bryan Pound
- “Living Sacrifice”
by Urshan College

Featured Song

“Name Above All Names”
by Indiana Bible College



PRAYER:

Holding hands, pray that your family would stay faithful to the things of God, waiting for Him to complete His plans. Pray specifically for any babies in your lives.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

To teach patience, wait on every family at your church to leave before leaving yourself. Discuss how hard it is to wait, but why it is important.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will faithfully wait for God to complete His plan in my life.*

Mark just wanted to hit a home run. He didn't want to go to practice. He didn't want to learn any of the rules of baseball. He just wanted to impress his friends by hitting the ball over the wall. As he stood at the plate taking giant swing after giant swing, he missed the ball almost every time. When he did hit it, the ball barely went anywhere.

His coach came up to him and asked Mark if he was ready to put in the work to actually get good at baseball. The coach explained that patience is needed. Mark wouldn't be good immediately, but if he could wait and be faithful to practices, he would get better. Over the course of the next few months, Mark learned the proper techniques for standing at the plate and swinging the bat. By the end of the season, Mark hit his first home run. Patience paid off.

DISCUSSION TIME

How does this story relate to you waiting on God's plan?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What is a promise that you had to wait for God to fulfill?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How will you know when God has a plan for your life?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to remain faithful as they wait for God's promises to come true.
- Parents, pray for your children to have patience when God doesn't do what they want Him to do, when they want Him to do it.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a family dinner. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

☐ Saturday

Family Project

Plan a special family dinner that everyone enjoys. Pick your family's very favorite dessert that they do not get very often. When you sit down to eat, set a timer. Take a minimum of thirty minutes eating and talking before getting the anticipated dessert. Discuss as a family how this exercise reminds them of what they have been learning all week.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

If God has made a promise to anyone in the family, take the time to write it out, and then put these written promises where everyone can be reminded of them. They can be written together on one piece of paper, or every family member can write out their promises individually.

Throughout the year, set a reminder on your calendar to do progress checks. If you find there has been little progress towards a promise being fulfilled, do not be discouraged.

Remember the importance of faithfully waiting on God.

Make Way for Jesus

Week

9

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 3:1-22 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

John the Baptist lived in the wilderness, preaching outdoors. John was a little odd. After all, he wore clothes made from camel's hair and ate locusts and honey.

God sent John to preach about Jesus' coming. He preached, "Repent! Get ready for the coming of the Messiah. Repent of your sins."

Many people went to hear John preach. They asked, "What should we do to prepare for the coming Messiah?"

John answered, "Repent. Be baptized. Change. Stop lying, cheating, and being mean to others. Do right."

They asked him, "Are you the one who will save us from sin?"

He replied, "No, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' Another will come who is more powerful than me. He will save you from sin and give you the Holy Ghost."

One day John saw a man coming toward him. It was Jesus! Jesus stepped into the water and asked John to baptize Him. John replied, "Why should I baptize You? I preached that You are more powerful than me. You should baptize me!" Jesus convinced John that He needed to be baptized.

As Jesus came out of the water, John heard a voice from heaven thunder, "This is my Son in whom I am pleased." Like a dove, John saw the Holy Ghost descend from Heaven. Jesus was the Messiah. As part of God's plan, John knew he would need to step back so Jesus' ministry could increase.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God has a plan to prepare our hearts for Jesus' return.

Read or review Luke 3:1-22 as a family. This week we will learn about the importance of sharing God's plan with others.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Who was the first person you remember telling you about Jesus?
- What was John the Baptist's message?
- John the Baptist was well known. Do you think it was hard for him to step into the background after baptizing Jesus?
- Why was it important for John to baptize Jesus?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God has a plan to prepare our hearts for Jesus' return.

God is intentional about everything He does. He uses the church to fulfill His plan to prepare our hearts for His return. Like John the Baptist, God's followers today are spreading His message, trying to prepare people for the Second Coming of Jesus. It is imperative that we respond to the words that we hear preached on a weekly basis.



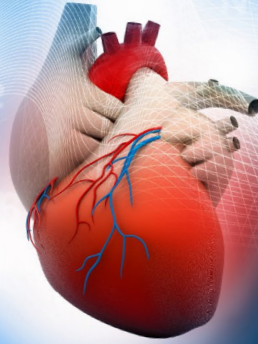
FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What are some ways we can prepare our hearts for Jesus' return?
- How can we help others understand that God has a plan to prepare our hearts for His return?

PRAYER:

Pray for strength and wisdom for your pastor and church ministry team.

Fun Facts!



- Your heart beats over 100,000 times a day.
- Your heart pumps 2,000 gallons of blood a day.
- Babies have the fastest heartbeats.
- Laughing is good for your heart because it relaxes your blood vessels.
- The beating sound made by your heart is caused by the opening and closing of its valves.
- Your heart is roughly the size of your fist.
- The word *heart* is mentioned 830 times in the KJV Bible.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 3:1-22 as a family. Find and highlight the words of John the Baptist.

Did You Know?

John the Baptist was imprisoned for rightfully accusing Herod Antipas of doing many immoral things. When John was in prison, Herod offered his stepdaughter anything she wanted after she entertained some of his guests. He would have given her up to half of his kingdom, but instead she asked for John's head on a platter. Even though he had grown to like John, he fulfilled her wish. (See Matthew 14:8.)



Sing "I'm So Glad That I've Been Buried" by the Mattoon Youth Choir, or write your own song about sharing God's plan with others.



Using action figures and figurines, reenact in your kitchen sink John baptizing Jesus.



Journal about ways you can prepare your heart for Jesus' return.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Luke 3:1-22.

- “Name Above All Names”
by Indiana Bible College
- “His Name Is Jesus”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Down, Down, Down”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray that God would let His plan to prepare your hearts be fulfilled.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Use a fitness tracker or smart watch to track how many times your heart beats while driving to church.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will follow God's plan and share it with others.*

Ruby had lived a long and happy life. She was now ninety years old and had few regrets. Something that brought her much joy was remembering all of the lives she had positively impacted. Over the years, Ruby never shied away from sharing God's plan with others. Nobody but God knew how many she had told, but Ruby guessed that she had ministered to millions of people in her lifetime. When people asked her if she had been a missionary, she always gave the same response. “No, but I supported missionaries my entire life.” By her calculations, every dollar she gave to missions equaled a man or woman who could be saved. Every young person she taught in Sunday school was also worth at least a dozen more, since they would undoubtedly impact many others throughout their lives.

Ruby was born, lived, and will eventually die having never set foot in another country. She is an inspiration for us all. She never missed an opportunity to share her testimony with others.

DISCUSSION TIME

How can we live a life that follows the example Ruby set for us all?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
What is the most effective way you have learned to share God's plan with others?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Have you ever shared God's plan with your friends that don't go to church?



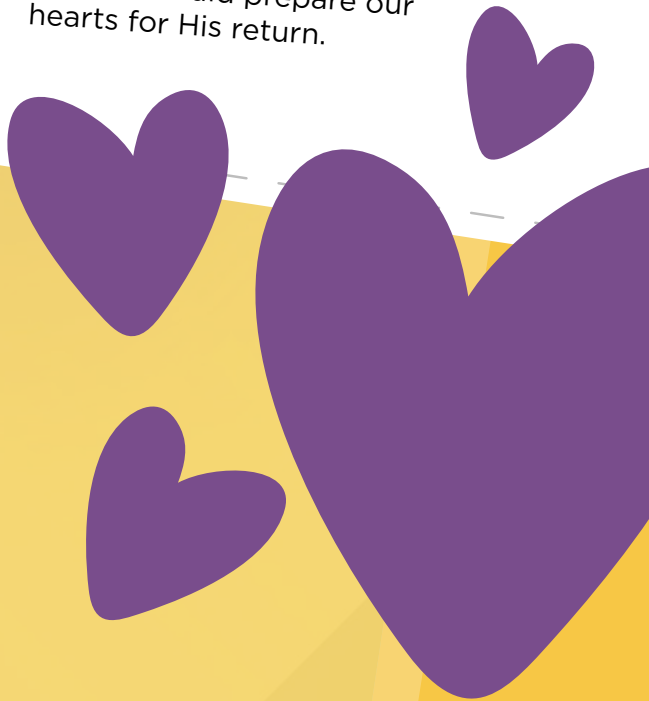
PRAYER:
Kids and parents, raise your hands in prayer as you thank God for caring for us enough that He would prepare our hearts for His return.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is putting together a puzzle. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday



Family Project

Putting together a puzzle as a family can be an exciting opportunity to work with each other. Purchase a puzzle that interests everyone with at least one hundred pieces. As you lay out the pieces on the table, create a plan. Assign someone to gather the corner pieces, someone to start putting the edges together, and so on. Discuss how, similar to putting a puzzle together requiring a plan, God has a plan for us.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Purchase a frame for the puzzle that you put together as a family and hang it on someone's bedroom wall or display it in a place where it will be able to serve as a reminder about the lesson the family has learned throughout the week.

Frequently speak as a family about the plan that God has for all His children. We can never afford to minimize the importance of letting God prepare our hearts for His return. We also must not keep it a secret. We are commanded, just as John the Baptist obeyed, to share the exciting news of His return with others.

Growing like a Tree

Read Psalm 1 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Psalm 1 (International Children's Bible)

¹ Happy is the person who doesn't listen to the wicked

He doesn't go where sinners go. He doesn't do what bad people do.

² He loves the Lord's teachings.

He thinks about those teachings day and night.

³ He is strong, like a tree planted by a river.

It produces fruit in season. Its leaves don't die.

Everything he does will succeed.

⁴ But wicked people are not like that.

They are like useless chaff that the wind blows away.

⁵ So the wicked will not escape God's punishment.

Sinners will not worship God with good people.

⁶ This is because the Lord protects good people.

But the wicked will be destroyed.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God wants us to grow in Him.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 1 as a family. This week we are going to explore how God wants us to grow in Him.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What do you think it takes to make a tree grow? What does this psalm say it takes to make a tree grow?
- What are some characteristics of someone who doesn't listen to the wicked?
- Why would anyone want to be wicked?
- In verse 3, what does it mean to "produce fruit in season"?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God wants us to grow in Him.

The reason a tree planted by the water is strong is because it has constant access to nourishment. Whenever water is needed, it is available. The tree's roots will naturally grow in the direction of the water because that water is its sustaining life source.

God wants us to be like a tree, and He will be our water. When we plant ourselves close to Him, our roots can stretch towards Him. In Him, our spirits will grow strong because He is the ultimate sustaining life source. We will also grow in faith and commitment to His work.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How can we plant ourselves close to God?
- What does it mean to grow in Him?

PRAYER:

Pray as a family for increased passion for the things of God.



This Week's
Life Lesson

I want to grow for
Jesus.



Fun Facts!

- Fig trees can bear fruit for more than 100 years.
- Strawberries aren't actually berries, but bananas are!
- In 1893 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that tomatoes legally must be labeled as vegetables, even though they are fruit.
- Almonds are actually considered to be fruit, not nuts.
- Coffee beans are the pits of berries and thus fruit.
- Apples, peaches, and raspberries are all members of the rose family.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 1 as a family. Find and highlight the things that good people do.

Did You Know?

The Bible spends a lot of time talking about fruit—both physical and spiritual. A well-known passage about fruit is found in Galatians 5:22-23. According to these verses, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.



Sing “Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day,” or write your own song about growing for Jesus.



Make as many different kinds of fruit that you can think of out of play dough. See if you can guess each other's play dough fruit.



Journal about your desire to grow in Christ and how you plan to make that happen.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 1.

- “This Dwelling Place”
by Urshan College
- “Amen” by Charity Gayle
- “We Want You”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Fruit of the Spirit”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray for one another to be sensitive to the direction God is trying to take your family so you can grow in Him.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On your way to church, look for trees that produce fruit. Call out things that grow, such as people, animals, and plants.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I want to grow for Jesus.*

I heard my pastor talking about growing for Jesus, but I didn't really understand what he meant. I went to my mom and asked her to explain it. Now I can't wait to share what she told me!

In life, we start as babies, unable to walk, talk, or even eat on our own. As we grow older and bigger, our parents help us learn to do all of those things and more. Next, we start going to school where we learn tons more things. Eventually, we become adults and have the responsibility of helping new babies start their journey.

With God, it is the same way. We start out like spiritual babies, barely able to understand the Word and in need of constant help. As we grow in God, we gain knowledge and understanding of what the Bible means and how we can apply it to our lives, just like kids in school learn and apply information. Finally, we have the responsibility to share and teach others who are brand new!

DISCUSSION TIME

- What stage of spiritual growth are you in right now?
- Who has been placed in your life to help you grow spiritually?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What was the most important thing you have learned about growing for Jesus?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What can I do to help you grow for Jesus?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for God to help you grow in Him a little every day.
- Parents, pray that you would help facilitate your children's spiritual growth while maintaining your own.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a science experiment. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



Family Project

☐ Saturday

For this experiment, combine the following in a plastic water bottle in this order:

- 2 drops of food coloring
- 1 cup of hydrogen peroxide
- A squirt of dish soap
- 1 packet of yeast

Doing so will produce a slow stream of foam flowing out of the bottle that is perfectly safe to touch. Experiment with varying amounts of each item to produce slightly different flows. As the foam grows, relate the chemical reaction to all that God pours into us as we grow.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

As your children grow, it is normal to look back and be shocked at just how far they have come in what feels to us like a very short amount of time. This project will help you keep track of both the physical and spiritual growth of your family as time goes by.

Purchase a 2 x 4 board at a local home improvement store. Stand it straight up and mark the height of each one of your family members on one side. On the opposite side of the 2 x 4, write each family member's name and their favorite Bible verse. Store the board in a safe, dry location where it is easy to access. Set a reminder to mark heights and verses of Scripture again every six months.

What Does a Shepherd Do?

Read Psalm 23 below or in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Psalm 23

- ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- ² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- ³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
- ⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
- ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for His sheep.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 23 as a family. This week we are learning that Jesus is our Shepherd and we should follow Him.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What does a shepherd do? What does the shepherd in this psalm do?
- What does it mean for goodness and mercy to follow us?
- What do you know about shepherds and their relationship with their sheep?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for His sheep.

Several qualities make shepherds good: understanding the needs of their sheep, defending their sheep against predators and enemies that want to do them harm, and keeping their sheep from fighting and hurting one another.

Good shepherds will leave the flock to search for a lost sheep. They rejoice in the health and prosperity of the group. They build a relationship with their sheep so the sheep will know the shepherd's voice. Jesus exemplifies all of these qualities. He is our Good Shepherd, and we are His sheep.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will follow
my Shepherd.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why would a good shepherd leave the flock to find one lost sheep?
- Can you share a way that God shows He cares for you?

PRAYER:

Take turns praying for your family members. Ask God to help you trust Him as your Good Shepherd.





Fun Facts!

- Because their eyes have large, rectangular pupils, sheep can see behind themselves without turning their heads.
- The horns on a sheep's head are made of keratin, the same thing as human fingernails.
- One sheep can produce up to thirty pounds of wool a year—enough to make nearly three hundred miles of yarn.
- Most sheep are unable to rise on their own if they have fallen onto their backs.
- During World War I, President Woodrow Wilson used sheep at the White House to keep the lawn trimmed.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 23 as a family. Find and highlight examples of God's care for us.

Did You Know?

In Matthew 18:12-14, Jesus shared a powerful parable about a shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep in order to seek after one that is lost. Jesus is telling us that He cares about all of us so much that He will do whatever it takes to rescue us.



Write your own song about Jesus being our shepherd.



Use cotton balls as sheep and pretend to be a shepherd who is caring for a flock. Walk them through the things mentioned in Psalm 23.



Journal about how you know that God cares for and loves you.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 23.

- “That’s What Jesus Does”
by Shara McKee
- “Psalms 23 (I Am Not Alone)”
by IPC Praise Team
- “Shelter Me”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“This Dwelling Place”
by Urshan College



PRAYER:

Take prayer requests, and bring the needs before God, the Good Shepherd.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive until you find a green pasture or open field, and then read Psalms 23 as a family.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will follow my Shepherd.*

The little lamb had spent her entire life with the flock. Even though she loved her shepherd, she wanted to see what was beyond the pasture. One day she noticed her shepherd was distracted by another lamb, so she made a run for it! She was able to get away into the forest.

It didn’t take long for her to realize why leaving the safety of her shepherd was a bad idea. Almost immediately she became lost. It was scary and lonely being all by herself somewhere she knew she wasn’t supposed to be. She heard the sound of a breaking tree branch and feared the worst. **Gulp!** Was it a wolf?

Thankfully, the sound was her shepherd coming to rescue her. The shepherd was so happy when he found her, he picked her up in his arms so he could carry her to the safety of the flock. From that day on, she vowed to trust and follow her shepherd wherever he led her.

DISCUSSION TIME

Have you ever found yourself feeling alone in a scary place? Did you call on the name of Jesus?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What do you do to make sure you are following Jesus—the Good Shepherd?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What is one thing you can do to follow Jesus—our Good Shepherd?



PRAYER:
Kids and parents, pray as a family that God will help you to understand how much He cares for you and that you will follow Him.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a writing game. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.





□ Saturday

Family Project

Use a notebook with at least ten empty pages.

- The first person writes an opening sentence to a story. Do not say it out loud!
- The next family member adds a second sentence on a new page.
- The third person is only allowed to see the second player's sentence before adding the next sentence.
- Continue with each player adding a line while only looking at the sentence before.

When finished, read the entire story. Discuss how mixed up and messed up things can get when we aren't following someone who understands the whole situation.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Psalm 23 is a constant reminder of God's care for us. Since our goal is lifelong discipleship, find ways to repeatedly return to the idea of following our Shepherd. Let your children write out the entire passage in their best handwriting, and then decorate the page accordingly. Post these masterpieces somewhere your family can see them and thank God for His constant care and provision. During family prayer—before dinner or bedtime—frequently thank God for being the Good Shepherd, and pray that you will follow Him.

Clean My Heart

Week

12

Read the summary of II Samuel 12:1-14 below. Then read Psalm 51 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

King David was a good king who loved God, but he was a human, and humans sometimes do wrong things. One day the king did something wrong—he took another man’s wife. He thought no one knew about his sin, but God knew.

God sent the prophet Nathan to talk to David. Nathan didn’t accuse the king or say he knew what David did. Instead, Nathan told King David a story.

Nathan started, “Once there were two men. One was rich, with a huge flock of sheep. The other was poor, with only one small lamb as his pet. One day a traveler visited the rich man. For dinner, the rich man wanted to serve lamb, but instead of serving one of his own sheep, he took the poor man’s only lamb.

King David was furious. “Who is that man? I will arrest and punish him.”

The prophet pointed at King David and said, “You are just like the rich man! You have so much, but you took something that did not belong to you.”

King David was so sad. That’s when he wrote Psalm 51. He prayed, “I have sinned against God. I have done wrong. Have mercy and take away my sin. Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Give me back the joy of your salvation, and I will tell others how great and forgiving You are.”

God forgave David because he repented.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: No matter what we’ve done, God will forgive us if we repent.

Discuss any questions about this Bible story. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 51 as a family. This week we are learning that God will forgive us if we repent.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Have you ever apologized to someone for doing wrong? Have you ever apologized to God?
- Why did Nathan use the example of a lamb when talking to David?
- Do you think Nathan was nervous going to the king and telling him he did wrong?
- What would have happened to David if he hadn't repented?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

No matter what we've done, God will forgive us if we repent.

When we do things that we know aren't right, our hearts can feel overwhelmed with guilt. Sin can make us feel like we don't deserve God's forgiveness. When the sins pile up, we can convince ourselves that God would never forgive so many bad things.

This belief is the furthest thing from the truth. The Word of God is clear. When we sincerely tell God we are sorry, He accepts our repentance and forgives us of our sins. God's forgiveness is immediate and absolute. No matter what you have done, He can and will forgive you.

This Week's
Life Lesson

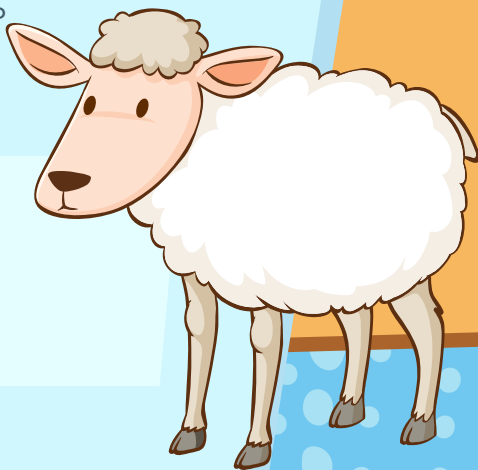
I must repent when I do wrong.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What kinds of sin can God forgive?
- How long does it take for God to forgive your sins?

PRAYER:

Pray as a family. Thank God for His unconditional forgiveness.



Fun Facts!



- David lived around 1000 BC.
- David was born in Bethlehem.
- David was a shepherd and a musician.
- David was the great-grandson of Ruth and Boaz from the Book of Ruth.
- David had seven older brothers.
- David was anointed to be king while he was a young man. He did not become king until he was thirty.
- Before David killed Goliath, he slayed a lion and a bear while protecting his sheep.
- Even though David sinned, he repented, and the Bible describes him as a man after God's own heart. (See I Samuel 13:14.)

□ Tuesday

Read or review II Samuel 12:1-14 as a family. Find and highlight the words that Nathan spoke to David.

Did You Know?

When King Saul disobeyed God, the Lord gave the prophet Samuel the task of anointing the future king who would take his place. God specifically guided Samuel to the home of Jesse in Bethlehem. Samuel obeyed, and the rest is history. (See I Samuel 16:1.)



Sing "Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary," or write your own song about God's forgiveness.

Instead of Simon Says, play a version using "Nathan Says."



Journal about how grateful you are that you can repent and be forgiven when you mess up and sin.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 51.

- “This Dwelling Place”
by Urshan College
- “Found at the Cross”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Wonderful Peace”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Bow at a chair and pray individually that God will forgive you of all your sins.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On your way to church, how many U-turn signs can you count?

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I must repent when I do wrong.*

“I didn’t do it,” said Cassidy, when her dad asked why she broke her brother’s favorite toy.

Her dad responded softly but firmly, “I know you did it. I was watching you as you picked it up in anger and threw it to the ground. Now we have two problems. You not only broke his toy, but you lied to me as well.”

Kassidy knew she was wrong. She looked at her dad, and as she was about to cry, she said, “I am sorry. I am sorry for breaking his toy and for lying to you. I don’t know why I did it, but I know I will never do it again.”

Instead of grounding her, Cassidy’s dad wrapped her in his arms and told her, “I love you, and you are forgiven. Now you need to apologize to your brother and let him know we are going to get him a new toy.”

“Thank you, dad. I love you, too,” said Cassidy as she went to find her brother.

DISCUSSION TIME

Have you ever done something that you had to apologize for? Were you forgiven?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever done something and thought God wouldn't forgive you?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What kind of things could you repent to God for?

PRAYER:
Hold hands and pray a prayer of repentance together.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is the board game Sorry. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



☐ Saturday

Family Project

Purchase or borrow the board game Sorry. The game is inexpensive and available in most major retail outlets. Play several rounds of this game as a family. As you play, every time you knock your opponent back to Start, take the time to practice making an apology. This will be both fun and helpful for kids to become comfortable saying the simple statement, "I apologize." Even if your opponents don't want to forgive you, God will!

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Our children will follow the example we set for them. The culture of our home is made up of the things we do repeatedly and consistently. Teach your children that apologizing does not necessarily mean there are no consequences, but it does mean that their wrongs will not be held against them forever.

Before you discipline your children, ask yourself if you have made the most of the opportunity to teach them through their mistake. Did you demonstrate mercy, love, and forgiveness? Too often we only discuss these topics when something bad happens. Take advantage of family time when no one has recently done anything wrong. At least once a month, bring up the subject of forgiveness and discuss making good decisions. It will take intentionality, but the rewards will be immeasurable.

A Concert for God

Week

13

Read Psalm 150 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Psalm 150

- ¹ Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.
- ² Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.
- ³ Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.
- ⁴ Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
- ⁵ Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
- ⁶ Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God has a desire for every breathing thing to praise Him.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 150 as a family. This week we are going to explore the importance of praising God.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What instruments do you like to play? What instruments do you hope to learn to play?
- What are some things for which you can praise God?
- In what ways can you praise God?
- Who should praise God?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God has a desire for every breathing thing to praise Him.

It would be impossible to list every single thing that God does for us on a daily basis. We take much for granted—things like seeing colors, hearing and understanding others, and breathing.

In return for giving us life, God desires the praise of everything that has breath. In fact, praising God is the minimum we can do to show appreciation to Him. Take a moment to reflect on the things God has done and is doing for you.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Can you list at least five things God has done for you this week?

PRAYER:

Thank God as a family for His greatness and goodness. Praise Him!



This Week's
Life Lesson

I am breathing; therefore, I will praise God.



Fun Facts!

- 78% of the air we breathe is made up of nitrogen.
- Plants produce oxygen.
- Relative humidity is the amount of water the air can hold before it rains.
- Air in our atmosphere protects Earth from getting too hot and too cold.
- The fastest gust of wind ever recorded was over 250 miles per hour!
- If you held a piece of paper in front of a fan in a room with no air, the paper would not move.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 150 as a family. Find and highlight any musical instruments.



Sing your favorite praise song with passion, or write your own song about praising God.



Read Psalm 150 together, taking turns reading every other word. Get out your musical instruments and praise Him!



Journal about the many reasons you owe praise to God.

Did You Know?

In Genesis 2:7 the Bible says God breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of Adam. No wonder God desires everything that has breath to praise Him. It is His breath! The breath that fills our lungs belongs to God.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 150.

- “This Dwelling Place”
by Urshan College
- “I Speak Jesus” by Charity Gayle
- “Show Me Your Glory”
by Rob and Shara McKee

Featured Song

“One Name”
by Anthony Trimble



PRAYER:

Take turns proclaiming the greatness of God. Raise your hands as a family and praise God!

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Count how many breaths you take on your way from your car to the church building.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I am breathing; therefore, I will praise God.*

When I found out my dad might lose his job, I was so worried that I became sick. The company he worked for had been having financial problems for a while. I heard him tell my mom that they had called for a company-wide meeting. When Dad came home the next evening, he let us know he had lost his job.

When he told us, my stomach instantly pitted up in knots, but Mom and Dad said not to worry. Then we prayed as a family. I was sad at first, asking God to help me understand, but by the end of the prayer time, we were all shouting praises to God, thanking Him for being so good to us.

A few weeks later, my dad got an even better job and, more important, a job that allowed him to spend more time with the family. My dad said that even if he didn't get a better job, he would praise God because God gives us breath and gives us lives worth praising Him for. God is so good to me!

DISCUSSION TIME

- Have you ever gone through a situation where it was hard to give God praise?
- What are some good things God has done for you today?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What is your favorite
memory involving praise
to God?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What is your favorite way to
give God praise?

PRAYER:
Pray as a family that you will be
committed to praising God with
every breath that you breathe!



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, try to commit
Psalm 150 to memory.
Then put it in your
own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a
Praise Party. Preview the
project on the next page,
and begin planning for it
in the family schedule.



☐ Saturday



Family Project

Have each member of your family select a praise or worship song that inspires them. Gather in a room where there is plenty of space to worship. One at a time, have each person introduce their song and share how it ministers to them. Play the songs, and praise God together. When done, play an upbeat song that the entire family loves!

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Be intentional to praise God at all times—both when He blesses your family and when times are tough. Worrying comes naturally to humans, but praise needs to be learned and should be intentional.

Teach your loved ones to respond to hard situations with praise, not craze. Flat tire? Hard day at work or school? Feeling sick? When you find tensions escalating, stop everything and praise God. Find something—anything—to praise Him for—something simple or complex. Acknowledging God with a “Thank You” can set a powerful example. If the breath in our lungs was the only thing God ever did for us, it would be enough. Thankfully, His blessings are pressed down, shaken together, and running over!

The Voice in the Burning Bush

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Exodus 3:1-22 in your family Bible.

Week

14

☐ Sunday

Moses was tending to his flock of sheep, leading them to a grazing spot near a mountain. He noticed a bush that seemed to be on fire, but it wasn't burning up. *This is amazing*, Moses thought. *Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it.*

As Moses approached the burning bush, God called out to him, "Moses! Moses!"

"Here I am!" Moses replied.

"Don't come any closer," God warned. "Take off your sandals. You are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Moses took off his sandals and covered his face, afraid to look at God.

God continued, "I have heard the cries of My children in Egypt. I want to rescue them out of Egypt and take them to a wonderful new land that is flowing with milk and honey. I am sending you to talk to Pharaoh and lead My people Israel out of Egypt."

Moses protested, "Me? Who am I to do this?"

God answered, "I will be with you. Lead them out of Egypt."

Moses continued to object, "They won't believe me. When they ask for Your name, what should I tell them?"

God replied, "I AM THAT I AM. Tell them I AM has sent me to you—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now go! They will believe you. Then go to Pharaoh and say, 'Let My people go!'"

Though he didn't feel worthy, Moses did what God told him to do because he knew God was with him.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Our Creator speaks to us, and we must listen and obey.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Exodus 3:1-22 as a family. This week we are learning about the voice that spoke to Moses from the burning bush.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why do you think God used a burning bush to get Moses' attention?
- What might have happened if Moses was distracted and did not notice the burning bush?
- There are many distractions in our lives. Can you name distractions that might keep us from hearing God?
- Has God ever spoken to you? How did you recognize His voice? Did you obey?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Our Creator speaks to us, and we must listen and obey.

God speaks! Before reading any further, stop and think about that incredible statement. God didn't just speak to people like Moses thousands of years ago. God still speaks today through His Word and His Holy Spirit. Is God trying to speak to you? Does He need to send a burning bush to get your attention?

God spoke to Moses because He needed Moses to do something important for Him. God also has an important role for us in His kingdom, but first we must listen and obey. Today, God doesn't need someone to lead His children out of Egypt, but He does want us to show His love to the world through our actions. God spoke to Moses, and He still speaks to us. Let's listen and obey so we can play an important part in what He wants to do.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why does God speak to us?
- How can we do better at recognizing His voice?

PRAYER:

Pray to hear God's voice clearly and be bold in obedience.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will listen for and
obey God's voice.





Fun Facts!

It's possible you have seen a burning bush without realizing it. *Burning bush* is the nickname for a popular shrub found in many yards across the United States—*Euonymus alatus*. Birds love to eat the small red berries, so through digestion and migration, they carry the shrub's seeds all over the continent. While its leaves are a beautiful green in the summer, it gets its nickname from its striking, vibrant, red appearance in the fall.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Exodus 3:1-22 as a family.

Find and highlight the instances when God spoke.

Did You Know?

God promised to bring His people to “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:8). While the area where God was leading His people was mostly covered in wild vegetation, this promise symbolized a rich, comfortable life that lacked nothing. What a promise!



Write your own song about God choosing you to do something great for Him.



Seal small amounts of milk and honey in a ziplock bag. Once the bag is firmly secured, lay it on a flat surface and squish its contents around to see what kind of things you can do.



Journal ways God might use you. Do you have any worries about not being able to fulfill the tasks? Pray over each concern.

□ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Exodus 3:1-22.

- “God Is Love” by Bryan Pound
- “The Great I Am”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song
“Forever (I Am)”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray together to be confident in what God has called you to do.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Walk or drive through your neighborhood looking for a Burning Bush shrub.

□ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will listen for and obey God's voice.*

L'Tisha sat next to her mother as their pastor preached. He said, “God spoke to Moses through the burning bush. He can speak to you today.”

As they drove home, L'Tisha asked, “Mom, how does God speak to us today?”

“I'm glad you were listening,” Mother commented. “The Holy Spirit speaks to us. Think about it. Has a thought ever popped into your mind—one that did not feel like it came from you?”

L'Tisha considered the question. “Yesterday I was playing with Shawna and suddenly I felt like I should pray for her. Does that count?”

“Most likely Jesus wanted you to pray for her.”

“But then I wasn't sure, so . . . I didn't do it. Is God mad at me?”

“No, no, He is not mad. We just have to train ourselves to listen for and obey God's voice. He understands and helps us learn.”

“Whew! I'm glad about that,” L'Tisha smiled as she grabbed her notebook. “I'm going to write a note to Shawna and tell her I am praying for her. I want to listen for and obey what God asked me to do.”

DISCUSSION TIME

Has a godly thought popped into your mind? Did you take time to listen for and obey what God was saying?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Did God ever ask you to do something that seemed strange? What happened when you listened and obeyed?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What is one way God has gotten your attention?

PRAYER:

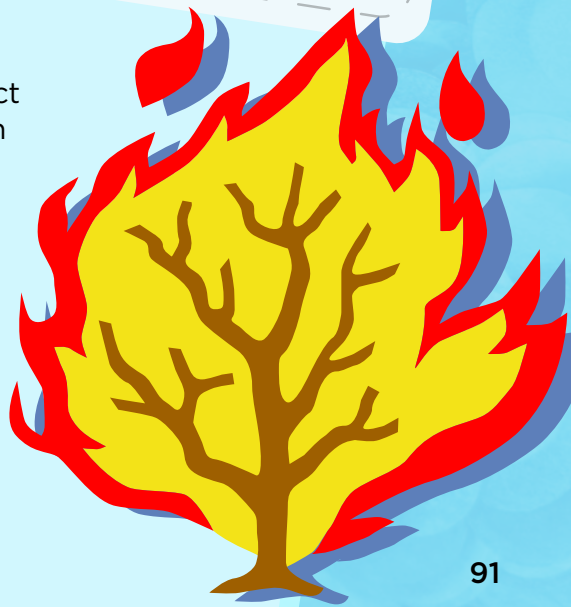
- Pray as a family to recognize and obey God's voice.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project begins with a family meeting. Preview the project on the next page, and plan for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, act out the story of Moses when he heard God's voice speaking from the burning bush.





□ Saturday

Family Project

Gather everyone together and pray, “God, speak to us about what You would like us to do for You today.” Sit quietly and listen for His guidance. Share as God places thoughts into your minds. Perhaps He asked you to pray for a neighbor, deliver groceries to someone in need, or text a friend who is struggling. List every thought that was shared, and discuss how your family can obey what God has asked.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

As a family, make it a habit to encourage each other to listen for and obey God’s voice. Ask each other, “What thought did God place into your mind today? Did you do it?” Become comfortable with sharing God-thoughts and how you obeyed Him. Teach your children to ask, “Have I pleased God recently by obeying His voice?”

Build faith by tracking these thoughts. Mount a dry erase board in a prominent place, and encourage the family to write each thought and response. On Sunday mornings, read the list, and thank the Lord for speaking to your family.

The Voice from the Fiery Mountain

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Exodus 19:1–25 in your family Bible.

Week

15

☐ Sunday

Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, to the wilderness of Sinai—the place where he saw the burning bush. Through Moses, God asked the people, “Will you obey Me? If so, you will be special to Me—a holy nation.”

The people said, “Yes, Lord, we will obey You.” God then told the people that in three days He would speak to them directly from a thick cloud on the mountain. First, they needed to prepare their hearts for such a special occasion. They would know it was time when they heard a trumpet.

On the third day, a trumpet blast filled the air. Fire! Thunder! Lightning! A thick cloud of smoke covered the mountain. The people were both amazed and afraid at God's magnificence.

Moses and his brother Aaron climbed to the top of the mountain. God explained His law so they could share it with the people.

God gave Moses His specific plans. He described laws and instructions, showing how people should live. He gave the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). He told them how to buy land, conduct business, and discipline lawbreakers. Each instruction would help the people become God's special treasure.

God later told Moses how to build the Tabernacle—a portable church (Exodus 25 and 26). God described every detail, including the Ark of the Covenant—a special box where God's Spirit would dwell. The great Creator wanted to live among His people, but if they wanted to be with Him, they needed to follow His plan and be a holy people.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Our Creator has shown us a plan so He can live among the people He loves.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Exodus 19:1-25 as a family. This week we are learning about the voice that spoke to God's people from the mountain.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What did God say happens when we follow His plan?
- Do you like rules? Why do you think God gave rules?
- What might happen if you ignore rules at home, school, or work?
- Share a time when you broke a rule. What was the result? Why was that rule important?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Our Creator has shown us a plan so He can live among the people He loves.

God made rules for His people to follow. We can trust that His rules are both good and for our good. His plan for us includes certain codes of conduct, also known as holiness. By living in His plan and following His commands, we experience the if/then principle. If we obey, then He can bless.

God loves us. The Bible shows us His plan. He asks us to follow it so He can live among us and bless us.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Will you follow God's plan in your life? What is the if and then part of His plan?
- How can we allow God to live among us?



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will hear God's voice
and follow His plan so
He can dwell in me.

PRAYER:

Pray for each family member to be willing to obey and follow God's plan, even when they do not understand the blessing of it.

Fun Facts!

Why do rules and laws exist? Is it to keep us safe? Is it to enforce common sense? Around the world, societies live by rules—some important, others ridiculous. Read these silly rules:



- In Milan, Italy, you may not frown in public unless attending a funeral or visiting someone in the hospital.
- In Quitman, Georgia, it is illegal to let your chickens cross the road.
- In portions of Australia, changing a light bulb must be done by a licensed electrician.
- In Singapore, it is illegal to chew gum.
- In Samoa, forgetting your wife's birthday is against the law.
- In Switzerland, people living in apartments are not allowed to flush the toilet after 10 PM.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Exodus 19:1–25 as a family. Find and highlight the if/then statements where God said, “If you do this, then I will do that.”

Did You Know?

In Exodus 19:5 of the King James Version Bible, God promised to make His people a “peculiar treasure” when they obeyed Him. In modern English, the word *peculiar* generally means something is strange or odd, but God was actually saying His people were special, unique, and chosen. We are His *peculiar* (*special*) people.



Write your own song about God choosing you to do something great for Him.



Create sound and visual effects to retell the story about the fiery mountain. Use common household items to represent the trumpet, thunder, lightning, fire, and smoke.



Journal about the importance of God's plan in your life, or draw how you think God's face looks when we obey Him.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Exodus 19:1-25.

- “Won’t Let Me Go”
by Nathan + Rachel Music
- “You Found Me”
by James Wilson and Ed Williams
- “His Love for Me”
by Urshan College

Featured Song
“Big Plans”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Choose a family member or friend and pray for that person to hear and obey God’s voice.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Parents and kids, go for a drive and count how many rules we obey automatically (i.e., wear a seatbelt, obey stoplights, and follow speed limits).

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will hear God’s voice and follow His plan so He can dwell in me.*

“Did you have a good day, son?” Mom asked.

“No. All I heard was rules.” Joey complained. “No snacks until four o’clock. Wash your hands. Put away your backpack.”

Mother listened quietly and then handed Joey a cup of hot chocolate.

“Yum! Hot chocolate. Thank you.” The warm drink soothed him.

“Rules are good. When we follow them, we stay in God’s plan. Imagine how hot chocolate would taste if we didn’t follow the rules—the recipe—to make it.” Mother explained. “If you listen and follow rules, life goes well. God wants us to listen and obey.”

“You are right. Without a recipe, this would taste awful. Without rules, life would be a mess.” Joey smiled at his mother. “I’ll do better tomorrow. I will listen and follow the rules.”

DISCUSSION TIME

God’s plan is not difficult to follow, but we must learn and obey His rules. What are some ways we can learn God’s rules for our lives?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:

How have you been blessed when you listened for and obeyed God's voice?

ASK YOUR CHILD:

How can you listen for and obey God's voice?

PRAYER:

- Parents, pray over each child. Ask God to help them learn His plan.
- Kids, pray for your parents to know God's plan so they can lead you in following Him.



TIP FOR TOMORROW

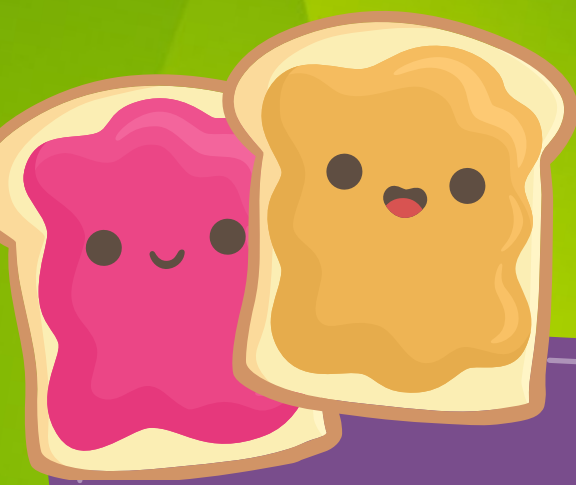
Tomorrow's project is completing the "Exact Instructions Challenge." Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell the story in your own words. Use sound effects. Make your voice deep when saying God's words.

☐ Saturday



Family Project

To follow a plan means to obey instructions. Complete the “Exact Instructions Challenge” together.

- Kids, select a challenge idea. Give specific instructions for your parents to follow.
- Parents, do exactly as instructed without question or trying to interpret the instructions.

Challenge Ideas:

- Make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- Draw a picture of a dog.
- Eat a piece of cake or bowl of ice cream.

After the challenge, discuss how easy or difficult it was to follow instructions. Then talk about how as a family you can demonstrate to your friends and neighbors the joy and blessings that come from following God’s instructions.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

It is important to have family discussions about plans. Everyone needs to understand the value of following, regardless of whether a directive is a biblical, family, or general plan. Understanding aids in following.

Beyond this week, think of how you can create a lifestyle of following—not just rules, but God’s big plan for us to draw close to Him. Consider how you model for your children the value of God’s plan. Think of ways you can bring up conversations about the joy that comes from following God’s Word.

Jesus—the Great I AM

Week

16

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read John 8:12-59 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Jesus said to the people, "I am the light of the world. Follow me. I will lead you out of the darkness."

The Pharisees erupted, "How dare you make such claims about yourself!"

Jesus replied, "I'm telling the truth, but you don't understand. You can't see that the Father sent Me to show you the truth."

"Your Father?" they questioned. "Show us Your Father!"

Jesus answered, "Since you don't understand who I am, you can't see the Father, because if you understood who I AM, you would see the Father."

At this, the Pharisees wanted to arrest Jesus, but they didn't. Later Jesus said, "I am going away, and because of your sins, you cannot come where I am going." Those who heard Him didn't understand. Jesus continued, "You are from earth; I am from Heaven. You will die in your sins unless you believe that I AM who I claim to be."

They demanded Jesus say who He was. Jesus replied, "When you see Me crucified on the cross, you will know that I AM He—the Savior of the world. If you follow Me, you will be My disciples. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

At that point, some believed Jesus. Others continued to argue. "Are you saying you are greater than our father Abraham?"

Jesus answered, "Before Abraham was, I AM."

The Pharisees raged, "Did he just call Himself God in the flesh?" At this, they took up stones to kill Him, but Jesus calmly walked right through the middle of them.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Knowing Jesus is the one true God sets us free.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Monday

Bible Focus

Read or review John 8:12-59 as a family. Find the phrases Jesus used to tell who He is. This week we are learning that Jesus is the great I AM.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- How would you answer this question from a friend, “Who is Jesus”?
- How would you describe Jesus?
- Why is it important to know who Jesus is?
- What did Jesus say will happen if we follow Him?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Knowing Jesus is the one true God sets us free.

The better you know someone, the better you are able to describe them. Jesus knew that those who followed Him would eventually learn and understand who He is. Meanwhile, many in the crowds balked at His words. They did not have a relationship with Him, so they could not understand how He could be who He claimed to be.

By knowing that Jesus is God, our relationship with Him gives us power over sin and death. He sends His Holy Spirit to prove to us that He is who the Bible says He is.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How do you know that Jesus is the one true God?
- What does knowing Jesus do for us?

This Week's Life Lesson

I will follow Jesus and
be set free.



PRAYER:

Pray that all family members will know Jesus and allow Him to set them free from sin.



Fun Facts!

Federal agents do not study counterfeit bills to learn how to spot counterfeit or fake money. They train by studying genuine bills. Certain characteristics cannot be mimicked and are difficult to reproduce. The more time they spend with the real thing, the easier it is to spot the fake.

The more time we spend with Jesus, the easier it is to understand truth and not get tripped up with wrong things.

□ Tuesday

Read or review John 8:12–59 as a family. Find each time Jesus' answer confused or upset the Pharisees.

Did You Know?

“Who is your Daddy?” Although the Pharisees did not use those exact words, they were challenging Jesus to show them His Father. Most likely the Pharisees were insulting Jesus over the controversy of His virgin birth. To question a man's birth father was a definite slam against his reputation.

The Pharisees recognized what Jesus was trying to say; they just didn't believe Him. Sadly, they were caught up in traditions and failed to see how the answer to their prayers and prophecies—the great I AM—was standing right in front of them.



Sing “Here I Am to Worship,” or write your own song about Jesus being the light of the world.



Make all the rooms dark, and then place flashlights in different rooms around the house. Observe how the light dispels the darkness.



Journal about your feelings of knowing the one true God when so many others do not know Him.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to John 8:12-59.

- “Our God” by Anthony Trimble
- “What an Excellent Name” by Jeremy & Jamin Hart
- “Only One God” by Christian Life Center

Featured Song

“When I Speak Your Name”
by Indiana Bible College



PRAYER:

Pray for God to make Himself real to your family and give full understanding of who He is.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Brainstorm a list of songs that declare Jesus as the one true God. Use these songs to hold a family concert.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will follow Jesus and be set free.*

Charles had two very different sets of grandparents. His mother’s parents seemed self-centered and liked to live on the wild side. They bragged about parties, told bad jokes, and loved to drink and smoke. When Charles visited them, he always felt a pit in his stomach.

His father’s parents were the opposite. They were kind, thoughtful, and loved everyone. When Charles went to their house, he always felt warm inside.

Charles asked his mother about the differences. She replied, “Your father’s parents used to be like my parents, always getting into trouble.”

He was surprised. “What made them change?”

“Jesus. When they decided to follow Jesus, He set them free from their old, hurtful ways.”

“If He did it for one set of grandparents, He can do it for the other. I am going to pray that they decide to follow Jesus and be set free.”

DISCUSSION TIME

Knowing and following Jesus will set us free, but we must choose to follow Him. How can we pray for those who still need to make that choice?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
How do we follow Jesus?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What does it mean to have
Jesus set us free?



PRAYER:
Together as a family, pray
that each person will fully
understand who Jesus is.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is an opportunity to donate. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday

Family Project

To be a Christian means to be like Christ. One way Jesus told us to be like Him is by showing kindness to others. Today, let someone in need see Christ in you. As a family, consider visiting an elderly neighbor and determining some chores you can do together that would be a blessing.

Also consider donating gently used toys, clothing, books, or household items to someone in need. Spend time thinking of things that might bless another person and give them to a local charity.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

This week's Life Lesson about knowing Jesus represents the heart of discipleship: the big picture or the eternal goal of a family. Whether the Apostolic faith is still new to you or it has been a legacy for many generations of your family, the choice to instill it in your children begins with you.

Reflect on some of the parenting suggestions and activities throughout this book so far. Which have been most helpful to you? Which did your kids seem to connect with best? How can you move those beyond a one-time activity to a family ritual that reinforces your family's goal of knowing Jesus?

Joy to the World

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Matthew 1:18-2:12 and Luke 1:26-2:20 in your family Bible.

Week

17

☐ Sunday

An angel, Gabriel, told Mary she would have a baby and to name Him Jesus. The angel of the Lord also told Joseph this baby would be Emmanuel—"God with us."

At that time, the Roman emperor called for a census, demanding people to return to the town of their ancestry. As descendants of David, Mary and Joseph travelled to Bethlehem. When they arrived, there was no place to stay. They ended up lodging in a stable. Baby Jesus was born that night and placed in a manger.

Outside of Bethlehem, an angel appeared to shepherds. "I bring good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David. You will find a baby wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger." Then an angelic choir sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and found this incredible baby. From there, they told everyone, rejoicing and praising God for what they had seen.

Later, a group of wise men travelled from faraway lands to see Jesus. For weeks, they followed a star believing it would lead them to a newborn king. They thought the star was leading to Jerusalem, but in that city, they only found King Herod, who had no idea what they were talking about. The wise men continued following the star to Bethlehem. When the star rested over Jesus' house, they rejoiced. When they saw the child, they fell down and worshiped Him, giving Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: We can have joy because Jesus is "God with us."

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Matthew 1:18–2:12 and Luke 1:26–2:20. This week we are learning that we can have joy because Jesus is “God with us.”

OPENING DISCUSSION

- How do you react when you experience extreme joy?
- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when Jesus was born?
- Why was Jesus’ birth important?
- How does Jesus’ birth impact your life today?
- Luke 2:19 says Mary “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.” Do you take time to ponder God and His Word?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

We can have joy because Jesus is “God with us.”

Though our souls long for joy, our minds tend to look for it in the wrong places. When Jesus was born, the Jews believed *Emmanuel’s* arrival—the Messiah—would deliver them from the Romans. They thought joy would come in the form of a political ruler who would crush their oppressors.

To experience true joy, however, God knew they needed to be delivered from the curse of sin. Yes, Jesus was born to conquer sin, but how? As God manifest in flesh, Jesus would sacrificially give His life to fulfill God’s law, which required blood to cover our sin. Jesus’ birth meant God’s plan of redemption was in motion. Joy comes to those who follow this plan. Yes, God is with us, and He has come to redeem us.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- If you were alive when Jesus was born, what role would you like to have played in this story?
- How do you feel when you consider that Jesus is “God with us”?

This Week’s
Life Lesson

I will rejoice because
Jesus is with me.

PRAYER:

Pray for each other to receive the joy that comes with understanding why Jesus was born in Bethlehem.



- There is only a 5% chance a baby will be born on its due date.
- Babies can hear their mother's voice from inside the womb.
- The mother's physical heart grows bigger during pregnancy.
- Babies can taste certain foods while inside the womb.
- Pregnancy often makes a mother's hair grow faster and her feet up to one size larger.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Matthew 1:18-2:12 and Luke 1:26-2:20 as a family. Find each group of people who heard about Jesus' coming. How did they react?

Did You Know?

The wise men were Gentile (non-Jewish) *magi*, which meant they served in the official priestly guilds of the neighboring Near East kingdoms. As philosophers, theologians, and natural scientists, one responsibility they were tasked with was interpreting astronomical signs.



Sing "Away in a Manger," or write your own song about Jesus' birth.



Swaddling is still a wrapping technique used today. Practice swaddling a baby doll in a blanket.



In a journal, write about the gifts you might have given baby Jesus, and compare these to the gift you can give Him now.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Matthew 1:18-2:12 and Luke 1:26-2:20.

- “Highly Exalted” by Gateway College of Evangelism
- “Joy to the World” by Faith Apostolic Church of Carmel
- “Waves of Glory” by Mark Yandris
- “Celebration Medley (Live)” by First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock

Featured Song

“Jesus, So Worthy of Love”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Consider those who may be sad this Christmas season. Pray that they will feel the joy that Jesus offers.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive through town counting the number of manger scenes.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will rejoice because Jesus is with me.*

Maria woke up crying and calling for her mother. She could hear mother’s footsteps in the hall.

“I had another bad dream,” Maria wailed as mother hugged her.

“Oh, honey, I’m sorry. I’ll stay with you while you fall back asleep.”

“No way. I don’t want to sleep ever again! I’ll just stay awake!”

Mom pulled her close, tucking the blanket around her. “I have an idea. Let’s sing worship songs. Allow Jesus’ love and joy to fill your thoughts.”

As she sang, Maria felt peace fill her heart. Jesus was with her. “Thank You, Jesus,” she whispered as she snuggled into the comforter. Soon Maria was asleep, dreaming good dreams about Jesus.

DISCUSSION TIME

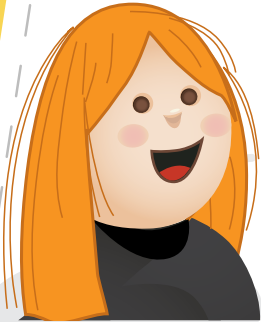
Have you ever been scared or lonely? Jesus is “God with us” and wants to help. Imagine Him holding your hand. How does that make you feel?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
Why were people in the Bible usually afraid when they saw an angel? Have you ever seen an angel?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Imagine being with the shepherds when the angels appeared. How would you act?

PRAYER:
Worship together as a family, thanking Jesus for His joy.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, use robes, towels, and sheets as costumes for Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and wise men. Act out the story of Jesus' birth.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project requires detective skills as you search for the meaning of names. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project

□ Saturday

Choosing a name for the newest baby is fun and challenging. Often names are selected to honor family members or to remember special people. Most parents spend considerable time choosing their children's names. They might ask questions like, "What does it mean? Will people tease my child because of that name? Will they have a nickname?"

Parents, share how you chose the names of your children.

Parents and kids, use a name book or search the internet for the meaning of each family member's name.

Review what you know about the name of Jesus—its meaning and power.

Then discuss how you can help friends and family members know about Jesus.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

The idea of *Emmanuel*, "God with us," is not limited to a Christmas story. This truth needs to fill our lives. God is with us everywhere and in all things. That should cause us to consider our actions and ask, "What does Jesus want me to do?"

Lead your kids in exercises to train their minds to picture Jesus in every situation. He is with us in good and bad moments. We are not alone. Use this principle to teach good decision-making skills. Make it a habit in your family to ask, "What does Jesus want us to do?" Name several situations where this habit would help your family make the right choices.

The One on the Throne

Week

18

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Revelation 21:1-22:5 in your family Bible.

□ Sunday

In the Book of Revelation, John was commanded to write about what he saw in a vision—a new Heaven and a new Earth. In John's revelation, Jesus was coming to gather His bride—the church. God promises to wipe away every tear because Heaven will not be a place of sadness.

Jesus is the Alpha and Omega—the beginning and ending. He is the start of everything and the end of everything. As the Lamb of God, He is all there is. No god stands beside Him. There is no god except the One true God—King Jesus!

Unfortunately, sin separates us from God. If we don't follow God's plan of salvation by letting the blood of Jesus cover our sins, we will not live with Him forever.

In John's vision, a city came down from God called New Jerusalem. It had tall walls with twelve gates. Each gate was guarded by an angel and had the name of a tribe of Israel. The walls were laid on twelve foundation stones. The city was approximately 1,400 miles in length and height. The walls were made of precious stones like jasper, sapphire, emerald, and amethyst. The gates were made of pearls. The streets were made of pure gold.

No one can enter into this city unless their name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. To get our names in that book, we must follow God's plan of salvation.

Jesus is the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus died on the cross to save the world from the curse of sin. After He died, He rose again and lives in Heaven. He alone sits on the throne in Heaven.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God alone sits on the throne in Heaven.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Revelation 21:1–22:5, looking for descriptions of Heaven. This week we are learning about the One who sits on the throne.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Do you believe Heaven is a real place?
- What can prevent us from going to Heaven?
- How can we be sure that our names will be written in the Lamb's Book of Life?
- What about Heaven sounds most beautiful or amazing to you?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God alone sits on the throne in Heaven.

A throne depicts authority. By designation, the one sitting on the throne is in charge. In John's vision, there was One who sat on the throne—the One all creation worships.

Ask each family member to raise one finger and say, "God alone sits on the throne in Heaven." Remember that the one true God is Jesus, and we will see Him on the throne in Heaven.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why is it important to know that One sits on the throne in Heaven?
- How can you acknowledge God's authority in your life?

PRAYER:

Pray that your family allows God to be their God on Earth so they are ready to worship Him in Heaven.

This Week's Life Lesson

I will worship the one true God who sits on the throne—King Jesus.



Fun Facts!



Throughout history, many materials were used to make thrones. Some were simple stools; others were large, ornate structures lavished with costly metals and jewels. Each represented a place where royalty sat and ruled. The most expensive throne in the world was the Peacock Throne in India. Created in the seventeenth century, the throne was encrusted with more than 2,535 pounds of gold and almost 510 pounds of precious stones. Today, it would be worth 800 million dollars.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Revelation 21:1-22:5 as a family. Underline the things that God promises to do in Heaven (i.e., wipe away tears, make all things new).

Did You Know?

The Lamb's Book of Life mentioned in Revelation 21:27 is a real book where the names of God's people are written. When we repent, get baptized in Jesus' name, and receive the Holy Ghost, our names are recorded there in preparation for us to enjoy eternal life with Jesus.



Sing your favorite song about Heaven, or write your own.



Using a chair and items from your home, design and decorate a family throne. Take turns sitting on it and overseeing family time.



Journal what it will be like in a place with no tears and sadness, or draw a picture of Jesus' throne.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Revelation 21:1-22:5.

- “You Are Holy” by First Apostolic Church Sanctuary Choir
- “Heaven” by Gateway College of Evangelism
- “Goin’ Up Yonder!” by West Monroe Apostolic Church

Featured Song

“Hallelujah, King Jesus”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray to keep eternity in sight and eliminate distractions that would keep anyone from Heaven.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Take a walk, and look for the beauty in God’s creation. While walking, talk about the beautiful things we will see in Heaven.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will worship the one true God who sits on the throne—King Jesus.*

“Mom, can I go to Phil’s house?” Robert asked.

“I don’t know. Ask your father,” Mom replied.

Robert wandered into the living room. “Dad, can I go to Phil’s house?”

“I don’t know,” Dad said from behind his newspaper. “Ask your mother.”

“Argh! Will someone please give me an answer?!”

Both parents stopped their tasks, and after a good laugh, said in unison, “You can go.”

Robert thought, *It can be frustrating to ask for things when no one takes charge.* Suddenly, he recalled the Bible lesson about Heaven. “Jesus, I’m glad to know that You are on the throne and in charge of this universe.” Robert smiled as he rode his bike down the street. It was good to know that Jesus sat on the throne!

DISCUSSION TIME

We will see King Jesus when we get to Heaven. How can we acknowledge that He is our king while we are on Earth?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
How can I be ready to go to Heaven?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Do you have any questions about repenting, getting baptized, or receiving the Holy Ghost?



PRAYER:
Pray for an opportunity to tell others about the one true God who sits on the throne.



BONUS ACTIVITY:
Kids, draw a picture that shows some of what we will see when we get to Heaven.

TIP FOR TOMORROW
Tomorrow's project focuses on reaching people for Jesus. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Heaven is worth everything we do for Jesus. One thing we should do is tell others about Jesus and help them prepare for Heaven.

Imagine how Heaven looks. Work together as a family to create an ad with pictures about Heaven. Write a tagline, such as, “Want to go to Heaven? Ask me how!” Include your personal or church contact information. Share the ad on social media, and pray that someone will respond to your invitation.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Being in His presence, walking on streets of gold, and knowing there is no more pain or sorrow will be wonderful. While we imagine and long for Heaven, we also realize we experience a bit of Heaven on Earth when we gather in worship. This may be a familiar feeling when your family attends church, but it is also important to entertain God’s presence in your home. Do you have a time set aside to worship together as a family? This week intentionally gather for worship and prayer. Allow Jesus to minister. Consider creating a sacred time each week for family worship.

God Makes a Promise to Abraham

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 12:1-8 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Faith is believing in something even though you haven't seen it. Abraham's life shows us how to be faithful. Romans 4:3 says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Abraham believed in and trusted the promises of God.

Before God changed his name to Abraham, he was called Abram. Abram was seventy-five years old when God said, "Go unto a land I will show you." In faith, Abram obeyed. He moved his family with no idea where he was headed.

Along the way, God gave Abram some incredible promises. God vowed, "If you trust Me and leave your home, I will give you a new land." God also pledged to turn Abram's descendants into a great nation. This must have been a shock since Abram was old and didn't have any children. Still, Abram trusted God and had faith that He would keep His promises.

God also vowed to protect Abram, saying He would bless those who blessed Abram and punish those who cursed him. Then God pledged, "In you shall all the families of the world be blessed." What an incredible promise!

When Abram arrived in Canaan, God showed him this was the land his children would eventually possess. In thanksgiving, Abram built an altar and worshiped God.

As promised, Abraham's children became a great nation—Israel. Also as promised, the whole world was blessed by Abraham's faithfulness, as his bloodline eventually led to Jesus.

Through faith and obedience, Abraham saw God's promises fulfilled. When we trust God and His promises, our faith can also encourage and bless those around us.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God blesses those who have faith in Him.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 12:1–8 as a family. Take turns sharing one of the promises God gave Abram. This week we are learning how God blesses those who have faith in Him.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- How would you describe faith?
- What do you think it means to have faith in God?
- Share what you think it means to be faithful.
- How can your faith encourage and bless others?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God blesses those who have faith in Him.

We must have faith to navigate life. Even those who do not profess faith exhibit a form of faith. Everyone expects the sun to be in its place each morning. Rarely do we think about our next breath of air or heartbeat, yet these functions are not guaranteed. Faith keeps us from worrying that they will disappear.

If we apply this faith-thinking to our walk with God, we realize His blessings. Abram believed God and did not worry about the future. He simply had faith. Because of that faith, He also had God's blessings.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- In what ways do you use faith each day?
- What kind of blessings have you seen because of your faith?



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will faithfully
obey God.

PRAYER:

Pray that your family will grow in faith and use that faith each day.



From Ur, Abram traveled 700 miles to the borders of present-day Iraq, another 700 miles into Syria, another 800 miles down to Egypt, and then back to Canaan (modern day Israel). Today, Ur is a desert scrubland filled with sand and mud. It is about 120 miles northwest of the Persian Gulf in the country of Iraq. Places we know as Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, and Jordan are in the land through which Abram passed.

Fun Facts!

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 12:1-8 as a family. Find a Bible map, and trace the route that Abram traveled.

Did You Know?

Abram was seventy-five years old when he left his home and followed God to a faraway place. He packed all of his belongings and took animals to carry the food, clothes, and other supplies that his family and servants would need. It was a difficult trip of many years before Abram reached Canaan.



Sing “Father Abraham,” or write your own song about God’s promises to Abram.



Fill backpacks with items for a trip. Carry them on your backs, and take a trip around the house. Discuss what Abram and his family probably did when they stopped to rest.



In a journal, write about what you think Abram felt as he traveled.

□ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 12:1-8.

- “Let There Be Faith”
by Urshan College Choir
- “Never Break a Promise”
by Brittani Scott
- “He Has Proven Faithful”
by The Wilbanks
- “Lord, Here I Am (Live)”
by Texas Bible College

Featured Song

“Forever (I Am)”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray that each family member keeps a desire to faithfully obey God.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive an unfamiliar route to church. Discuss how it must have felt for Abram and his family to travel to an unknown country.

□ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will faithfully obey God.*

“I’m exhausted!” Jimmy plopped down in front of his now-empty house. Tomorrow his family would journey to their new home. As he looked across the yard, a tear rolled down his cheek. “I’m going to miss climbing that tree. I’ve lived here all my life, and now I am leaving.”

Then his father asked, “Are you OK, Jim?”

He brushed the tear away. “I guess so. Moving to a new place just scares me.”

“When we obey God in faith, He blesses us with new experiences. Let’s make this a new adventure with Jesus. We’ll find the best fishing spots and build a dirt bike track at the new place. Deal?” Dad offered his hand. Jimmy perked up and shook his father’s hand.

“Deal!” Jimmy flashed a smile. “Thanks for reminding me to be faithful, Dad.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How does God help when we face the unknown?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever traveled to a new place? How did you feel during that trip?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What would you do if God asked you to travel to an unfamiliar place?



PRAYER:

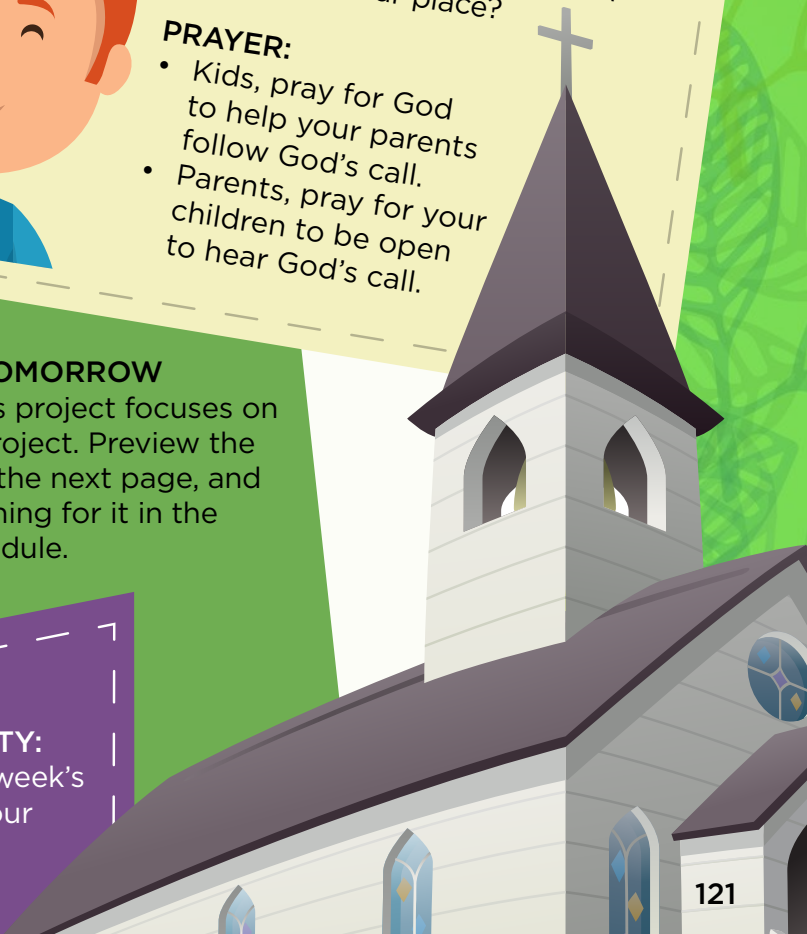
- Kids, pray for God to help your parents follow God's call.
- Parents, pray for your children to be open to hear God's call.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project focuses on a church project. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday



Family Project

Ask your pastor for a one-day church project the family can do. Gather the materials, and assign tasks to family members. After completing the work, gather in the sanctuary, and share how serving in this way helps you faithfully obey God.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Look at a monthly calendar. Discuss what your family does each week to show faith in God. Draw stars on each day you attend church, and discuss the importance of being faithful to God's house.

Faithfulness includes many activities. Family devotions, church projects, personal prayer, and individual devotions are all spiritual habits that support faithfulness. Use specific marks or small stickers on the calendar to indicate these activities, and celebrate the joy of spending time with Jesus.

God Sees Abraham's Sacrifice

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 22:1-19 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



God made a promise to Abram. Even though he and his wife Sarai were getting very old, they would have a baby. God also changed their names to Abraham and Sarah. The promise came to pass, and Sarah had a baby boy named Isaac.

When Isaac got older, God gave Abraham a test to see if he would obey. God told Abraham to take Isaac on a three-day journey to a certain mountain where Abraham was to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God. As they approached the mountain, Abraham told the servants to stay behind. He and Isaac went up the mountain.

As they climbed, Isaac asked, "Dad, we have the wood and the fire, but where is our sacrifice?" Abraham, in faith, said, "God will provide a lamb for sacrifice."

At the top of the mountain, Abraham built an altar and laid the wood on it. Then in obedience to God's command, Abraham bound Isaac and laid him on the altar. God saw Abraham being faithful and didn't really want Abraham to kill Isaac. He was testing Abraham's faith.

God called, "Abraham, Abraham! Don't touch your boy! I have seen your obedience, and I am pleased." Then Abraham saw a ram with its horns caught in the nearby bushes. Together, Abraham and Isaac sacrificed the ram on the altar and worshiped God.

Because of Abraham's faith, God promised to bless the entire world through his children. Abraham called the place Jehovah-Jireh, which means "God shall supply all my needs." God saw Abraham's faith and supplied the sacrifice that was needed.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God sees and rewards people who give sacrificially to Him.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 22:1–19 as a family. This week we are learning that God sees and rewards those who give sacrificially.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why is it important for us to obey God?
- What are some areas in which we can show obedience to God?
- What does sacrifice mean to us?
- How can we demonstrate sacrifice in our daily lives?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God sees and rewards people who give sacrificially to Him.

God is pleased when we give sacrificially. Our sacrifices are important to Him, but even more important for us. By giving Him something special, we learn to be selfless. A sacrifice causes us to lay aside our own wants and focus on what God wants. In return, He promises to bless us.

God didn't give the command to stop until He allowed Abraham to reach the point of actually offering the sacrifice. The reward came because Abraham's actions proved his faith and love in God. We often sacrifice with the hope that God will do the miraculous—and He does once He sees our sacrifice.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why do we feel good when we give to God?
- What does giving sacrificially mean to us?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will give to God,
even when it requires
sacrifice.

PRAYER:

Pray together as a family that each would understand how to give cheerfully and sacrificially.





Fun Facts!

Moriah is a girl's name. Its Hebrew origin means "the hill country." The land of *Moriah* was a mountainous region. King Solomon eventually built his magnificent temple at this same location as described in I Kings. Jews were instructed to bring their sacrifices to this location, Jerusalem's Temple Mount, because no other place was acceptable.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 22:1-19 as a family. On a Bible map, find the location of Mount *Moriah* where Abraham offered Isaac to God.

Did You Know?

Imagine making a three-day journey on foot to a mountain with your father and then realizing you were the sacrifice! Isaac was old enough to understand the situation and strong enough to carry the wood up the mountain. He obviously helped build the altar. It is certain that Isaac was strong enough to resist his father, yet we read that Abraham bound Isaac and laid him on the altar. It took a lot of courage for both Abraham and Isaac to do what God commanded without knowing the outcome. Imagine their relief when God provided the ram.



Write your own song about giving your life to God.



Play "Will You Do It?" This game is like "Mother May I?"

Parents give a practical command, and children respond with assigned steps forward until all reach the finish line.



Journal about things that would be a sacrifice for you to give to God.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 22:1-19.

- “All to You” by Bryan Pound
- “You Are”
by The Pentecostals of Katy
- “Unshakable Faith”
by Wedeline Casimir
- “He Does”
by The Chandlers

Featured Song

“Give It Away”
by David and Stephanie Hutton



PRAYER:

Each family member mentions one thing they feel God would like them to give sacrificially. Pray together for faith to believe that God sees and rewards the sacrifice.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Visit a memorial that highlights the sacrifices of others, and discuss the difference between giving sacrificially for people versus giving sacrificially for God.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will give to God, even when it requires sacrifice.*

Missions Sunday was here. Next week, the Clark family would leave for their mission assignment in a faraway nation. “Are you excited?” Anna asked Chloe.

“I am, and also nervous,” Chloe explained. “I can’t stop thinking about the friends who I am leaving, and I feel sad, but leaving friends is a small sacrifice for the joy of seeing people saved.”

Anna considered her friend’s words. *What have I sacrificially given?* She looked in her purse at a \$100 gift card. She felt the Lord’s nudge to put it in the offering. She thought she would feel bad, but giving to missions actually made her feel warm inside.

On Monday, Chloe called Anna with a praise report. “On Sunday, the church raised over \$10,000 for our family. This will definitely make it easier for us to start our new church overseas. Hallelujah!”

“Praise the Lord!” Anna shouted as she felt the rush of God’s Spirit. She had no idea how good God’s rewards could feel on the inside.

DISCUSSION TIME

How do faith and sacrificial giving work together?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever given sacrificially? What did you give?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
How can we know that God sees our sacrificial giving?



PRAYER:
Pray that your family will understand and willingly give even if sacrifice is required.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project focuses on missions. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Pray for God's guidance as you select a missionary family or project to support.

- Research facts about the city or country that is being evangelized.
- Find the location on a map.
- Bookmark the internet page where updates are given.

On index cards, write the list of needs stated by the missionary family you selected. Pray over these needs, and determine ways your family can provide support, which may include more than giving money. Mount these cards around the house as reminders to pray. Thank God for letting your family give sacrificially to benefit His kingdom.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Giving includes planning—not so much the amount of giving as the idea of giving. To train your kids to be growing disciples, it is important for giving to become part of family life. Write a family plan of action for giving. List the recipients of your giving and giving actions (i.e., sending funds, writing letters or emails, and praying).

The Stolen Blessing

Week

21

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 25:24-34 and 27:1-29 in your family Bible.

□ Sunday

Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons named Jacob and Esau. Born a few minutes earlier, Esau was older, so he would receive the father's blessing and the family birthright. Esau didn't care about these honors, however, and Jacob really wanted them.

One day Jacob saw his opportunity. Esau returned empty-handed from a hunt. Jacob had just cooked a pot of delicious soup, and Esau was HUNGRY! He asked Jacob for some soup. Jacob responded, "Only if you hand over your birthright." Esau hungrily agreed.

With birthright in hand, now Jacob needed his father's blessing. His mother, Rebekah, overheard Isaac tell Esau, "I'm nearing death. Please hunt up some delicious meat. When you return, I'll impart the blessing on you." While Esau was away, Rebekah and Jacob needed to act quickly.

First, Rebekah cooked a goat just how Isaac liked it. Jacob entered to serve it to his father. Though Isaac had become blind in his old age, his nose and ears still worked. He said, "I smell the food, but your voice sounds like Jacob. Let me feel you. If you're Esau, your arms will be covered in hair."

Realizing Isaac might make this request, Rebekah had covered Jacob's arms in goat's hair. It worked! Isaac thought Jacob was Esau, so he prayed the family blessing over Jacob.

When Esau returned from his hunt, Isaac told him that the blessing had already been given to Jacob and there was nothing he could do to undo it. Esau had not guarded the treasure that was supposed to be his, so it was taken away from him.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God wants His people to treasure their relationship with Him.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 25:24–34 and 27:1–29 as a family. Find and underline the word birthright. Use a Bible dictionary to learn its meaning.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why do you think Esau was careless about his birthright?
- What does it mean to treasure something?
- Why does God want us to care about our relationship with Him?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God wants His people to treasure their relationship with Him.

A treasure is something desirable. Many people spend their lives in search of treasure—giving their resources, reputation, and time to obtain a specific goal.

God wants us to treat our relationship with Him in the same manner. We should dwell on Him, desire time with Him, and give our resources to Him. The most important treasure we can have is a relationship with Him.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why should we treat our relationship with God as something special?
- What are some ways we can treasure our relationship with God?

PRAYER:

Take a prayer walk in your house. Pray a blessing over each family member's bedroom. Then gather in the center of the house, and ask for God's blessing and presence to be felt there.

This Week's
Life Lesson

*I will cherish my
relationship with God.*





Fun Facts!

Jacob must have been an excellent cook for Esau to trade away his birthright for a bowl of soup. *Pottage* was a thick soup or stew made by boiling vegetables and grains. When available, meat or fish were added. Jacob's pottage was likely lentils (beans) that were boiled with a few veggies and spices for several hours until the flavors melded. Pottage was often served with bread. Making pottage was the simplest form of cooking and provided a meal with little cost.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 25:24–34 and 27:1–29 as a family. Use several Bible translations to read the description about Jacob's pottage. Find a recipe that may be similar to that description and make some.

Did You Know?

Esau's nickname was *Edom* meaning "red," which referred to the red hair that covered his body. His many descendants were called Edomites and were likely a hairy bunch. Later in the Old Testament, the Book of Obadiah solely deals with God's judgment of the Edomites because they neglected their birthright just as their ancestor Esau had done. Romans 9:13 reveals God's feelings about this story: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."



Sing "You Are My All in All," or write your own song about how special God is.



Play Facts in a Hat. Each family member writes one Bible story fact on an index card. All cards are placed in a hat. Take turns drawing and reading a card. After all facts are read, work together to put the cards in the proper story sequence.



In a journal, write about what you think is important for you to keep a right relationship with God.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 25:24-34 and 27:1-29.

- “Jesus I Love You” by First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock
- “If You Love Him (Live)” by The Pentecostals of Katy Sanctuary Choir
- “My Savior First of All” by The Chandlers
- “Won’t Let Me Go” by Nathan + Rachel Music

Featured Song

“Your Kingdom Come”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray together that each family member better their relationship with God.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Serve soup for supper. Discuss how odd it sounds for Esau to have traded away God’s blessings for a bowl of food. Do you cherish the things of God more than what you eat?

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will cherish my relationship with God.*

Jasmine saw Cherie sitting on her front porch alone. She asked, “Hey, Cherie, are you OK? What’s wrong?”

Cherie’s shoulders drooped. “I thought Alice was my friend, but now she says if I don’t join her gang, she won’t talk to me anymore. Her gang does bad things. I don’t know what to do.”

“I do,” Jasmine advised. “Your relationship with Jesus is too important to give it up for friends. You can be her friend, but not if it involves doing bad things. Maybe you should invite Alice to join your gang.”

“My gang?” Cherie asked.

Jasmine nodded, “That’s right. You should invite her to church.”

Cherie laughed and hugged her friend. “Good idea. Even if she says no, at least Jesus will know that I treasure my relationship with Him.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How does your relationship with Jesus affect others?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What things help you cherish your relationship with God?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How can your actions show Jesus to others?

PRAYER:
Pray that your family might show others how important it is to have a relationship with Jesus.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, use a pot, spoon, and bowl to retell the Bible story.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project focuses on ministering to others. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project

☐ Saturday

Part of keeping a right relationship with God is keeping a right relationship with others. List two or three ways your family can help someone else (i.e., preparing a meal, cleaning a house). Decide who you can bless today, and prepare your plans. As you minister, pray a blessing over that person. After completing the task, gather and share how it felt to minister to others.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Relationships take time, effort, and daily attention. The best way to cherish our relationship with God is to build consistent spiritual disciplines. Schedule personal and family devotions. Attend worship and prayer services. Make it a family habit to discuss the ways each member is keeping a right relationship with the Lord.

Jacob's Wrestling Match



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 32:1-2, 22-32 and 33:1-16 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Jacob was meeting his brother, Esau, for the first time in twenty years. The last time they were together, Jacob had tricked their father, Isaac, into giving him the family birthright instead of Esau. When Esau found out what had happened, he was furious. He begged his father to bless him, too, but it was too late. His father only had one birthright to give, and he had given it to Jacob. In fear that Esau would kill him, Jacob ran away.

Now that Jacob was returning home, he was worried because he would have to face his brother. Would Esau still want to kill him?

The night before the meeting, Jacob was alone, or so he thought. A man approached to wrestle him. Jacob didn't realize who he was really wrestling—an angel sent by God. They wrestled all night.

During the fight, Jacob's hip was dislocated, but still he fought on. God recognized that Jacob was a changed man. At the end of the struggle, the angel told Jacob, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have wrestled with God and with men, and you have prevailed."

When Esau saw Jacob the next day, Esau ran to give him a hug. Esau had forgiven Jacob.

Because Jacob did not give up, God blessed him and gave him a new name. Jacob called the place where he wrestled the angel Peniel because he saw the face of God there.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God blesses those who seek Him.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 32:1–2, 22–32 and 33:1–16 as a family. Find in the story how long Jacob wrestled and who he was really wrestling.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why was Jacob worried?
- What happened to Jacob as he wrestled?
- What does it mean to seek God?
- Do you ever ask God for a blessing?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God blesses those who seek Him.

Children play a popular game called Hide and Seek. To play, they select one person to be the seeker while all others hide. Seeking is interactive. It makes a person look in places often overlooked. It is exhilarating when the seeker finds someone who is hiding.

Even though God is not hiding from us, we certainly need to be seekers of Him. Interactive communication with our Savior is important. Pursuing that relationship means looking in places people often overlook—the Word of God and the altar. God promises to bless those who seek Him. Finding God is an exhilarating experience, one we need to share with others.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What ways can you seek God today?
- Have you ever received an answer after seeking God? What was it?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will hold tightly to God.

PRAYER:

Lay your hands over your heart, and pray that you will remember to seek God with all your heart.





Fun Facts!

Wrestling has more than one definition:

- To take part in a fight; to move or force with difficulty and some physical effort
- To struggle with a difficulty or problem

People who wrestle learn to hold on during the fight until there is an answer. Jacob did this during his face-to-face struggle with the angel of God. Jacob won. God honored him and changed his name to *Israel* meaning “God contends,” or “One who struggles with God, wrestles with God, and is triumphant with God.”

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 32:1-2, 22-32 and 33:1-16 as a family. Find and highlight the words wrestled and bless. Discuss how these two words are connected in the story.

Did You Know?

When Jacob wrestled with the angel of God, he was changed. He was given a new name (Israel). It was a life and history changing moment never to be forgotten. He named that place Peniel as a reminder of this transformational encounter.



Sing “Victory in Jesus,” or write your own song about how special God is.



Give each family member a snack-size bag of chips and ask them to open the bags using only their hands (no scissors). Discuss the need to hold tightly to the bag while opening it. Compare this to our need to hold tightly to God when seeking Him for answers.



In a journal, write about ways you can hold tightly to God.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 32:1-2, 22-32 and 33:1-16.

- “Control” by Dylan Woodward
- “Your Voice” by Amanda Perry
- “Coming Close” by Natalia Benthall
- “See A Victory” by Pentecostals of Alexandria (BOTT 2020)

Featured Song

“Makin’ Me Whole”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray for other family members as you give them a tight hug.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Take a drive, and look for things that are held together (i.e., roads/bridges, signs/poles). Discuss why each item needs the other, and compare these examples with our need to hold tightly to God.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will hold tightly to God.*

Today was exam day, and Mandi was super nervous. At breakfast, she said, “I hope I pass my math test. I spent hours studying.”

“Did you pray first?” Mom asked.

Mandi groaned, “No, it slipped my mind.”

Mom raised her eyebrows. “It slipped your mind? Honey, you should always pray first. Keep God close, and He will help you.”

Embarrassed, Mandi bowed her head and prayed. “Lord, I’m sorry I forgot to pray first. Please help me do my best. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

That afternoon, Mandi bounded into the house. “Mom, I remembered to pray. When I struggled with a question, God helped me. I got an A!”

“I am so proud of you for passing both your tests.” Mother exclaimed.

“Both? I only took one.” Mandi looked confused.

“No, you passed your math test and your seeking God test. He answered you with a blessing.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How does praying first connect with holding tightly to God?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
In what ways do you hold tightly to God?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How can you practice holding on to God?



PRAYER:
Pray that your family holds tightly to God and prays first in every situation.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is learning to pray first. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



☐ Saturday



pray first

Family Project

Make a banner by writing PRAY FIRST in large lettering. Hang it in your house. Practice praying first to begin the day and every time you begin a new task. During family devotions during the upcoming week, list activities that need specific prayer. At the end of the week, discuss what each family member discovered about this practice. Share the answers that God gave and worship together. Conclude by praying for your neighborhood and that God would use you to show them the joy of seeking Him.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Jacob's experience is like ours. We may not wrestle face-to-face with an angel of God, but we often wrestle within our spirits over situations in life. Jacob realized that his blessing lay in the struggle. If he held on tightly, he knew God would bless. Even when the struggle was painful, Jacob refused to let go. He held on tightly until the blessing appeared.

As a family, discuss times when you had to hold on through a struggle. Encourage each other to remember that God blesses those who seek Him. Beyond this week, think of how you can set reminders to prompt you to tell your kids a testimony of how God has helped your family.

Passing the Test of Temptation

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 4:1-15 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Before His ministry began, Jesus entered the wilderness for forty days of prayer and fasting. No food, just prayer, for forty days. Meanwhile, the devil looked for an opportunity to tempt Him.

The devil said, "Jesus, are You hungry? Since You are the Son of God, You can do anything. Just turn that rock into bread."

Jesus recognized the devil's tricks and knew the Word of God would give Him power, so Jesus said, "It is written in the Word of God, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

The Word of God defeated the devil's first temptation, so he tried again. He showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and said, "I will make You ruler over all of these kingdoms. They are mine to give, and I want to give it all to You, . . . if You will worship me, that is."

Jesus replied, "It is written in the Word of God, 'Worship God alone and serve Him only.'"

The Word of God defeated the devil's second temptation, so he tried again. He took Jesus to the roof of the Temple. He said, "Show everybody how powerful You are by jumping off this building. When the angels catch You, everyone will know You are the Son of God."

Again, God's Word gave Jesus power over the devil's temptation. Jesus responded, "It is written in the Word of God, 'Don't test the Lord your God.'" In defeat, the devil ran away.

Then Jesus returned to Galilee and started His ministry.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's Word gives us power over every temptation.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Luke 4:1-15 looking for each temptation the devil gave Jesus. This week we are learning how to resist temptation.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What are some temptations you face?
- Are there any Bible verses you use when facing temptations?
- How does God's Word give you power over temptation?
- Why is it important to use the Word of God to help you overcome daily temptations?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's Word gives us power over every temptation.

Temptations abound in our lives. Both young children and adults face temptations and often do wrong because they simply cannot resist. Although temptation is common, it should not be allowed to control our lives. When we resist temptation, we are resisting the opportunity to sin. The choice is ours, and God's Word gives us power to make the correct choice.

No one escapes the moments of temptation—not even Jesus! Yet God equips us with a powerful tool that helps us turn from temptation and follow His ways. It is the Word of God.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why does God's Word help against temptation?
- If you were tempted by Satan in the wilderness, what might you say to him? How would you combat the temptation?



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will learn and use
God's Word to resist
temptation.

PRAYER:

Gather in a circle, and have each person pray for the one to their right. Pray that they will use God's Word against temptation.



Fun Facts!

The wilderness Jesus entered is often described as a desert place. To qualify as a desert, a location must receive less than ten inches of rain per year. These arid regions are dry and have little vegetation. However, people can live in a desert. Cairo, Egypt, and Lima, Peru, are the world's largest cities located in arid regions. Their residents have adapted to little rain and extreme climates. Deserts can be both extremely hot and exceptionally cold.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 4:1-15 as a family. Find and highlight the words Jesus used to fight temptation.

Did You Know?

When Jesus went into the wilderness, He entered an arid region. The days were likely sweltering, and the nights were frigid. He spent forty days and nights in the desert with no food. Jesus learned to adapt to this different climate, and the Word of God must have given Him strength.



Sing "The B-I-B-L-E," or write your own song about how special God's Word is.



Using figurines, dramatize the lesson while reading the Bible story aloud. Be passionate!



Journal about temptations that you have faced. What words from the Bible helped you stay strong?

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Luke 4:1-15.

- “Nothing Is Impossible”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Coming Close”
by Natalia Benthall
- “See a Victory”
by Pentecostals of Alexandria
(BOTT 2020)

Featured Song

“A Love for Truth”
by Dylan Woodward



PRAYER:

Pray together that your family has strength to overcome temptations.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

As you drive to church, discuss the temptation drivers have to play with their phones while driving.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will learn and use God's Word to resist temptation.*

As Freddy stood in line with his mom at the checkout, he noticed his favorite candy—sour worms. Freddy held the package in his hands, picturing how the sourness would make his face pucker in delight. “Hey, Mom, can I have these sour worms?” Freddy asked politely. His mom shook her head no.

Freddy wouldn't give up. “Please?” Again, she shook her head no.

After a few more futile attempts, Freddy sighed and put the sour worms back in their place. They would have to wait, . . . or would they? Freddy noticed his mom wasn't paying attention to him. Freddy looked around. Nobody was watching. Surely, he could just sneak those sour worms into his pocket.

“What am I thinking?” Freddy spoke aloud. “The Bible says, ‘Thou shalt not steal.’” Freddy walked to the other side of the shopping cart so he would no longer be tempted.

On the way home, Freddy whispered, “Thank You, God, for the power of Your Word over temptation.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How does God help us during times of temptation?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever been
tempted to do something
you knew was wrong?
What did you do?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Can you think of a Bible
verse that will help you with
temptation?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to be good role models against temptation.
- Parents, pray for God to give your children wisdom when they are tempted. Pray that they will remember the truth of His Word.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, draw a comic book to retell this week's Bible story.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

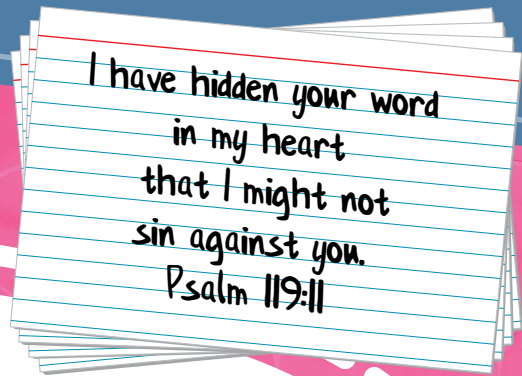
Tomorrow's project is a Bible Verse Scavenger Hunt. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project Saturday

Parents, select Bible verses that help against temptation. Write each one on an index card. Place the cards throughout the house for your children to find. For each verse, give a hint to help them find the card.

Good verses include Psalm 97:10, Psalm 119:11, Proverbs 7:25, Matthew 4:10, Matthew 5:6, Matthew 6:13, John 14:15, I Corinthians 10:13, II Corinthians 10:4, Galatians 5:16-17, Ephesians 6:10-11, Philippians 3:8, Philippians 4:13, I Timothy 6:11, James 1:12, James 4:7, II Peter 2:9, and I John 4:4.

Kids, walk around looking for the cards. Each time you find a verse, ask the family to read it together, and discuss how the verse helps against temptation. Mount the cards where the family can see them, and challenge each other to memorize a verse before next Saturday.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Learning to use God's Word to combat temptation is a powerful and lifelong lesson. It is easy to criticize when someone is struggling with temptation. Instead of criticizing, assist others in finding and learning verses that will help. Encourage your children to use the Bible as a spiritual buffer. Are their actions, thoughts, and desires aligning with what it says? Can they see themselves standing with other great men and women from God's Word?

Healthy disciples lean on Scripture and learn to wield God's Word against temptation. Our children will be prepared for the battle if they have the Word. Look for ways you can reference the Bible in casual conversation throughout daily life.

From Rejection to Fame



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 4:14-37 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

As Jesus travelled the region of Galilee, He was becoming well known for His preaching and miracles. One day He decided to go to his hometown of Nazareth, where He had lived as a boy.

On the Sabbath, He went to the synagogue. During service, Jesus stood to read the Word of God. From the scroll of Isaiah, He read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come."

As everyone watched, He rolled up the scroll and added, "This passage has been fulfilled this very day."

When the people of Nazareth heard this, they sat up in amazement. "Did you hear that? Does He think He can do all these things? He's just the son of Joseph the carpenter. Who does He think He is?" In anger, they mobbed Him, forcing Him to the edge of a cliff where they planned to throw Him over. At the top of the hill, however, Jesus walked right through the ruckus, seeming to disappear.

Jesus left Nazareth recognizing how His hometown had rejected Him. Although they did not believe in Him or His mission, He did not let that stop Him. He went to the nearby town of Capernaum where the people were happy to receive Him. Jesus did many mighty miracles for those who welcomed Him and did not reject Him.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God can use us, even when others reject us.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Luke 4:14-37, looking for the words Jesus read from Isaiah. This week we are learning that God can use us even when others reject us.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Have you ever felt rejected or unwanted by your friends? How did it make you feel?
- When Jesus was rejected by the people in His town, what did He do?
- Jesus proclaimed that He was fulfilling biblical prophecy. How did others react to this news? How would you have reacted to Jesus's statement?
- Why is it important to realize that God can use us even when others reject us?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God can use us, even when others reject us.

In a world driven by social media, it has never been easier for people to feel rejected. Insensitive comments are commonly made and then shared with little regard for who might be hurt by them. People who internalize these remarks, especially young people, fall prone to depression, and even thoughts of suicide.

Does Jesus know how rejection feels? Yes, nobody was rejected more than Jesus. Still, He recognized His calling, shrugged off the haters, and continued to minister faithfully. If people are being unkind because you follow Jesus, realize they are actually rejecting Him. Don't take it personally, forgive them, and continue to live how God has called you to live. God wants to use you for His glory, so don't let someone's unkindness keep you from receiving the blessings He has in store for you.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why should we want to be used by God?
- What will you do if you are rejected by others while following God's call?

This Week's
Life Lesson

No matter what happens, I will do what God calls me to do.

PRAYER:

Pray for one another to have courage to be used in God's kingdom.



A miracle is an extraordinary or unusual event where God intervenes. The gospels record thirty-seven notable miracles performed by Jesus, with John 21:25 adding that He did so many miraculous things, it would be impossible to write them all down. Jesus healed numerous diseases, from fevers to leprosy. He provided physical needs by multiplying food and turning water into wine. Jesus performed miracles because He cared for and wanted to help others. By filling you with His Spirit, Jesus wants to work even more miracles through you.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 4:14-37 as a family. Find and highlight the verses that show the crowd's reaction to Jesus.

Did You Know?

When Jesus performed miracles, more than just people took notice. Several instances in the gospels describe how demons cried out in His presence. In each case, Jesus silenced them. People vexed by unholy spirits for years, and even decades, were suddenly made well. Onlookers were astonished. Soon every city around Nazareth was talking about Him.

Sound amazing? Still today, Jesus wants to work miracles like these. Don't let rejection deter you. Allow the Lord to lead you, and then get ready to do miracles in His name.



Sing or write a song about following God's call.



Kids, record yourselves preaching a sermon like Jesus. Parents, share the video with friends and family on social media.



Journal ways God has used you to reach others, or draw a picture illustrating how you have helped others.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Luke 4:14-37.

- “My World Needs You”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Take Me to Jesus”
by Denae Joy Abbott
- “Only You” by Kristen Hicks
- “Called to Be”
by Texas Bible College

Featured Song

“Power”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Ask God what He is calling you to do. Spend time listening for His answer.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive to a busy intersection, and pray for the people you see.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *No matter what happens, I will do what God calls me to do.*

As Denise scrolled through her app, a caption caught her eye. “Family of Seven Loses Everything in House Fire.” *I cannot imagine how that family feels*, she thought. A tug pulled at her heart. Jesus was trying to get her attention. She put aside her phone and slid to her knees. “Lord, what are you saying?”

Suddenly, she had an idea. “I can help. I will organize a food and clothing drive!”

Her brother told her it was a stupid idea, but Denise didn’t let that stop her. Two hours later, Denise and her parents were distributing flyers up and down their street. Within hours, neighbors were calling with food, clothing, and gift cards. Denise gathered three boxes of contributions.

Then Denise’s mom found out where the family was staying. The family’s father just happened to be in the lobby when they dropped off the donations. “This is for us?” the man asked in amazement. “Thank you for caring.”

Denise went home with a joyful heart. “It wasn’t hard to do what God wanted, and being part of His plan was so rewarding.”

DISCUSSION TIME

List situations that might try to keep us from doing what God asks. How should we respond to those?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
Has God ever asked you to do what others thought you could not do? How did you respond?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Do you feel God is calling you to help someone? What is He asking?



PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents as they follow God's call.
- Parents, pray for your children to respond to God's voice when He calls.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is Help Your Neighbor Day. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Help Your Neighbor Day

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

□ Saturday

Family Project

Jesus calls us to help others like He did. One way to help is to volunteer in your community. Make today Help Your Neighbor Day. Pick up trash along the road. Help an elderly neighbor clean her house. Organize a food collection for a local food pantry. Prepare snack bags for a homeless shelter.

List several projects your family can do, and select one per week for the next month. While helping others, pray for your community to learn about Jesus.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Children are never too young to help others, but they need parental support. Find unique ways for your children to participate in the community and your local church.

Volunteering opens their minds to new ideas and allows them to meet new people. Research service organizations in your town and see if there is a current or ongoing project where you might volunteer.

Develop a sense of importance and purpose in your child's life. Serving in a community alongside a parent is valuable training. It builds strong habits for future service. When your child is inspired to help, find reasonable and realistic ways to make their goals achievable. Children can answer God's call and become world changers.



Called to Be Disciples

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Luke 5:1-11, 27-32; and 6:12-16 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

A large crowd followed Jesus, wanting to hear Him teach. He saw two ships sitting along the shore. He entered a ship that belonged to Simon and taught the people from the boat as they sat on the shore.

When He finished teaching, He told Simon to go out into the deep and let their nets down. Simon and his partners were tired. They had fished all night and caught nothing but decided to obey anyway. They caught so many fish that they filled both ships! Jesus told Simon Peter, James, and John, that from now on they would catch men instead of fish. In response, they left their old life behind to become “fishers of men.”

Jesus called people from all walks of life to be His disciples. The scribes and Pharisees questioned His choice of followers. With scorn, they asked, “Why are you eating with sinners and tax collectors?”

Jesus answered, “I didn’t come to walk with perfect, healthy people. I’ve come to call sinners to repentance. I’m not concerned about a person’s past. I want people who will leave their old lives to follow Me.”

Jesus chose twelve men to be His closest followers: Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James (the son of Alphaeus), Simon, Judas (the brother of James), and Judas Iscariot.

Jesus called all sorts of people to be His disciples. He was not looking for “perfect” individuals, but rather those who were willing to leave behind their old lives and follow Him.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God calls people to be His disciples.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Monday

Bible Focus

Read or review Luke 5:1-11, 27-32; and 6:12-16 as a family. Find and highlight the names of Jesus' disciples. This week we are learning that God calls us to be His disciples.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What does it mean to be a disciple?
- What kind of people did Jesus call to be His disciples?
- What does Jesus look for when He calls people?
- Why do you think Jesus needed disciples?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God calls people to be His disciples.

HELP WANTED: God is getting ready to make history, and He wants to use you! Are you ready to be called a disciple of Jesus? A disciple is someone who hears and accepts God's call to serve in His kingdom. Jesus has a plan to redeem the world, but He doesn't want to do it alone. To answer His call, you don't have to be perfect. In fact, all you need to do is be willing. God knows you have flaws, and He will work on them over time. If God told you His plans for you, you wouldn't think you were capable, but God does extraordinary things incredibly well. Interested? Then obey, follow His Word, and go where His Spirit leads you. The Lord of all creation is calling you. Will you leave your past behind and follow Him?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will choose to be a
disciple and follow God.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Why do you think Jesus called disciples from all walks of life?

PRAYER:

Take turns praying, "Jesus, I want to be a disciple and follow You."



Fun Facts!



Fishing was an important way of life during Bible times in areas near lakes and seas.

- The Sea of Galilee (where Jesus called some of His first disciples) is actually a freshwater lake in Israel that is thirteen miles long and eight miles wide.
- The disciples probably fished the Sea of Galilee for a form of tilapia, a tasty fish that grows to be about three pounds.
- The biggest fish in the ocean is the whale shark, which may grow forty feet long and weigh forty tons!

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 5:1-11, 27-32; and 6:12-16 as a family. Find and discuss some of the tasks the disciples were doing when Jesus called them.

Did You Know?

When Jesus called His disciples, He said they would become “fishers of men.” Jesus meant that these men who had spent their lives fishing for sea creatures would begin a new career fishing for followers of Jesus.



Sing “The Twelve Disciples,” or write your own song using the names of Jesus’ disciples.



Create a hopscotch board with chalk, and number it 1-12. Play and count to twelve, just like the number of disciples.



Journal about how you would feel if called to be one of the twelve disciples. Draw a picture of you following Jesus.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Luke 5:1-11, 27-32; and 6:12-16.

- “Worth It All (Live)”
by Jessica DiGiovanni
- “I Will Walk This Road”
by Brittani Scott
- “Willing Vessel”
by First Pentecostal Church
of North Little Rock

Featured Song

“That’s What Jesus Does”
by Shara McKee



PRAYER:

Pray that each family member will become a disciple of Jesus and follow Him.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On the way to midweek service, discuss how your family can be fishers of men and tell others about Jesus.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will choose to be a disciple and follow God.*

As Charlie and his mom filled the grocery cart, they heard a commotion in the dairy aisle. A grocery worker stooped next to a little girl on the floor. “It’s OK, honey.” The toddler wailed louder. Seeing Charlie, she crawled across the floor and grabbed his hand.

Charlie saw she was scared. “What’s wrong?” he asked. “Are you lost?” The toddler whimpered for her mama.

“Don’t worry. We can help you find her.” Charlie wiped her tears with a tissue. The grocery clerk hurried toward the front desk to make an announcement. Charlie knelt on the floor and said, “When I am scared, I talk to Jesus. He is always listening.”

Just then a frantic woman came down the aisle. “Mama!” the youngster shouted joyfully. The little girl ran to her mom.

After the lady thanked them, Charlie’s mom said, “You showed Jesus’ love to the little girl. That is what a disciple of Jesus does.”

Charlie grinned. “I like helping others as a disciple of Jesus.”

DISCUSSION TIME

When someone is in distress, how can a disciple of Jesus help?

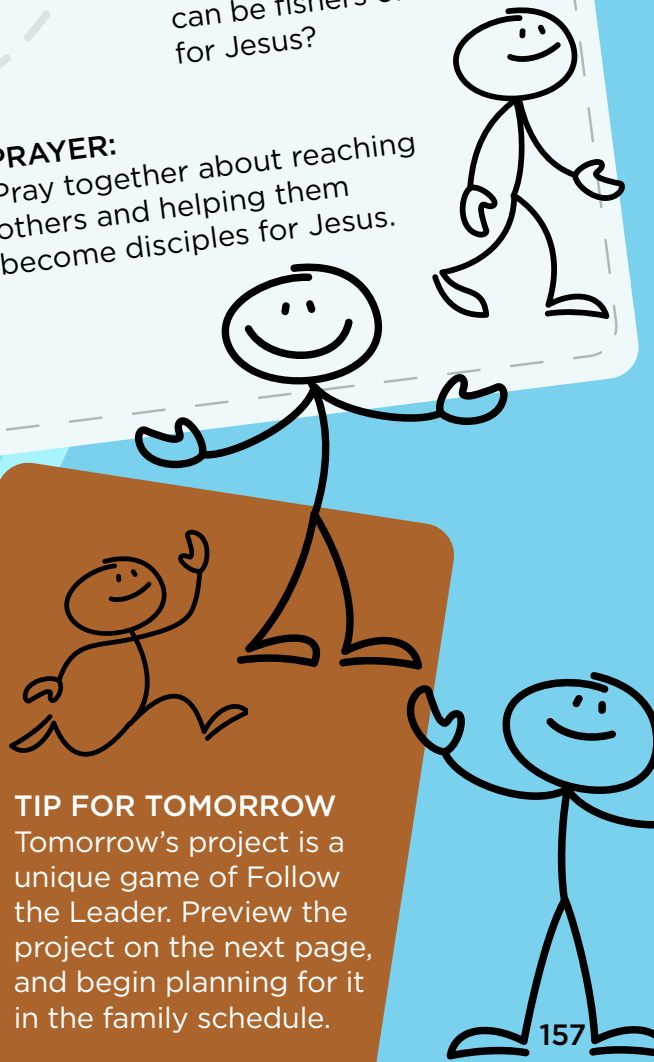
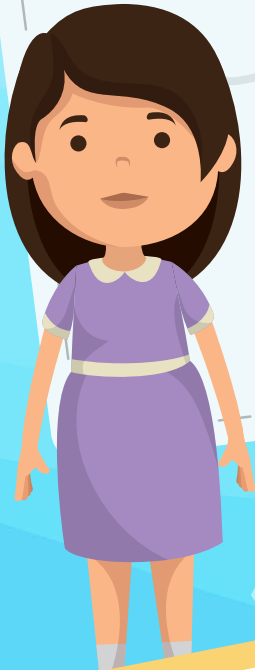
☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What ways have you been a
disciple of Jesus?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How do you think we
can be fishers of men
for Jesus?

PRAYER:
Pray together about reaching
others and helping them
become disciples for Jesus.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, draw twelve stick figures (one for each of Jesus' twelve disciples), and retell the Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a unique game of Follow the Leader. Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

□ Saturday

The Big Picture: Discipleship

We must teach our kids to be disciples. While we cannot physically follow Jesus like the twelve disciples did, we can follow our pastor and instill in our home good spiritual habits. Thinking and acting like Jesus develops a lifestyle of discipleship. Cultivating godly character traits is a powerful indicator that we are His followers.

As children develop an awareness of the discipleship role, they realize the beauty of evangelism and become fishers of men for Jesus.

Family Project

Just as Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, we are called to follow our leaders. Parents are leaders in life, and children should learn to follow them. Parents, remember that you are helping grow disciples for Jesus.

Play Follow the Leader around your neighborhood. Take a walk with parents in the lead. Children should mimic how parents walk and talk. Be sure to overcome some obstacles along the way.

While walking, discuss ways to follow Jesus daily. How can following Jesus help others become His disciples?



The Teacher and His Students



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below,
or read Luke 6:17–38, 46–49 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

One day, people gathered around Jesus, pressing Him to perform miracles. As the sick touched Him, they were healed. Then Jesus turned to His disciples to teach a special lesson.

Jesus said, “God blesses the poor, for the Kingdom of God is theirs. God blesses the hungry, for they will be satisfied in the days to come. God blesses those who cry today, because one day He will bring joy. When people make fun of you for My sake, leap for joy, because an incredible reward is waiting for you in Heaven.”

Jesus continued, “If you are My disciple, love your enemies. Bless those who curse you and pray for those who hurt you. Treat others like you want to be treated. Show kindness without expecting a reward. When you forgive others, you will be forgiven. The mercy you give will flow back to you in abundance. As My children, your reward will be great in Heaven.”

Jesus taught, “Just as a tree is known by its fruit, others will judge you by your actions and words. If you show God’s love, they will want to hear what you have to say.”

He also told a story about two builders. One built his house on rock; the other built his house on the sand. When a storm came, the house on the rock stood strong; the house on the sand fell apart. The house on the rock is like people who hear God’s Word and follow it. The house on the sand is like people who hear God’s Word but don’t follow it. Jesus wants His disciples to hear and obey God’s Word.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Jesus wants His disciples to hear and obey God’s Word.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Luke 6:17-38, 46-49, looking for ways God blesses His disciples. This week we are learning about hearing and obeying God's Word.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What are ways we can hear and obey God's Word?
- How do we know we are listening to God's Word?
- How can we show God we are listening?
- What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus wants His disciples to hear and obey God's Word.

Our world tries to fill every living second with noise and activity. Today, countless technologies make sure no downtime goes without something to do. We numb our brains by scrolling through apps, playing games, and searching endlessly for mindless entertainment. People are having a hard time turning it all off. It is as if silence is an enemy.

Jesus taught that His disciples would hear and obey His Word above all other messages. Hearing requires us to stop our own tasks and quiet our thoughts so we can intentionally focus on what He is saying. The disciples couldn't spend enough time listening to Jesus. What has occupied your ears, eyes, and mind today?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How can we show God we are hearing and following His Word?
- How can we show others we are hearing and following God's Word?



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will be a disciple of
Jesus.

PRAYER:

Pray together and promise to make God's Word a priority in your day and life.



In construction, a safe building requires a good foundation. This foundation must support a building's weight and keep it from sinking into the ground. Think about skyscrapers. How deep must their foundation go to keep them safe? The Salesforce Tower in San Francisco currently has one of the deepest foundations, going 310 feet below ground to support the 1,070-foot structure.

A weak foundation makes a building unstable and dangerous. In 1173 AD, builders of the Leaning Tower of Pisa could see the foundation shifting to the north after completing only the third story. When construction resumed in 1272, the building's shift had now turned southward. While this lean makes an interesting tourist attraction, the structure has been in danger of toppling from the beginning.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Luke 6:17–38, 46–49 as a family. Find and highlight the story about the two builders.



Sing the “Standing on the Promises of God,” or write your own song about building life on the foundation of God’s Word.



Explore the value of a firm foundation by building identical block houses on different foundations (e.g., shag carpet, blanket, mattress, wood floor, cement). Which foundation provides the most stability?



Journal about your spiritual foundation. How will you build a strong life on God’s Word?

Did You Know?

Jesus often used stories or parables while teaching to get His point across. When He told the story of the two builders, His aim wasn’t to convince hearers to build safer houses. Jesus knew the crowd understood the importance of building a house on a proper foundation, so He caught their attention with a story that would cause them to consider their spiritual grounding.

□ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Luke 6:17-38, 46-49.

- “Changing Times”
by Indiana Bible College
- “He Brought Me This Far”
by The Wilbanks
- “I Know That Man”
by Jeremy & Jamin Hart
- “Every Time” by Mark Yandris

Featured Song

“Build My Foundation”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray together about specific ways to build your spiritual foundation in Jesus.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive through residential areas, and observe house foundations. How many kinds of foundation materials do you see?

□ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will be a disciple of Jesus.*

Darcy had been playing with her dollhouse for an hour, pretending that her dolls were having a tea party and Bible study.

“Playing with your dolls?” Darcy jumped. Grandma surprised her.

“Yes, we’re having tea and Bible study, just like Momma’s friends.”

Grandma smiled. “Your dolls must be good disciples of Jesus.”

Darcy looked serious. “Grandma, when I grow up, I want a beautiful house, tea parties, and Bible studies. Do you think that will happen?”

“Only God knows, but I do know this: Good things happen to those who build their lives on the correct foundation, so you are on the right track. Would you like to continue building your foundation?”

“How do I do that?” Darcy asked.

“I just baked chocolate chip cookies,” Grandma answered. “How about we have cookies and tea while practicing Bible verses?”

“Building my foundation sounds delicious,” Darcy smiled. “Let’s go!”

DISCUSSION TIME

How can we build our lives on Jesus and be His disciples?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What Bible verses help you become a better disciple of Jesus?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How does learning God's Word help you become a better disciple of Jesus?

PRAYER:
Talk to God together about living like disciples of Jesus. Pray that each area of your life be built on the foundation of His Word.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, use craft sticks to retell the story about the two builders.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is about having a "blessing conversation." Preview the project on the next page, and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



□ Saturday



Family Project

Sometimes friends and neighbors have lives that are sad or difficult. As disciples of Jesus, we want to show them His love and try to restore their joy. Make a list of people who may need encouragement. Discuss simple ways your family can brighten their day. Choose to call several people on the list and let them know that you are thinking about them. Have a “blessing conversation,” where you seek to listen, bless, and encourage them.

Friends and neighbors are strengthened when we minister to them. An encouraging word or beautiful smile brings great blessings.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

This week's focus to be disciples is our ultimate goal as a family. Since disciples can be any age, no family member is exempt. The process of being a disciple involves seeking Jesus' presence, learning His Word, and helping others be His disciples too. Today evaluate the time you are spending each day as a family to focus on discipleship. Can you do anything to make it more effective? Encourage each other to act kindly, love mercy, and walk humbly. As your family follows Jesus, your life will be blessed with an abundance of joy.

God Lights the Way

Read and discuss Psalm 119:9–16 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



In this Psalm, David shared the importance of knowing God's Word and hiding it in our hearts to help us keep from sinning. God's Word guides us like a light leads us on a path. With God's Word in our hearts, our lives will naturally overflow with His goodness.

Psalm 119:9–16

- ⁹ Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.
- ¹⁰ With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.
- ¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.
- ¹² Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes.
- ¹³ With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.
- ¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.
- ¹⁵ I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.
- ¹⁶ I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's Word is a light that guides us along the right path.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 119:9-16 as a family. The Lord teaches us His statutes, but we have a part to play. Underline or highlight the actions we should take.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why is it important to seek God with our whole heart?
- Where should we hide the Word of God, and why?
- What are some ways to ensure we don't forget God's words?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's Word is a light that guides us along the right path.

What is the Bible? Many people believe it is just a collection of stories, laws, genealogies, and poetry from Jewish people from long ago. Many fail to realize that God gave us the Bible to teach us about Himself. Each story tells us something about the God who created us, redeemed us, and wants to walk with us to live with Him eternally. When we seek God as we read God's Word, His Spirit will help us understand what we are reading. At first, reading the Bible may seem like a huge task, but the more we read, the better we will know Him. These verses show us how to activate the power of God's Word in our daily lives, letting it lead us in the right way.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What is one intentional way you can follow God's guidance this week?
- What are some practical ways your family members can hold you accountable for moving in the direction God is leading?

PRAYER:

Ask for the clear direction of the Holy Spirit as you walk in the way of God's wisdom. Share your thoughts with the rest of your family. Commit to holding each other accountable as you fall into step with each other and His will for your family.



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will let God's Word
guide me.



Fun Facts!

Mnemonics are a fun way to help something stay in your memory. A *mnemonic* is just a twist or mental trick—a system that takes regular information and makes it exceptional or memorable in some way.

- You can concentrate on a fact and “place” it in a specific room of a house you build in your brain.
 - You can associate something not well known with something familiar.
 - You can make a sentence with the first letter of each item on a list you are trying to memorize.
- At the end of the day, however, the most important key in memorization is repetition.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 119:9-16 as a family. Underline or take turns finding parts of the passages related to memory.

Did You Know?

Keeping Scripture in their minds and on their hearts was so important to the Jewish people that some would literally wear the Word of God. This practice used something called *phylacteries*, which were black, leather, cube-shaped, boxes containing key verses from Scripture that would be worn on their arms and fastened to their foreheads.



Sing “Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart” or write your own song about the sacred significance of God’s words and how you plan to treasure and honor them.



Pick a Psalm 119:9-16 and set a timer. See which member of your family can quote the verse from memory when the timer rings.



Journal about a passage of Scripture that offers instruction. Include what it means to you and how you plan to follow it.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 119:9–16.

- “Hidden in My Heart”
by Scripture Lullabies
- “Me and My House”
by PPH Kids Music

Featured Song
“A Love for Truth”
by Dylan Woodward



PRAYER:

Pray together for God’s continued help as you commit His Word to your memory. Ask Him to soften your hearts and sharpen your minds as you do so.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Quote the verse from this psalm that you memorized on Tuesday. As a family, let each person state one word at a time until the whole passage is completed.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will let God’s Word guide me.*

It was Amy’s first time walking home by herself. Usually her older brother, Jake, was there to accompany her. Today Jake had soccer practice after school. Amy’s parents assured her she could walk alone, but she was still a little anxious.

“I’ve walked this way a hundred times, but what if I can’t remember without Jake here to help me?”

Amy was relieved to discover she did seem to remember what direction to go, but nervously steeled herself for the part of the trip she dreaded—the big black dog. The dog was kept behind a sturdy white fence, but it still made her nervous as he barked and charged each day, even when Jake was there.

Amy remembered the Bible verse she and her family had been memorizing, and she said it over and over: “What time I am afraid I will trust in thee” (Psalm 56:3).

She looked around. She had made it to her own front door already! She had walked past the scary dog without even noticing.

DISCUSSION TIME

How did memorizing Bible verses help Amy?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:

Has there ever been a time when the Word of God showed you a clear path where there had not been one before?

ASK YOUR CHILD:

What is an area of your life where God's Word could be a light for your path this week?

PRAYER:

- Kids, ask God to help you memorize passages from the Bible that will help you face what life brings you this week.
- Parents, ask God to help you continue to build your family on the strong foundation of His Word.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, try to memorize additional key verses from this week's psalm.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is creating a post-it practice posterboard. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Turn off the lights in your home, allowing your family to fumble around in the dark. Turn the lights back on and say to them: “Why couldn’t you see? There was a flashlight in the drawer!” Expound on how the flashlight is of little use unless it’s taken out and turned on in order to provide light.

Decorate a posterboard to use for Scripture memorization. Choose a passage from the Bible to work on as a family. Write the verse on sticky notes—one word per note—and place the notes on the posterboard, displaying it somewhere easily visible to the whole family. Practice the passage daily, removing more and more sticky notes each day until the family can recite the verse from memory.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Does your family have a “family Bible”? God’s Word is a light, but it is useless to us unless we take it out and use it. There is so much wisdom to be found within its pages, but we must let it guide us. Place a large family Bible prominently in a common area such as the living room, and then don’t let it collect dust. Turn to it frequently for family activities. Spend evenings reading and discussing passages. When problems arise, turn to it for wisdom. The more time your family spends in God’s Word, the closer your family will be to its Author.

The Secret Place

Read and discuss Psalm 91 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

- ¹ He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- ² I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.
-
- ⁹ Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;
- ¹⁰ There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
- ¹¹ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.
- ¹² They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.
- ¹³ Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.
- ¹⁴ Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.
- ¹⁵ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.
- ¹⁶ With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God wants to be close to us when we pray.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 91 as a family. Look for “cause and effect” parts of this passage. Example: “Because this happens, then this will happen.”

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What is your best hiding place?
- Where is someplace you go to feel safe?
- What promise does God give to those who dwell in His “secret place”?
- What is a refuge? What is a fortress?
- How does God act like our refuge and fortress?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God wants to be close to us when we pray.

To feel safe, some people build a *panic room* in the middle of their house to run to if they feel an invader has entered their home. This room is designed to be impenetrable against those who are trying to do harm.

In this psalm, we learn that God wants to be our panic room. He promises to come close when we call on Him. He wants us to dwell in Him, inviting Him to walk with us in all that we do so that His love, protection, and blessing surround us at all times.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How do we practice making God the place where we live?
- What is one thing we can do this week to draw closer to God and His presence?



This Week's
Life Lesson

*I will find a secret place
of prayer to meet with
God every day.*

PRAYER:

Take turns praying and asking God to build your family's desire to be close to Him.



Facts!

- The classic game of hide-and-seek dates back to two hundred years before Jesus' birth.
- An international hide-and-seek competition is held in Italy with usually over seventy teams from a dozen nations.
- Harriet Tubman knew a lot about hiding. She escaped from slavery and then helped over three hundred other slaves escape to freedom through the Underground Railroad.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 91 as a family. Underline or take turns finding the things that are promised to us when we pray.

Did You Know?

Many scholars speculate that Moses wrote Psalm 91. In Moses' mind, "the secret place of the most high" would have been inside the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. Moses pitched his tent directly next to that area, literally "abiding under the shadow of the almighty." At the time, this was as physically close to the presence of God as he could get.



Sing "Amen" by Charity Gayle or write your own song about prayer.



"Pitch a tent" in your living room and crawl into it for some quiet time with the Lord.



In a journal, write a prayer to God, telling Him what's on your heart today.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 91.

- “When I Pray”
by David and Stephanie Hutton
- “All I Ever”
by PPH Kids Music
- “When I Say Thank You”
by PPH Kids Music

Featured Song

“This Dwelling Place”
by Urshan College



PRAYER:

During prayer, spend time whispering Jesus’ name and seeking His presence for several minutes. Look for that “secret place” as you pray.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Discuss the prayer practices you are implementing with your family. Share how the specific time you’ve spent with Jesus has impacted your week.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will find a secret place of prayer to meet with God every day.*

Fred was having a hard time at school. At lunch time, he sat alone. He just didn’t seem to fit in and he didn’t know what to do about it.

When he told his parents, they didn’t know how to fix the problem, but they knew who to turn to. As a family, they had purposed to “dwell in the secret place of the Most High” by spending time in prayer every day.

Outwardly, nothing seemed to change at first, but things changed on Fred’s insides. He noticed he was more at peace and he felt more understood. He even began to view his classmates differently.

One day at lunch, he noticed a kid named Jacob sitting by himself. As Fred thought about it, Jacob usually sat by himself. He gathered his courage, whispered a prayer, and asked if he could sit with Jacob. Jacob’s whole face lit up at the question. Lunch time was never the same. Fred never ate alone again.

DISCUSSION TIME

How does time with God change how we view the world around us?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:

When do you feel like you are closest to God? Do you have a secret place?

ASK YOUR CHILD:

How has spending extra time with God made a difference for you this week?

PRAYER:

- Parents, pray your kids continue to desire to spend time with God.
- Kids, pray your parents' time with God continues to build a strong foundation of safety for your family.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, memorize key verses from this week's psalm.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is building a secret place. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

□ Saturday



Family Project

Choose a room, closet, or corner of your house to become your family's "secret place" to pray. Stock it with prayer aids, journals, pillows, and blankets—anything that will provide a warm and welcoming place for family time with God. Go over your calendar and schedule intentional times to enter into this "secret place." This schedule will provide accountability for prioritizing a specific time of prayer throughout the week.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

God longs to be near us when we pray. He draws close to us when we draw close to Him. Think of this week's act of creating a "secret place" to be used specifically for prayer time as more than just a one-time activity but a reflection of your family's commitment to time with Jesus. Don't just throw some pillows in a corner; make this a consecrated area that has a special appeal. Find a music source like My Hope Radio's "Morning Prayer" channel to use as soothing background when your family prays together. Lifelong discipleship (the big picture behind all the daily spiritual activities we do as a family) is built on prayer and time in God's Word. Watch the Lord transform your family in little and big ways as you prioritize time with Him.

How Will You Praise Him?

Read Psalm 96 and Psalm 100 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13

¹ O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

² Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

¹² Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

¹³ Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

Psalm 100

¹ Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

² Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

³ Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

⁴ Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

⁵ For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God is worthy of our praise.

Discuss any questions about these Bible passages. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 96 and Psalm 100 as a family. How many different commands to worship does it contain? Highlight them.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- According to Psalm 96:2, how often should we “shew forth his salvation” and worship?
- In Psalm 96:13, when the Lord comes, what will He use to judge His people?
- According to Psalm 100:1, who is called to make a joyful noise?
- What are some things we can know about the Lord from this passage?

This Week's Life Lesson

I will praise the Lord
in many ways.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is worthy of our praise.

These verses do not just ask us to praise and worship. They remind us why the Lord is so worthy of our doing so.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What is your favorite way to worship the Lord?
- What extra time can you set aside this week to practice worship?



PRAYER:

Spend some moments in worship before you enter into prayer as a family. Pray the Lord continually calls you to praise throughout the week.

Fun Facts!

In the Old Testament, several structures were built to worship God. In Genesis, people built altars out of rock to offer God sacrifices. In Exodus, Moses constructed a Tabernacle to perform the sacrifices and to house the Ark of the Covenant, a special box that signified God's presence. The Books of Kings and Chronicles detail how King David's son, Solomon, built a Temple in Jerusalem to permanently house the Ark of the Covenant.

Do we still need these structures to find God's presence? No, in 1 Corinthians 6:19 of the New Testament, Paul explained that when we are filled with the Holy Ghost, our bodies become God's holy temple.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 96 and Psalm 100 as a family. Underline or take turns finding reasons why the Lord is worthy of worship.

Did You Know?

In the Old Testament, a priest entered into the Holy of Holies once per year on the Day of Atonement to offer sacrifices for the sins of God's people. Because of sin's curse, no one else could enter into God's presence.

When Jesus died on the cross, the veil separating the Holy of Holies ripped down the middle (Matthew 27:51). Through His blood, the curse of sin was destroyed. We no longer need to go to a priest. We have direct access to God's presence. He is as close as the mention of His name.



Sing a favorite song from church, or write your own song about the Lord being worthy of worship.



Attach streamers to a ruler or broom handle and dance around your living room. Take some time to have fun while praising God in the dance!



Journal about all the ways the Lord is worthy of worship.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 96 and Psalm 100.

- “O Magnify” by James Wilson
- “Until God Is Praised”
by First Church Worship
- “When I Shout/Testify”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Down, Down, Down”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray together that God continues to show each member of your family ways to worship Him better.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Take turns listing praiseworthy attributes of God, one for each letter of the alphabet.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will praise the Lord in many ways.*

“Everybody’s worshiping something.” Brody couldn’t get this phrase out of his head. His Sunday School teacher said it two days ago and he just couldn’t stop thinking about it.

He understood what she meant. It had never occurred to him, but he got it. All around him he saw people consumed with different things. He saw people with briefcases consumed with money, people with sports jerseys consumed with winning, and people walking out of liquor stores consumed with alcohol.

Then he thought about himself. How he always rushed home to play with his tablet. How he did homework quickly so he could play with his tablet. How he hurried through chores so he could play with his tablet. How he was kind to his sister because if he wasn’t, he would lose his precious tablet. He wondered—did his time with God matter to him as much as the time he got to spend on his tablet? It was a good question. He would think long and hard about the answer.

DISCUSSION TIME

Is there something in your life that might be more important than worshipping God?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Was there a time when you prioritized something above spending time with God? What was it?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What space of time are you spending on other things that might be better served as worship time?



PRAYER:

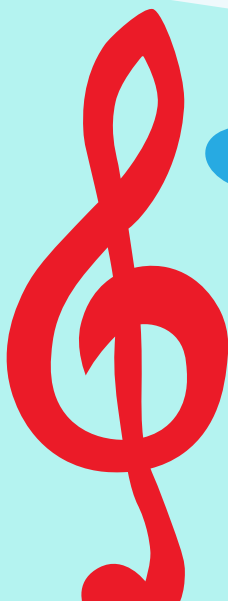
- Kids, pray that God would reveal areas where you are giving more time to other things than to Him.
- Parents, pray that God would show you how to live as an example to your family of praising God.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is building a family playlist. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, memorize key verses from this week's psalms.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Create a worship playlist on iTunes or Spotify, incorporating all your family's favorite songs. Play it loud. Play it often. Take time to pause, listen to, interact with, and experience the presence of God.

If you want to take it a step further, look up key Bible verses that relate to the songs. It will cement your worship and praise with the Word of God.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Here are some great spiritual disciplines to help your family worship the Lord consistently.

- Create a family praise playlist and play it often. (See above.)
- Stop for a “take five” praise break at various intervals throughout the day.
- Keep a running list of things the Lord has done in a special notebook.
- Set a timer for three minutes and see which member of the family can list the most praiseworthy attributes of God during that time.
- Sit in silence and meditate on God’s goodness as a group.
- Break out musical instruments and have a worship moment in your living room.

God is so worthy of our praise, and there are many ways we can practice praising Him!

Whom Shall I Fear?

Read and discuss Psalm 27 below or from your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Psalm 27:1-5, 11-14

- ¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
- ² When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.
- ³ Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.
- ⁴ One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.
- ⁵ For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.
-
- ¹¹ Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.
- ¹² Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.
- ¹³ I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.
- ¹⁴ Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God wants us to turn to Him in troubled times.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 27 as a family. These verses contain one thing David asked of the Lord. Find and highlight that one thing.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Who is our light and salvation?
- How can we be sure we are walking the right path, safe from our enemies?
- What can we place our confidence in in time of trouble?
- If we wait on the Lord, what is promised to us?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God wants us to turn to Him in troubled times.

Everyone has different troubles, and everyone experiences troubles differently. When trouble arises, some people panic, others look to blame someone, some are cool and calm, while others may even faint. How do you respond when troubles arise?

Hopefully you turn to God. God wants us to turn to Him when we are in trouble. Though He is invisible, God is always with us. When we don't know what to do, we should turn to God and we will sense Him guiding us. He will give us courage to face what's in front of us.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- In times of trouble, why do we want to turn to other places instead of turning to God?
- What ways can you be intentional about turning to God this week?



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will always trust God.

PRAYER:

Pray a prayer of purpose as a family, committing to seeking God first in times of crisis.



Fun Facts!

- When something frightens you, your brain releases chemicals like adrenaline that are known as “fight or flight” triggers.
- Fear can be healthy when our body uses it to take action in the face of danger; it can be unhealthy when fear keeps us going about daily life.
- Opossums have a unique way of responding to threats: they pretend to be dead—typically freezing, falling on their side, and curling up.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 27 as a family. In that psalm, underline or take turns finding all the things God promises to be.

Did You Know?

A giant once said to David: “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.” When David says, “The wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell,” he is speaking from experience. He had faith that God would come through again.



Sing “Wait on the Lord” by James Wilson, or write your own song about waiting in trust.



Designate a place in your home to be a safety, and then engage in a game of tag where everyone is “it.” Run to safety to avoid being tagged.



In a journal, write about things you are waiting for from the Lord.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Psalm 27.

- “Psalm 27 | He’s Able”
by Indiana Bible College
- “It Is Finished” by Urshan College

Featured Song

“Power”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray that God’s peace prevails over any possible problem as you and your family practice praise.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Have each member of your family share something that is worrying them, stressing them out, or causing them to fear. For each concern, share a message of hope of God’s protection, provision, and character.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will always trust God.*

Sharon’s new school terrified her. “I just don’t want to start over again, Mom! I will not have anyone to sit with, I don’t know where anything is, and I have 0.0000 friends!”

As Sharon wailed, her mom sat on the edge of the bed and stroked her daughter’s hair. “All of these things are real fears and valid emotions,” her mother said. “You have every right to feel this way, but there’s something else that’s true as well. You are never alone. The Lord is always with you. He goes before you, He stands beside you, and He’s got your back. He will be with you no matter where you go.”

Sharon’s tears lessened as she leaned into the truth. Mom continued, “The Lord is a provider. He provided your father this new job we needed so desperately. He provided us with this beautiful house to live in. He will provide you with people to sit with, and He will help you know where to go in the hallways.”

Sharon still had to face an uncertain future, but she knew her mother was right. The Lord would be with her wherever she went.

DISCUSSION TIME

How did recounting the truth about God change how Sharon felt about the truth of her circumstances?

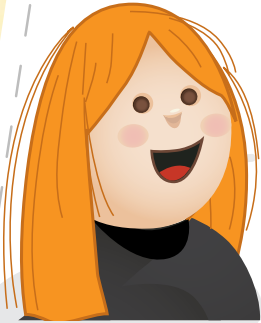
☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
Has there ever been a time recounting the truth about God changed the way you felt about the truth of your circumstances?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What can we do to move the focus off our problems and onto our Savior who can solve them?



PRAYER:

- Children, pray your parents will continue to trust God in all they do.
- Parents, pray your child will remove their focus from the problems around them and fix their gaze on Jesus!

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, try to memorize key verses from this week's psalm.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is making a magic mirror. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project

□ Saturday

Find a large mirror at a thrift store or Dollar General. Using chalk markers, write truths about your family taken from the Bible. If you need help, search “Bible verses about family.”

As a family, incorporate the practice of standing in front of the mirror and reading the words written on it. We should view ourselves, and the circumstances we face in life, through the lens of Scripture. What the Lord says about us is what matters most. He will always come through. That is the ultimate truth.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

“But first, pray” can be found on T-shirts, memes, and coffee cups. It’s an easy slogan to preach but a harder principle to practice. In times of affliction, we are to look to God for help. We should stand upon the truth of His Word as a shield against the fiery darts of the enemy.

Make “But first, pray” part of your family’s spiritual disciplines. Any time you’re feeling rushed, stressed, frustrated, angry, or . . . ask, “Did we remember to pray first?” Then during prayer, try to recall times God helped you through similar experiences in the past. God wants us to turn to Him in troubled times, trusting that He will move on our behalf.

Joseph Dreamed a Dream

Week

31

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 37:2-35 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Out of Jacob's twelve sons, Joseph was his favorite. Jacob gave Joseph a special gift—a beautiful robe—which made his brothers jealous.

One morning, Joseph shared a dream from the night before. “We were tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up while your bundles all bowed before mine.”

His brothers scoffed, “You really think you’ll be our king?” His brothers hated Joseph even more.

On another morning, Joseph shared another dream. “In this dream, the sun, moon, and eleven stars all bowed before me.”

This time his father spoke up. “Do you really think your mother, brothers, and I will bow before you? That’s crazy!” His brothers’ jealousy continued to rage.

Days later, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers. When they saw him, they said, “Let’s kill him and throw him into one of these wells. Then we’ll see what becomes of his dreams.”

Reuben spoke up, “Let’s just throw him into this pit alive.” The brothers agreed with this idea, tearing off Joseph’s robe and throwing him into an empty well.

Then a group of Ishmaelite traders came over the horizon. “Instead of killing Joseph, let’s sell him into slavery,” Judah suggested. His brothers agreed. Joseph was traded for twenty pieces of silver. The Ishmaelites took him to Egypt. Meanwhile the brothers smeared blood on Joseph’s coat and returned to their father, telling him Joseph had been mauled by a wild animal.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God has plans for us that we sometimes do not understand.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 37:2–35 as a family. This week we are learning about trusting God’s plan for our lives.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Have you ever shared a dream with a family member? How did they respond?
- Why do you think Joseph shared his dreams with his brothers?
- How would you respond if a younger sibling shared a dream like this with you?
- Joseph had to be scared and confused. How do you think he stay encouraged?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God has plans for us that we sometimes do not understand.

Have you ever found yourself in prayer asking God why something happened? Have you ever been confused as you were trying to make heads or tails of something that simply didn’t make any sense to you? Trust His plan.

God knows the end before we even experience the beginning of life’s most difficult situation. It can be hard to see where the road is leading us, but we must trust in Him. We can have faith and know that in the end, whether we understand the process or not, God is working in all things.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Can you think of a time in your life where God worked an impossible situation out for your good?
- How can we encourage others to trust in God’s plan, even when they don’t understand why something is happening?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will trust God’s plans
for my life.

PRAYER:

As a family, pray that God would give you patience and understanding as you wait on His plan for your lives.

Fun Facts!



- Here are some fun facts about Egypt, the place Joseph was taken to as a slave.
- Egypt is mentioned over seven hundred times in the Bible.
 - Egyptians believed that moldy bread could help heal infections.
 - Pharaohs of Egypt were often buried in pyramids or secret tombs.
 - A Pharaoh's hair was never to be seen by regular people. He kept his head covered at all times.
 - Ancient Egyptians loved board games. The most popular was called "Senet."
 - King Tut may have died from a hippopotamus bite.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 37:2-35 as a family. Underline or take turns finding actions that Joseph's brothers took.

Did You Know?

Even as he was thrown into slavery, Joseph was able to see God's plan at work. In Genesis 50:20, Joseph said, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." The Bible has many examples where God turned difficult circumstances into His plan to receive glory. In Romans 8:28, Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." If you trust God, in the end He promises to make everything work out.



Sing "Way Maker," or write your own song about trusting God's plan.



Using construction paper and tape, make a coat of many colors.



Journal about a time you trusted God's plan, even though you didn't understand it.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 37:2-35.

- “Have Your Way” by Draylin Young
- “Great Is His Faithfulness” by Charity Gayle
- “Find Rest” by Louisiana All-State Youth Choir

Featured Song

“Walk by Faith”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Let every individual take turns praying over the home. Pray for God’s peace for any situations happening right now.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Before a trip, map out the route you will take. As you travel, let your child direct you along your planned course.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will trust God’s plans for my life.*

I went out to the garage to get my bike and the tire was flat. I was frustrated because I really needed to get to my friend’s house in the next ten minutes. Now it was going to take at least fifteen minutes. Once I added air to my tire, I was on my way.

A moment after I left, I heard sirens and a squad of emergency vehicles coming very fast down my road. I got off to the side and watched as they hurried to an intersection one block ahead. A lady was walking by who had just seen what had happened. She said a car lost control about five minutes earlier and crashed into an electric pole. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

At that moment I realized that if my tire had not been flat, I would have been crossing that intersection at the same time as the accident. There is no way that was a coincidence. God was looking out for me.

DISCUSSION TIME

When bad things happen, if we believe God is in control, how should we react?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
When something happens that you don't understand, how do you still trust God?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Is there anything in your life right now that you are having trouble understanding?



PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to keep the faith and trust in God no matter what happens in life.
- Parents, pray for your children to grow strong every day, trusting in God's plan for their life.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is planning a family trip. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project

□ Saturday

In the morning, meet as a family and write out a plan for the entire day. Determine the places you will go, how long each event will take, and what you will need to bring with you. In your plan, work in a few intentional moments of ministry. Be thorough.

Before embarking on the plan, gather everything you think you might need for your journey. Then as you follow your plan, put a child in charge of executing it.

Note when you deviate from the plan for any reason.

At the end of the day, discuss how we can try to plan everything out, but things will always come along to knock us off track. God can see these things, and He still works them to our good. We need to trust God's plans for our lives.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Parents, as your child goes through hard-to-understand situations, they need to feel safe coming to you. Every night, make it a point to ask about their day. First, talk about what was good about their day. Then ask if anything is bothering them. What can we pray about? Try to find a biblical example of someone who went through a similar situation, and ask, "How can we trust God during this situation?"

While we might not be able to solve all their problems, you can take it to the God who can. While building their faith and trust in God, this time will also draw them closer to you, because they know you care.

Joseph's Ups and Downs

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 39-40 in your family Bible.

Week

32

☐ Sunday

As a servant in Potiphar's house, Joseph did everything with excellence. Soon Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his entire household. Unfortunately, Joseph also caught the eye of Potiphar's wife. "Come stay with me," she beckoned, but Joseph refused.

One day, she clutched his cloak and said, "Come!" Joseph tore himself away, leaving behind his coat, which she claimed as evidence as she cried to her husband, "Look what your most trusted servant tried to do." Potiphar put Joseph in jail.

Even from prison, Joseph did every task with excellence. Soon he was put in charge of all prisoners, which included the Pharaoh's recently-jailed cup bearer and baker.

One night these men each had a dream, which Joseph offered to interpret. The cup bearer started, "In my dream, a grapevine with three branches produced clusters of grapes. I squeezed the juice into a cup and served it to Pharaoh."

Joseph replied, "In three days, you'll return to your position as chief cup bearer. When this happens, please mention me to Pharaoh."

"My turn," the chief baker insisted. "In my dream, three baskets of bread were stacked on my head. Birds were eating from the top basket."

Joseph replied, "Your dream reveals that in three days, you will be executed."

Just as Joseph said, three days later the cup bearer was restored and the chief baker was put to death. The chief cup bearer forgot to mention Joseph to Pharaoh, however.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God is with us in the good times and bad times.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 39–40 as a family. This week we will learn how God is with us in both and good and bad times.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What is the best thing that has happened to you this week? What is the worst thing?
- When bad things happen, is it easy to turn to God for answers?
- How do you think Joseph kept a right attitude after being mistreated so many times?
- Why do you think the cup bearer didn't keep his word about telling Pharaoh?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is with us in the good times and bad times.

Joseph's life, much like our own, was a rollercoaster of ups and downs. In life, every day is filled with high points and low points. No matter how high the ups are and how low the lows get, there is one constant—God is with us.

Hold on and let God be God. If we are faithful, He promises that in the end, we will see how it worked out for our good. Yes, some days are better than others, but God is with us through them all.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What are some ways God shows us He is with us in difficult times?
- How can we show our appreciation to God for being with us at all times?

PRAYER:

Pray together, thanking God for being with us no matter what we are going through.



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will remember that
God is always with me.



Fun Facts!

- Every night, the average person dreams between one to two hours.
- During deep sleep, your brain temporarily paralyzes your muscles, so you don't act out what you are dreaming.
- People born blind do not dream images. They have dreams involving sound, smell, touch, and emotion.
- Your brain is more active during sleep than when you are awake.
- Albert Einstein first thought of the Theory of Relativity during a dream.

Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 39–40 as a family. Underline or take turns finding every mention of Joseph.

Did You Know?

The Bible contains several instances where God's chosen vessels were imprisoned, even though they didn't do anything wrong. In Acts 16, Paul and Silas were thrown in jail for preaching about Jesus. Instead of complaining, they praised God. God responded with a great earthquake. Read the rest of the story in Acts 16:25–34.



Sing "You Are God Alone," or write your own song about God being with you at all times.



Act out the part of the story where the baker and cup bearer ask Joseph to interpret their dreams.



Journal about how God has been with you in both good and bad times.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Genesis 39–40.

- “Gracefully Broken Medley”
by Urshan College
- “We Worship You”
by Atlanta West Pentecostal Church Sanctuary Choir
- “Lord, You Are My Song”
by Charity Gayle

Featured Song

“That’s What Jesus Does”
by Shara McKee



PRAYER:

Pray as a family for faith to know that no matter what happens, God is always there.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

As a family, research what a cup bearer’s job was and discuss it.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will remember that God is always with me.*

“I don’t want to go to Sunday school. It’s a new class, and I’ll be alone,” Tyler said to his mom.

“You’re never alone,” she replied. “God is with you wherever you go. Whenever you feel scared or alone, remember that you have a direct connection to God, and He is with you.”

After taking a deep breath Tyler replied, “I know mom. Thanks for the reminder. It’s just my first day with all new kids and I want it to be OK.”

“You are a great kid, serving an even greater God,” she said as she hugged Tyler. “It wouldn’t surprise me if you had a dozen new friends by the end of the day. Just put God first and know that He is watching over you.”

Sure enough, by the end of class, he had made friends with everyone he talked to. He simply reminded himself throughout the day that God was always with him.

DISCUSSION TIME

How can you remind yourself that God is always with you?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
When you are going through a hard time, how do you remind yourself that God is still with you?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Has God ever given you a dream? What was it?



PRAYER:
Kids and parents, pray that no matter how good or bad situations get in life, you would stand strong and never doubt that God is with you.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is reaching out to someone who is having a tough day. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:
Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.





Family Project

Make plans to show others how God is with us in the good times and bad times. As a family, locate people who may be going through tough times and find a way to show them that God is with them and loves them.

- Buy a hot meal for someone. The person doesn't have to be homeless—everyone likes to be blessed with a free meal.
- Give words of encouragement to anyone who looks sad. Everyone loves a cheerful compliment.
- Send a card or note of encouragement to someone who may be going through a tough season.
- Offer to help around the house or yard of a widow. They will usually enjoy the company as well.

As you minister, comment frequently how God is always with us through good times and bad.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

When God helps your family through a difficult situation, find a way to memorialize the moment. As a family, agree upon a keepsake to help you remember how God comforted and provided throughout the ordeal. Place all of these reminders in one location so they can easily be turned to during future trials.

When you or others need encouragement, prayerfully go through this collection and recount the stories of God's faithfulness. Years down the road, this memorial will become one of your favorite collections because it will testify of God's goodness and power.

Oh, Happy Day

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below or read Matthew 27:57-66 and 28:1-8 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



As Jesus died on the cross, darkness fell across the land. That evening, a rich follower of Jesus named Joseph of Arimathea took possession of Jesus' body. They wrapped Jesus' lifeless corpse in a long, clean sheet and placed it in a new tomb recently carved out of rock. As Mary Magdalene and another Mary watched, a large stone was rolled across the entrance.

The next day, the priests responsible for Jesus' crucifixion went to see Pilate. "Sir, we think Jesus' followers will steal Jesus' body and then tell everyone He has raised from the dead. Will you please seal the tomb?" Pilate agreed to seal the tomb and sent extra guards.

Early on Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and another Mary returned to the tomb to apply spices to Jesus' body. Suddenly a great earthquake erupted as an angel rolled aside the stone that covered the tomb. The angel perched atop the stone door as the guards below fainted. The angel's face shone bright white and his clothing was white as snow.

As the women cowered, the angel declared, "Don't be afraid! I know you seek Jesus who was crucified, but He is not here! He is risen, just as He said. Come look where His body was lying." The women saw that the tomb was indeed empty.

The angel continued, "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead. He will meet you in Galilee. Now, go!"

The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were frightened but also filled with great joy. They rushed to give the disciples the incredible good news. Jesus is alive!

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Jesus lives!

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Matthew 27:57–66 and 28:1–8 as a family. This week we will learn that Jesus is alive.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- How do you think Mary Magdalene felt when she watched the body of Jesus being placed into the tomb?
- Why did the priests care about Jesus' body possibly being stolen from the tomb?
- What would you have done if the angel had told you that Jesus had risen?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus lives!

JESUS LIVES!

To any other man, death would have been the end of their story. Jesus' death on the cross, however, was simply the next chapter in a story still being told two thousand years later. When Jesus rose from the dead, He fulfilled prophecy and permanently changed the trajectory of all people's relationship with God.

Because Jesus claimed ultimate victory over anything that could come against us, we can boldly enter into the presence of God. Knowing that Jesus is alive and working within us, our faith should rise up and we should do incredible things for Him. Because he rose again and lives in us, we have hope for tomorrow and also His power to cope with fear. An old song reminds us, "Life is worth the living, just because He lives!"

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How does Jesus' resurrection impact you today?
- How can you share the good news about Jesus being alive with your friends this week?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I have hope because
Jesus rose from the dead.

PRAYER:

Pray as a family, thanking Jesus for the miracle of the resurrection.



Fun Facts!

- Earthquakes, like the one that happened when the angel rolled the stone from Jesus' empty tomb, are caused by the shifting of the Earth's crust deep underground.
- Earthquakes are measured by seismic waves, and the size is known as the earthquake's magnitude.
- On the measurement scale, an earthquake rated as a 4 would shake your house like when a big truck passes by. Anything above 7 can cause buildings and bridges to collapse.
- The strongest ever recorded earthquake was in Chile in 1960. It was measured at 9.6.
- Earthquakes in the oceans can create giant waves called tsunamis.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Matthew 27:57-66 and 28:1-8 as a family. Underline or take turns finding the words of the angel.

Did You Know?

The Bible mentions several instances of people being raised from the dead. One such instance is recorded in II Kings 13:20-21. After the prophet Elisha had died and was placed in a tomb, some men were looking for a place to bury their friend. They tossed his dead body onto the bones of Elisha and their friend sprang back to life!



Sing "He's Alive," or write your own song about the resurrection of Jesus.



Using dolls or action figures, play out this week's Bible lesson.



Journal about how good it is to know that Jesus lives.

☐ Wednesday

Reflect on how these additional songs relate to Matthew 27:57–66 and 28:1–8.

- “Risen” by Indiana Bible College
- “God of Wonder” by Urshan College

Featured Song

“Hallelujah, King Jesus”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Thank God for the hope that we can have every day because we know He lives.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On your way to church, see who can list the most miracles Jesus performed during His time on earth recorded in the Gospels.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I have hope because Jesus rose from the dead.*

True or False?

This test is too hard. I know I will fail and I will never achieve my goals. FALSE.

I will never lose hope because Jesus rose from the dead. TRUE.

The situation I am in right now is so bad. I don't think things will ever be good again. FALSE.

I will never lose hope because Jesus rose from the dead. TRUE.

They are sick and the doctor even said it's hopeless. I should give up. FALSE.

I will never lose hope because Jesus rose from the dead. TRUE.

As I think back over my life, I can state beyond the shadow of a doubt that I am blessed. When I would start to think these false thoughts, I am reminded about the sacrifice Jesus made for me on that cross. Then I am reminded that even death itself could not hold Him down. On the third day, He rose in victory and I will never lose hope. TRUE, TRUE, TRUE!

DISCUSSION TIME

How does knowing that Jesus is alive give you hope?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
When did you first understand the importance of Jesus rising from the dead?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How does the thought that Jesus is alive impact your life today? Are you seeking His Holy Spirit to guide you?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to have a heart filled with hope every day because they know that Jesus rose from the dead.
- Parents, pray that your children would gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the resurrection of Jesus.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

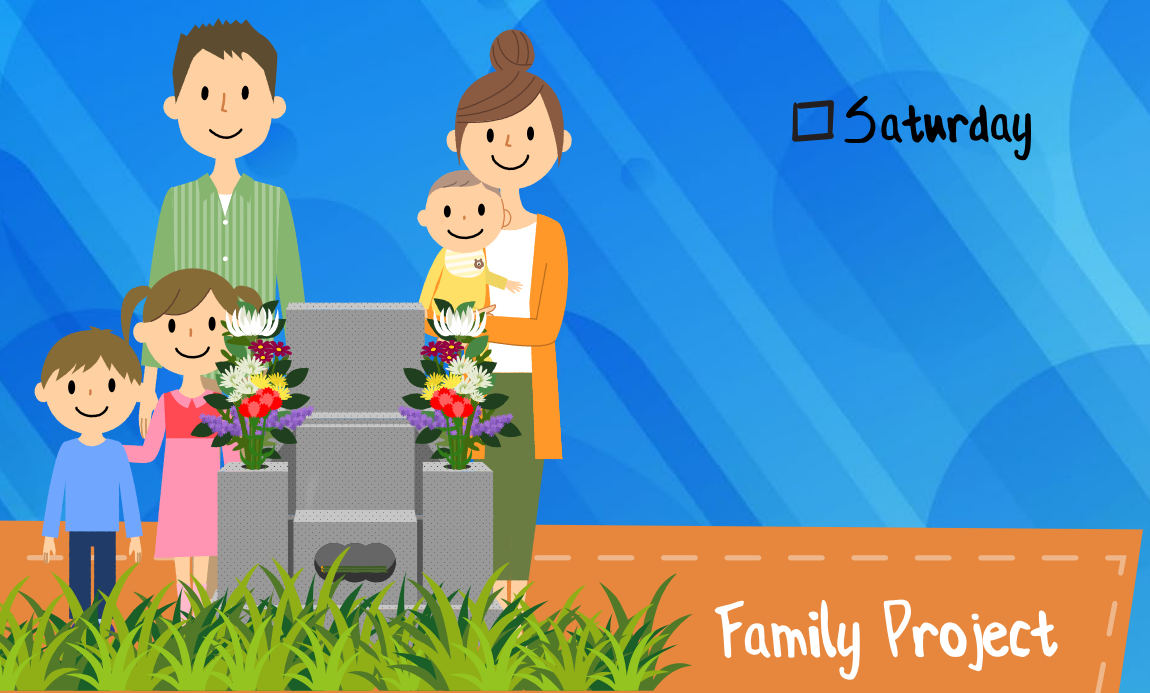
Tomorrow's project is about paying respects to the dead. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday



Family Project

During the day, visit a familiar graveyard, perhaps where friends or family members are buried. As you pay respects, take time to talk about the meaning of Jesus' resurrection. By believing in His resurrection, our resurrection becomes possible, which removes the sting of death.

Read Bible verses about the church's resurrection, such as John 11:25, Romans 6:5 and 8:11, I Corinthians 6:14, and I Thessalonians 4:13-17. Recognize that while death is one of life's great mysteries, God's Holy Spirit should give us comfort. Through His Spirit, Jesus lives inside of us so we can have faith beyond death to live eternally with Him.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Jesus is alive! Outside of Easter, as we live out this message year round, this truth should become evident to everyone we meet. Look for ways to remind your kids God is with you and His Spirit is living inside of you. He is alive, guiding and comforting us through life in this process called discipleship. He is alive, and all of His promises found in the Bible are for us. He is alive, and He wants us to show the whole world how He is alive in us.

Pharaoh's Dream

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 41:1-45 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Joseph successfully interpreted the chief cup bearer's dream in jail. He hoped the cup bearer would mention his plight to Pharaoh, but that didn't happen. As a prisoner, Joseph continued to trust God by doing every task with excellence.

Two years later, Pharaoh had two dreams. In the first dream, he stood along the Nile River. Seven healthy cows emerged from the river, only to be eaten by seven scrawny cows.

In the second dream, seven plump heads of grain were swallowed by seven shriveled heads of grain. When Pharaoh awoke, he was disturbed. He called every magician and wise man to interpret the dreams, but nobody could.

That's when the chief cup bearer remembered Joseph. "My Lord, when I was in prison, a man there could interpret dreams." Pharaoh sent for Joseph at once.

Pharaoh asked Joseph, "Can you interpret my dreams?"

Joseph shrugged, "No, I cannot, but I have a God who can!"

After Pharaoh explained his dreams, Joseph explained, "Both of your dreams have the same meaning. My God is warning you that Egypt is about to have seven years of prosperity, but after that, Egypt will go through seven years of famine. I suggest you find someone who can store up crops during the good years so Egypt can have food during the famine."

"Great idea," Pharaoh exclaimed. "You're the man!" On the spot, Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of this new project. Joseph was made second-in-command, only answering to Pharaoh.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: The Lord directs our steps.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 41:1-45 as a family. This week we will be learning about the Lord directing our steps.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Have you ever felt like giving up? What made you feel that way?
- When you go through hard times, do you feel like God is with you?
- How would you have reacted when asked for a favor by Pharaoh after being imprisoned for years?
- How did Joseph know the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams?
- How do you think Joseph felt when Pharaoh placed him as second-in-command over Egypt?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

The Lord directs our steps.

Sold into slavery by his brothers and imprisoned for something he didn't do, it would have been easy for Joseph to simply give up. He stayed faithful and trusted in God and eventually became the second highest in power in Egypt. If God can do that for Joseph, you better believe He can do it for you.

God knows how much we can bear and wants what is best for us. Instead of leaning to our own thoughts and desires, invite God to be with you in your difficult times. With patience, let Him direct your steps, and let Him lead you to a better tomorrow.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What does it look like when we trust God to lead us?
- How can we share with our friends that the Lord is directing our steps?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will trust God
to lead me.

PRAYER:

Pray that God would give you the faith to trust in Him and let Him direct your steps.



Fun Facts!

- Pharaohs were both the political and religious leaders of Egypt.
- Some believe the Pharaoh Akhenaten was influenced by Judaism when he closed Egypt's temples and professed his belief that there was only one god.
- Tutankhamun's tomb (a.k.a. King Tut) is the only royal burial site discovered by recent archaeologists where grave robbers haven't stolen all of the treasures.
- As a female Pharaoh, Hatshepsut still wore the crown and the ceremonial beard of her male counterparts.
- Ramses II built more statues and monuments than any other Egyptian Pharaoh.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 41:1–45 as a family.
Underline or take turns finding references to dreams.

Did You Know?

Joseph's father Jacob likely wasn't surprised by his son's propensity to dream and interpret dreams. Jacob had a powerful dream that changed his life (Genesis 28:10–15). God confirmed that through him, He would fulfil the promise made to his grandfather and father, Abraham and Isaac.



Sing a song about walking by faith, or write your own song about the Lord leading every step you take.



Play Follow the Leader.



Journal about a difficult time where you feel the Lord was directing your steps.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 41:1-45.

- “The Isaiah Song” by Urshan College
- “You Found Me”
by Ed Williams and James Wilson
- “When I Speak Your Name”
by Indiana Bible College

Featured Song

“Walk by Faith”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray that God would take control of your life and personally direct your steps.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Keep track of how many steps it takes to go from one location in your home to another. Try to guess before and see who comes closest.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will trust God to lead me.*

At the park, as I was playing with some friends, I noticed Jessica. She was playing with us, but it didn't look like she was having any fun. Inside my head, I heard a little voice tell me to encourage her. I looked around. Who was talking to me? Was that God? My heart raced. I thought about how awkward it would be. I had never really talked to Jessica before. I didn't know what to say. I didn't want to go to her.

The little voice said it again. *All right, God*, I thought to myself, *I will trust you to lead me.* To break the ice, I went over and told her, “I love those shoes! They are so cute.”

She looked at me and for the first time that day, she smiled. “Thanks,” she said. “I needed someone to be my friend.” She went on to tell me some things that were going on at home, and by the end of the day, we became friends.

I have learned that it doesn't matter what I want to do, if God is telling me to do something, I am going to trust Him and let Him lead me.

DISCUSSION TIME

Has God ever tried to lead you to talk with or encourage someone?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever gone through a difficult time where you looked back and realized God was with you the entire time?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Is there anything you are struggling to trust God with right now?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray that your parents would trust God unconditionally to lead their lives.
- Parents, pray that your children would be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a Prayer Walk. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project

□ Saturday

Go on an extended family prayer walk with the goal of letting God guide your steps. Before you go, pray about the route you will take and the things you will need to bring with you. Look for a Bible verse to use as a theme for the walk, such as Psalm 143:10, "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness."

During the walk, keep your verse in mind, looking for things in God's creation to be thankful for. With each step, seek God's guidance, changing your route as necessary. Look for people to bless along the way. Bring along a trash bag to pick up trash. Let God use your walk to bless your community.

As you finish your walk, take time as a family to reflect on God's goodness. Thank Him for directing your steps, both now and in the future.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Trusting God to lead your family doesn't mean sitting back until the perfect scenarios present themselves. God expects His people to take action. When you don't know what to do, do the next right thing. Become that family known for blessing and encouraging others.

As a family, set God-given goals, both short and long term. Frequently and prayerfully discuss the next steps your family needs to take to accomplish those goals. Be transparent with each other and humble enough to recognize when you need to alter your course to get on the path God is asking you to follow.

Turning Evil into Good



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 45:1-28; 46:26-34; 47:27-31; and 50:15-21 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

The famine hit the land hard, but Egypt was ready because Pharaoh had put Joseph in charge. When people needed food from Egypt's storehouses, they came to Joseph.

Meanwhile, Joseph's father, Jacob—who had no idea Joseph was still alive—sent his ten sons to Egypt in search of food. They didn't recognize Joseph because he was decked out in full Egyptian garb. For months, Joseph tricked his brothers, calling them spies and then framing them so it looked like they were thieves. They thought he was just an Egyptian dignitary giving them a hard time, not the brother they had sold into slavery many years ago.

As his final trick, Joseph framed the youngest brother, Benjamin, with a silver cup, threatening slavery to the one who was caught with it. In desperation, Judah begged for Benjamin's freedom.

Joseph couldn't hold his emotions any longer. In tears, he revealed his true identity. "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" His brothers were speechless.

Joseph continued, "Don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God, not you, who sent me here so I could save everyone. God has put me in charge over Egypt. He has turned your evil into something good."

When Jacob found out his son was alive, he was overwhelmed with joy. Pharaoh invited Jacob and his family to move to Egypt to survive the famine. They all moved to an area on the outskirts of Egypt called Goshen where they flourished.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God knows how to take something bad and turn it into something good.

Discuss any questions about these Bible events. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 45:1-28; 46:26-34; 47:27-31; and 50:15-21 as a family. This week we are learning how God can turn things meant for bad into good.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What would you do if you wanted to disguise yourself so your family couldn't recognize you?
- If you were in Joseph's situation, would you have been able to keep the secret of your identity?
- How do you think Joseph felt the first time he saw his brothers in Egypt?
- How do you think Jacob felt when he learned what his sons had done and that Joseph was alive?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God knows how to take something bad and turn it into something good.

A testimony is our story that tells something special God has done. Our testimonies bring God glory. A powerful testimony indicates that God has brought someone through a very difficult situation. The darker the situation, the better the testimony. People who've had bad things happen to them or did bad things themselves before they gave their life to God are often effective at helping other people know Jesus. When people hear a person's testimony, it encourages them and lets them know that there is hope for them too.

If you think something you have gone through disqualifies you from being an effective witness for Christ, you are mistaken. Let God use your testimony to minister to someone else who desperately needs to hear it.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What are some ways God can turn a bad situation into a good one?
- Do you have a testimony? What is it?

This Week's Life Lesson

I will let God take my past and make something beautiful out of it.

PRAYER:

Thank God for taking things that are bad and using them for good.



Joseph used silos to store Egypt's grain as the nation prepared for the seven-year famine.

- A silo is a bulk storage building typically used on farms to store grain and other materials.
- One of the first recorded uses of a silo is in this Bible story.
- Without ventilation, a silo can become toxic due to methane gas produced by fermenting materials. Today's tower silos typically have ventilation in place.
- The Swissmill Tower in Switzerland is the tallest silo in the world. It is 387 feet tall and can hold over seventy thousand pounds of grain.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 45:1-28; 46:26-34; 47:27-31; and 50:15-21 as a family. Underline or take turns finding references to Joseph's brothers.

Did You Know?

God finds pleasure in turning bad people into good ones. Look at Paul in the New Testament. When he was younger, people recognized him as an absolute hater of Christians—someone who literally persecuted and even killed those who followed the teachings of Jesus. After his transformation (Acts 9:1-31), he ended up becoming one of the most influential men in the entire Bible!



Sing "See a Victory" (sung at BOTT 2020), or write your own song about God taking something bad and turning it for good.



See who can "turn around" the most times before they get too dizzy to stand up straight.



Journal about a time where God worked something for your good that you didn't think was possible.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 45:1–28; 46:26–34; 47:27–31; and 50:15–21.

- “Because of Love”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Midnight” by Bryan Pound
- “BOTT 2020 | See a Victory”

Featured Song

“Because You Love Me”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

As a family, pray that God would take anything bad and turn it for His good.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

When traveling in the car, use mirrors to look behind you. Discuss how you have to look forward if you want to get safely to your destination.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will let God take my past and make something beautiful out of it.*

Years ago, I had made it my mission to do all the things I knew I shouldn't do. If someone warned me that a place was dangerous, I went out of my way to go there. If someone told me not to do something, I always figured out a way to do it. God was irrelevant to me. I was only trying to please myself. After years of living this way, I found myself in a horrible place—surrounded by bad people, addicted to bad habits, and always depressed and feeling hopeless.

Then God reached down and showed me a new way to live. When I turned my life to God, He forgave me. After being baptized in Jesus' name, I never wanted to do those bad things again. Even when I slipped up, He forgave me again and encouraged me to keep living for Him.

Last year, a friend from my early days visited my church. At first, he didn't recognize me. I shared my testimony and explained that if God could do it for me, He could do it for him. After a few Bible studies, my friend was baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost.

It is amazing how God can take our mistakes from the past and turn them into something beautiful.

DISCUSSION TIME

How will you share your testimony with others around you?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Is there anything in your past that God has turned into something beautiful?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What are some things you are experiencing that you need God to help with?



PRAYER:
Kids and parents, pray together that God would make beautiful anything from your past or present that needs His healing touch.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is baking a cake. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday



Family Project

Prayerfully decide upon a person or family who might enjoy being blessed by a cake. Look for someone who may be going through a hard time. Set out all of the ingredients for a basic cake recipe. Prepare to make two cakes, one for you and one for your designated person.

Discover how, on their own, a mouthful of sugar, flour, butter, or eggs taste bad, but when they are all mixed and baked properly, they create a delicious cake. Mix, bake, and ice the cakes. Then deliver the cake to your recipient, expecting to spend some time and bless them with your company.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Do you have a family journal? Today's technology makes it easy to chronicle your family's day-to-day activities. Set intentional times throughout the week to sit down for ten minutes as a family and write about recent events. If your children are younger, it can be an illustrated journal with pictures of God's handiwork in your lives. Include the highs and the lows. Store the journal in a special place and make it a regular habit to revisit it as a reminder of the amazing things God does for us.

A Way out of the Mess

Week

36

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Genesis 3:1-7 and Romans 5:17-19 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Genesis 3:1-7 (paraphrased)

After making Adam and Eve, God placed them in the beautiful Garden of Eden with one rule: "You can eat from any tree except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil."

One day, the shrewd serpent slithered up to Eve and hissed, "Did God say you could eat from any tree in the garden?"

"Every tree except that one," Eve replied, pointing at the forbidden tree. "Fruit from that tree will kill us."

"You won't die," the serpent responded. "God knows the fruit from that tree will open your eyes. You'll be as wise as Him."

Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the fruit. At that moment their eyes were opened. As punishment, God kicked them out of the Garden of Eden, but from that point in history, God had a plan to restore relationship with His creation—Jesus.

Romans 5:17-19 (King James Version)

¹⁷ (For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

¹⁸ Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God has a plan to save us from sin.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Genesis 3:1-7 and Romans 5:17-19. In the Genesis text, look for the first untrue statement. (hint: Eve said it.)

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Are you a leader or a follower?
- Does it matter who you have conversations with?
- Did Adam and Eve's choices impact anyone else but them?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God has a plan to save us from sin.

According to Romans 3:23, everyone is a sinner. Your friends, your parents, your pastor, your teachers, everyone you follow on social media, and you—we are all sinners. No exceptions. Every person, no matter how important or unimportant, will stand before God's Judgment Seat at the end of their life. When we do, God will reveal the answer to one simple question: "Are your sins covered by the blood?" If yes, we will receive eternal life.

Through Adam and Eve, all humans inherit the curse of sin, but thankfully, God has had a plan in place from the beginning to save us from this curse. God loves us so much that He came to us in human form as Jesus to create for us the path to eternal life. All we have to do is follow His plan.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

While Adam introduced the curse of sin, what is God's plan to save us?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will thank Jesus
for saving me from
the curse of sin.

PRAYER:

Pray that we will understand the love Jesus has for us. He loves us so much, as soon as sin entered the world, He had a plan to save us from it.





Fun Facts!

The Garden of Eden must have been an incredible place. Here are a few fun details about gardens and fruit:

- Tomatoes are the most popular fruit in the world.
- Eggplants and potatoes are from the same family.
- Plants respond to sound.
- Many of your most common fruits are part of the rose family.
- An average-size tree can make over 170,000 pencils.

☐ Tuesday

Read or review Genesis 3:1-7 and Romans 5:17-19 as a family. Locate the first time sin entered the world.

Did You Know?

God gave Adam and Eve full access to everything in the garden but one single tree. That tree was there to remind them that obeying God is a choice. God doesn't make us like robots and force us to obey Him. He loves us so much He gives us a choice. We must choose if we want to obey Him.



Sing "Jesus Loves Me," or write your own song about how much He loves us.



Using fruit you have at home, create a dish, bake a dessert, or just slice it up and share.



Read Romans 5:17-19 and then write about how it applies to you.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Genesis 3:1-7 and Romans 5:17-19.

- “Love Me Anyway”
by James Wilson
- “Because of Jesus”
by Mark Condon
- “Gracefully Broken”
by Urshan College

Featured Song

“Thank You, Jesus (Genesis)”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray for your pastor today that God will help him to share God’s plan in your city in an effective way. Pray that you can help your pastor by helping share God’s plan too.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

A *plan* is defined as “a detailed proposal for doing something.” Have the kids plan out that evening’s bedtime snack.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will thank Jesus for saving me from the curse of sin.*

I knew the car was low on gas, so I planned on filling it up in the morning. Unfortunately, I ran out the door late for work. I knew I should stop, but I told myself it should be fine—the gas gauge is probably just super sensitive. Besides, my friend drives with the gas light on all the time.

Then it happened. The car started chugging. The next nearest gas station was ten miles away. I knew I’d messed up.

I pulled off to the side of the road and put my flashers on. I called my Dad, who lives in another state. He’s always told me not to let the car get low on gas. I knew he would be disappointed, but I didn’t know who else to call.

He was disappointed, but he told me that he’d bought a plan from AAA when he first gave me the keys. He knew that I might mess up and wanted to have a plan in place to save me if something happened. I was so glad my father had a plan.

DISCUSSION TIME

How does God help us when we make a mess in our life?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Has God ever come to your rescue? What happened? How did you feel?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
How do you thank Jesus when He shows you He cares?



PRAYER:

- Plead the blood of Jesus over every sin. Thank God for your understanding of this important truth from God.
- Pray that you will know when the enemy is trying to trick you.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a rescue mission. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

Family Project Saturday

Jesus' plan to save us from our sin rescues us from all the bad things we've done. As a family, create a plan to each rescue something. Ideas could be:

- Rescue a jar from the trash to use in a craft.
- Rescue some veggies from going bad by making a salad.
- Volunteer at a rescue shelter.
- Rescue your elderly neighbors from having to clean up their own yard.
- Rescue a friend or neighbor by telling them about God's plan of salvation.

Rescuing shows that you care, and Jesus sure does care about you.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

How many sunsets has God painted that we didn't notice? How many love notes has He tried to slip us, but we didn't see them? I wonder if He knows how thankful we are that He has a plan to save us from sin.

One way to show thankfulness is by making it a habit to express appreciation in everything, big and small, on a regular basis. Make it a part of your family's routine to thank God together. Choose at least one thing you're thankful for and say it out loud together each day.

Repentance Is Preached



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below or read Matthew 3:1-11; Mark 1:1-5; Mark 2:17; and Acts 2:38 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Matthew 3:1-11 and Mark 1:1-5 (paraphrased)

John the Baptist had a special job—to prepare the hearts of the people for the coming Messiah, Jesus. John's ways were a little odd—his clothes were made of camel skin and he ate locusts dipped in honey. More important, people from all over Judea came to the banks of the Jordan River to hear him preach.

“Repent!” John would preach. “Repent of your sins and turn to God. Being a Jew does not bring you salvation. God's axe is poised and ready to chop down any tree who is not bearing good fruit. Repent and be baptized in water, because someone is coming who is greater than I am. He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire!”

As John preached, people who repented of their sins were immediately baptized by John in the river. John was showing the importance of repentance in God's plan of salvation.

Mark 2:17 (King James Version)

When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Acts 2:38 (King James Version)

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's plan requires us to repent.

Discuss any questions about these Bible passages. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Matthew 3:1-11; Mark 1:1-5; Mark 2:17; and Acts 2:38 as a family. As you read, count how many times the word “repent” is mentioned.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What are some sins common to people your age?
- Is it easier to see the sins of other people or your own sins?
- What does it mean to *repent*?
- If you are a good person, do you still need to *repent*?
- What does repenting do?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's plan requires us to repent.

To *repent* means to express sincere regret about sin or doing wrong and to turn away from it. Before you can repent, you must first realize you have sinned, so what is sin? Sin is any thought, action, speech, or attitude that goes against God and His ways. At first it may feel good to us, or look good to us, or make us feel special (1 John 2:16), but sin always hurts us and people around us (Romans 6:23). When Eve saw the forbidden fruit in the Garden, she “saw that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes), and a tree to be desired to make one wise (pride of life)” (Genesis 3:6). That’s when Eve introduced the curse of sin to humanity.

Do you have sin in your life? Sin separates us from God. Take time to search your heart for sin, and then repent.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

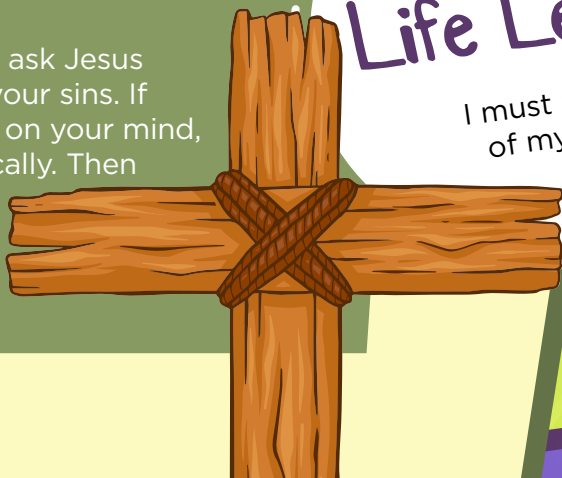
In these passages, who were the three people that preached repentance? (John, Jesus, and Peter)

PRAYER:

In your own heart, ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins. If there’s something on your mind, mention it specifically. Then begin to thank Jesus, knowing that you are forgiven.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I must repent
of my sins.





Fun Facts!

- *Locust* is the common name for short horned grasshoppers.
- Locusts are edible insects and are considered a delicacy in many countries.
- They can be fried, smoked, or dried and then eaten.
- Locusts normally live in solitude and avoid contact with each other.
- A “swarm” of locusts looks like a big, black cloud and can stretch over hundreds of square miles with billions of hungry insects ready to eat everything in sight.
- In the Old Testament, the Book of Joel was written after a plague of locusts had mutilated Israel’s crops. Joel prophesied that God had sent the swarm to punish the people so they would repent of their sins.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Matthew 3:1-11; Mark 1:1-5; Mark 2:17; and Acts 2:38 as a family. Underline any time *repentance* and *baptism* are mentioned.

Did You Know?

In Mark 2:15-17, Jesus’ followers were criticized for eating with sinners. When Jesus heard it, He replied, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.” Jesus was saying, “Of course I’m sitting with sinners! That’s the whole reason I was born.” Jesus came to show us that we can repent and be made whole again.



Sing “I’m so Glad that The Lord Saved Me,” or write your own song about being thankful for a chance to repent.



Sin hardens our heart. Repentance softens it. Collect hard and soft items and put them in a bag. Take turns reaching inside and guessing what each item is.



Journal a written prayer asking Jesus to forgive you for your sins. Thank Him for making your heart soft again.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Matthew 3:1-11; Mark 1:1-5; Mark 2:17; and Acts 2:38.

- “That’s What Jesus Does”
by Shara McKee
- “Wait on the Lord”
by James Wilson
- “Prodigal”
by Ryan Trimble

Featured Song

“Nothing but the Blood”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray for God to search your heart and show you if there’s anything not good in there. Then repent and thank Him for forgiveness.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

As you drive in the car, pay attention to billboards and signs trying to make people give in to temptation. Discuss how we should respond to temptation.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I must repent of my sins.*

I wanted to make my grandma’s cake recipe for my little brother. Gathering the ingredients was easy, except one—the flour! I searched ten minutes, looking through every cupboard.

Then my older sister chimed in, “You can’t make a cake without flour. It’s the main ingredient!”

“Challenge accepted,” I snapped back. I knew it would be tricky, but I was bored, and my baby brother wanted cake. I was determined to give him cake, one way or another. I spent the whole afternoon trying all kinds of things—extra sugar, extra eggs, and even using quinoa! Let’s be honest. I was wasting all kinds of things and making a huge mess trying to do it my way. Turns out my sister was right. I couldn’t make a cake without flour.

Good thing my brother is only four years old and didn’t care that I gave him a granola bar instead. Still, I guess when the recipe calls for flour, it really means it. Some plans you just have to follow if you want good results!

DISCUSSION TIME

Repentance is a “key ingredient” in God’s plan to save us from the curse of sin. Can we be saved without it?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
What's the difference between repenting and just saying that you're sorry?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
As you've learned about repentance this week, have you found it easy to repent of your sins? What has been hard about repenting? How has God blessed you this week after repenting?



PRAYER:

- Pray for a heart that wants to please God.
- Pray that you will be able to teach others about God's plan so that they can repent and be forgiven.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is cleaning. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell John the Baptist's message of repentance in your own words.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Select a certain area of the house that is particularly cluttered and make a determined effort to clean it out as a family. Work together to determine what can stay and what needs to be discarded. With each task, take time to notice the “before and after.” Notice the dirt and dust on the rag and dump out the vacuum together.

Did you realize this area had that much filth? Imagine repenting as letting Jesus clean our hearts to get rid of all the dirty sin, guilt, and shame. We don't realize how dirty something is until we clean it. When things are all clean, it just feels better. It's even truer with our hearts when we repent and let Jesus in to clean it.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

As a family, be constant encouragers, always looking to lift each other's spirits. When family members disagree, sometimes they may try to bring out “dirty laundry” from someone's past to win an argument. Shame is a tool of the enemy to keep us from feeling forgiven. Shaming indicates a selfish motive by someone looking for a shortcut to a desired goal. God does not want His families to resort to shame. Simply put, if it's under the blood, it should not be brought up by the family. In God's plan, when we repent of our sins, Micah 7:19 says they are cast into “the depths of the sea” and forever forgotten. When the enemy tries to bring shame, shut it down with God's Word and encourage yourself that God has forgiven you.



Philip Baptizes the Ethiopian



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16; and Acts 8:26-39 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Matthew 18:18-19 (King James Version)

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Mark 16:15-16 (King James Version)

¹⁵ And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

¹⁶ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Acts 8:26-39 (paraphrased)

An angel of the Lord told Philip to walk south down a desert road. As he walked, he came across an important man from Ethiopia parked in his carriage. The man had a scroll containing the Book of Isaiah and he was trying to read it aloud. The Holy Ghost told Philip to walk up and ask, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

The man replied, "How can I unless someone teaches me? Can you teach me?"

Philip entered the carriage, and as they rode, he described how this passage from Isaiah was talking about Jesus. Philip went on to explain how believers in Jesus need to be baptized in His name.

"Look!" the man exclaimed. "There's some water! I can be baptized!" The carriage stopped and Philip baptized the man in Jesus' name. The man returned to Ethiopia rejoicing.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's plan requires us to be baptized in Jesus' name.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Matthew 28:18-19, Mark 16:15-16, and Acts 8:26-39. Underline any mentions of baptism.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Have you ever felt confused by a Bible passage? Who taught you to understand it?
- Should you expect to be able to read the Bible and understand everything on your own? Who can help you understand what you read?
- How important is it to obey God's Word exactly? Why?
- In Matthew 28:18-19, how does it say to get baptized?
- According to Mark 16:15-16, what is the purpose of baptism?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's plan requires us to be baptized in Jesus' name.

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commanded His followers to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Who is the Father? the Son? the Holy Ghost? In what "name" was Jesus telling them to baptize?

The Book of Acts reveals the answer. Without exception, Jesus' disciples baptized in the name of Jesus. (See Acts 2:38, 8:12, 10:48, 19:5, and 22:16.) What does this say about Jesus? In Jesus, we find the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. (See Colossians 2:9.) To find God, look no further than Jesus: "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What do these Bible passages say we need to do to be saved?
- Why is baptism an important part of God's plan?

PRAYER:

Ask God to help the person next to you understand the Scriptures and to embrace His plan for us to be baptized in Jesus' name.



This Week's
Life Lesson

*I must be baptized
in Jesus' name.*



This week's lesson explores when Philip baptized a man from Ethiopia. Ethiopia is located in the continent of Africa. Today it is home to over 111 million people and over eighty different languages. It is said that Ethiopia was the birthplace of coffee, and it has its own unique calendar (with thirteen months) and clock system. Certain species of wolves and baboons are found only in this special nation.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Matthew 28:18–19, Mark 16:15–16, and Acts 8:26–39 as a family. Look for the words *teach*, *baptize*, and *believe*.

Did You Know?

The word “baptism” is a transliteration of the Greek work *baptizo*, which means to immerse or plunge. Today, *baptism* is sometimes used to describe a sprinkling or water being poured over the head, but to the New Testament church, baptism meant to fully submerge under the water, which is why the eunuch “came up out of the water.”



Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus,” or write your own song about following Jesus.



Gather some dolls or toy figures, fill a bowl full with water, and practice baptizing your “friends” in Jesus’ name!



Journal how you (will) feel when your sins are washed away as you are baptized in Jesus’ name.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to this week's Bible passages.

- "Cleansed" by Charity Gayle
- "New Name Written Down in Glory" by Charity Gayle
- "Water Grave" by Mickey Mangun

Featured Song

"Something Happens"
by James Wilson



PRAYER:

Pray together for God to speak to each family member about the blessing of following His plan.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

If the church baptistery wasn't available, where else in your town could someone get baptized? As you travel in the car, look for bodies of water.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I must be baptized in Jesus' name.*

Mark was so desperate to get away from his family heritage that he decided to move out on his own. As he met new friends, he told them his last name was "Smith." If they knew he was "a MacDonald," they would treat him differently, recognizing who his father was.

Several months into his newfound freedom, Mark was in a horrible car accident. An ambulance rushed him to the hospital. When he started to wake up, he wondered if they were treating him as a Smith or a MacDonald. Then the thought hit him, *How am I going to pay for all of this?!*

That's when he heard his dad talking to the doctors. With mixed emotions, Mark realized there may be benefits to being "a MacDonald" that he hadn't considered. As a MacDonald, his hospital debt was being paid. Being covered by his father's name gave him what he needed to be saved—literally.


DISCUSSION TIME

How does being baptized in Jesus' name pay our debt and save us?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you been baptized?
What was it like?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Do you want to get baptized? What questions do you have about it?

PRAYER:

Pray together that:

- Your hearts will be open to God's plan.
- You will understand God's plan.
- You will feel the hope that comes with knowing God has given us a path to eternal life with Him.



TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is baptism awareness. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell Acts 8:26-39 in your own words. Role-play how you will tell your friends about baptism in Jesus' name.

Family Project

☐ Saturday

If any family members have not yet been baptized, hopefully this week's devotions have helped them make up their mind to obey God's Word. If any have decided to get baptized on the coming Sunday, use Saturday to prepare for the event.

- Contact your pastoral staff and let them know of your intentions to be baptized.
- Continue to study the Bible regarding baptism.
- Invite friends and family members to attend this life-changing event.
- Prayerfully search your heart for areas where you need to repent.

If everyone in your family is already baptized in Jesus' name, go through a ride-through car wash and discuss how thankful you are to have your sins covered by the blood of Jesus.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Baptism is a foundational part of our lifelong discipleship journey. The Holy Ghost prompted Philip to ask the Ethiopian, "Do you understand what you are reading?" When the man said no, Philip was ready to give him a Bible study. Similarly, your kids will have questions about baptism; be prepared to talk with them about this significant building block of their spiritual lives.

Additionally, as Apostolics, we are defined by our baptism. When we are filled with God's Spirit, He will send us to friends and family members to share this distinction. Does your family understand God's plan of salvation well enough to give a Bible study? Be ready. Have tracts and studies on hand, and always make yourself available to answer questions others may have.

The Promise of the Holy Ghost

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below,
or read Acts 1:3-15 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Acts 1:3-15 (paraphrased)

They crucified Jesus on the Passover. For three days His dead body lay in a tomb. Then He came back to life!

For forty days after His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His followers to teach about the Kingdom of God: “Don’t leave Jerusalem until you receive the Promise of the Father. John baptized with water, but you will receive the Holy Ghost.” His followers heard Him, but didn’t quite understand.

One day on the Mount of Olives, they impatiently asked, “As king of the Jews, when are you going rule over Israel?”

He replied, “That’s not for you to know right now. It’s more important for you to be filled with the Holy Ghost. By the power of the Holy Spirit, you will be my witnesses to the entire world.”

Then Jesus ascended into the air. His disciples watched Him go up, up, up into a cloud. As they gawked skyward, two white-robed men stood among them saying, “Why are you standing here staring into the sky? Jesus has gone into Heaven, and one day He will return just as you saw Him go.”

Then the disciples remembered Jesus’ teaching, “Don’t leave Jerusalem until you receive the Promise of the Father.” One hundred twenty of Jesus’ closest followers returned to the city, gathering day and night for prayer in an upper room. For seven long days, they petitioned God to send the Promise of the Father.

Fifty days after Jesus was crucified—on the Day of Pentecost—that promise would arrive.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God’s plan requires us to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Acts 1:3-15 as a family. Find and underline the word promise. This week we are learning about the week leading up to the Day of Pentecost.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Has anyone ever made you a promise? What did they promise? Did you ever receive your promise?
- Do you believe God's promises are for you? Why or why not?
- How would you feel if you were there when Jesus ascended into the sky and disappeared?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's plan requires us to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Think about everything Jesus' disciples witnessed.

- They watched as their leader got tried, convicted, and crucified.
- Next they saw His dead body laid in a tomb, but then He reappeared to them.
- For forty more days, they were able to hear Him personally give further instruction.
- Finally, they watched Him rise into the heavens.

If anyone was qualified to tell the world about Jesus, it was them, right? "But wait!" Jesus said, "You're not ready to be My witnesses until you receive the promise of the Father." Head knowledge alone doesn't qualify us to be His messengers; you've got to have the Holy Ghost.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How do you think the disciples felt walking back to Jerusalem after watching Jesus ascend?
- Do you think the Holy Ghost is necessary to be Christ's witness?

PRAYER:

Pray as a family that each member would be filled with the Holy Ghost and allow the Holy Ghost to work in your lives.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will pray to be filled
with the Holy Ghost.



Fun Facts!

The Mount of Olives (a.k.a. Mount Olivet) is where Jesus ascended into Heaven. While its name came from the olive groves that once covered its slopes, from the time of King David (1000 BC) it served as a Jewish cemetery, holding approximately 150,000 graves. Jesus probably enjoyed praying there because it was over 250 feet higher than the Temple Mount and offered an incredible view of the Temple. When Jesus returns, Zechariah 14:4 reveals that the Mount of Olives will split in two to become a wide valley.



□ Tuesday

Read or review Acts 1:3-15 as a family. Find and highlight Jesus' words to His disciples.



Sing "I've Got the Holy Ghost," or write your own song about receiving the Holy Ghost.



Stand empty cups in a cake pan. Pour water into each cup until it is overflowing and discuss how this represents being filled with the Holy Ghost. The Spirit fills us to overflowing as we speak in a new language (speaking in tongues).



Journal about how you (will) feel when you pray in a heavenly language and feel God's Spirit.

Did You Know?

May 23, 2021 is Pentecost Sunday, the day we celebrate the Acts 2 outpouring of the Holy Spirit. *Pente-* means fifty, and this day of Jewish celebration occurred fifty days after the Passover—the day Jesus was crucified. When the disciples returned to Jerusalem, they entered into an “upper room” to pray to receive the Promise of the Father. For seven days they prayed night and day until the promise was finally poured out. Will you follow their example and seek the Promise of the Father this week?

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Acts 1:3-15.

- “I Shall Be Saved”
by Mattoon Youth Choir
- “Get Ready” by Cortt Chavis
- “This Is Revival”
by Brittani Scott

Featured Song

“Power (I’ve Got Power)”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray to feel God’s presence and to be filled with His Spirit. Let the Holy Ghost overflow in you.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

After watching Jesus ascend, the disciples returned to Jerusalem. On the way to church, look for words that start with the letter J.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will pray to be filled with the Holy Ghost.*

On Sunday afternoon, Miles talked to his Grandpa through the computer. “I’ve mailed you a gift,” his Grandpa promised. “You should be receiving it any day.”

On Monday, Miles ran to the mailbox. The gift hadn’t arrived.

On Tuesday, Miles checked the mailbox again. Still no package.

On Wednesday, Miles again peeked into the mailbox, but he only found bills for his parents and no gift.

On Thursday, Miles checked the mailbox twice. No and no.

On Friday, Grandpa’s gift still hadn’t arrived.

On Saturday, Miles watched the mailbox all day waiting for the mailman to arrive. When he did, he still didn’t have Miles’s gift.

On Sunday, when Miles got home from church, a special delivery was waiting on his doorstep. He tore open the package. It was exactly what he wanted!

DISCUSSION TIME

How do you think the disciples felt praying for seven days to receive the Promise of the Father?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Do you have the Holy Ghost? What was it like the first time you spoke in tongues?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Do you understand what the Holy Ghost is? Would you like to receive God's gift? (Or: How did you feel when you received it?)

PRAYER:
Pray together for any family member that would like to receive the Holy Ghost.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is an upper-room experience. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.





☐ Saturday

PENTECOST

SUNDAY

Family Project

Tomorrow is Pentecost Sunday. Hopefully this week's devotions have prepared your family for this special celebration. When the disciples returned to Jerusalem, they went into an "upper room" to seek the Promise of the Father. These upper rooms were usually built onto the roof of houses and were used as a special place of prayer to seek God's presence. To get your hearts ready for tomorrow's outpouring, make an "upper room" in your home. Give it special lighting, a comfortable chair to read God's Word, and prayerful music such as the Morning Prayer channel on MyHopeRadio.com. Once built, encourage family members to spend as much time as possible in the room, seeking God's presence. Consider sleeping in the room as a family, praying yourselves to sleep as you enjoy the presence of God.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

In Apostolic families, Pentecost Sunday needs to be a big deal, even rivaling Christmas and Easter. If your church is having a special service, find ways to support your pastoral leaders.

- Invite friends and family to attend.
- As a family, offer to drive a shuttle to pick up visitors.
- Plan to fellowship after service with someone who just experienced the joy of salvation.

Make Pentecost Sunday incredible, expecting God to pour out His Spirit on all who seek Him. Whether there is a specially recognized service at your church or not, talk as a family over a meal after service about what it means to be Pentecostal and the joy of being filled with the Spirit.

God's Promise for Me



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Acts 2 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Acts 2 (paraphrased)

Just as Jesus commanded, the disciples were praying and waiting for the promise to come. It was the Day of Pentecost and they were in a large upper room. Suddenly they heard a strong wind and saw what looked like flames dancing over everyone's heads. Filled with the Holy Ghost, they began to speak in tongues—languages they had never learned. They felt a power they had never known.

The noise and activity spilled into the street. People stopped to hear these Jews speaking in many languages they didn't know. They heard them praising God in their own languages. "How can we understand these men as they praise God? Are they drunk?" the people asked.

A huge crowd gathered. Peter spoke, "We are not drunk. This is what the prophet Joel said would happen. We are filled with God's Spirit." Peter preached to the crowd about Jesus. "Jesus did miracles among you, but you and your leaders crucified Him. It was God's plan and Jesus rose from the dead."

The people knew they had messed up. With an ache in their heart, they cried out, "What shall we do?"

Peter said, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the removal of your sins. You will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This promise is for everyone."

Three thousand people believed Peter's preaching and obeyed God's plan. They repented, were baptized, and received the Holy Ghost.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God wants to fill us with His Spirit.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Acts 2 as a family. Find and underline the sign that the Holy Spirit was being poured out. This week we are learning how God fills people with the Holy Spirit.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why do you think God chose speaking in tongues as the initial sign of receiving His Spirit and not another sign like your hair turning purple or something else unusual?
- When you read Acts 2, do you believe that is how God still pours out His Spirit today?
- How did Peter respond when the people asked what they were hearing?
- What did Peter say was the key to salvation? (Hint: Acts 2:38)

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God wants to fill us with His Spirit.

People try to make God's plan of salvation more complicated than it is. If you repent of your sins and get baptized in Jesus' name, He will fill you with His Holy Spirit. From that moment, it should be your heart's desire to follow after Jesus. How will you know you've been filled? According to the Book of Acts, you will speak in tongues—an unknown language. (See Acts 2; 10:44-48; 19:5-6.)

Do you believe this promise is for you? Some try to argue this experience was only available during New Testament times, but we have experienced it for ourselves! If you seek God with all of your heart, He offers this promise to everyone, including you and me. With God's Spirit inside of you, you will be empowered to tell others about Him. Best of all, this gift gives you the promise of eternal life.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

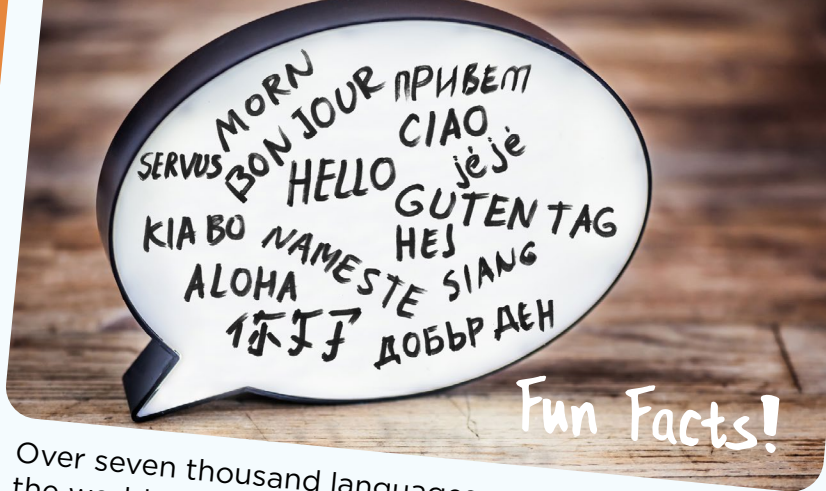
- Why is it important to receive the Holy Ghost?
- What does the Holy Ghost give us power to do? How does it affect others?

PRAYER:

Pray together that each family member is filled with the Holy Ghost.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will receive the
Holy Ghost and be a
witness for Jesus.



Fun Facts!

- Over seven thousand languages are spoken around the world.
- The Chinese language has over five thousand characters.
- The Cambodian language has seventy-four letters in its alphabet.
- The longest word in the English language describes a lung disease and is forty-five letters long.
- Over four thousand new words are added to the English language each year.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Acts 2 as a family. Find and highlight the verse that shows the crowd's response after hearing about the Holy Ghost.

Did You Know?

Acts 2 reports that three thousand people left Jewish traditions, obeyed Peter's preaching, and were saved. The group was too large for any house, so they met in the temple and in prayer groups among families. Imagine the excitement and effort to baptize and disciple three thousand new converts!



Sing "I've Got It," or write your own song about receiving the Holy Ghost.



Gather all the stuffed animals, dolls, and other toys representing a crowd. Position these facing a chair. Use the chair as a pulpit and preach Peter's words.



Journal what you think your life will look like in ten years because God has empowered you to be His witness.

□ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Acts 2.

- “Celebration Medley (Live)” by First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock
- “Baptize Me Jesus” by UPCI General Conference 2018
- “Holy Ghost & Fire (Live)” by Texas Bible College
- “It’s for Me” by PPH Kids Music

Featured Song
“Send Your Fire”
by Bonilla Band



PRAYER:

Pray together to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Encourage those who have the Holy Ghost to pray for others to receive it and invite the Spirit to fill your home.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On the Day of Pentecost, the crowd heard the disciples speaking in other tongues. On the way to church, look for words in other languages.

□ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will receive the Holy Ghost and be a witness for Jesus.*

Speaking in tongues is a language, but not one you can learn. These true stories demonstrate God’s power through the gift of tongues.

While visiting an Apostolic church in Canada, Salim prayed, “God, reveal truth to me.” Next to him, in his native African tongue, he heard, “This is the church of the one true God.” God answered through another person’s prayer in tongues.

As a pastor was greeting guests, one lady said, “Please introduce me to the man in the second row who speaks Czech.” The pastor realized what had occurred. “Ma’am, no one here speaks Czech, but he was praying in tongues.” Intrigued, she replied, “He was speaking my native language.”

Missionaries to Pakistan were attending a prayer meeting in America. Suddenly they heard praises in clear Urdu coming from the back as a man praised God in a language he had never learned.

It happened in Acts 2, and it happens today. Will you let God speak through you?

DISCUSSION TIME

Why do you think God would allow another person to understand a prayer in tongues?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What was it like when you received the Holy Ghost? How did it change you?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Would you like to receive the Holy Ghost? or What did you feel when you received the Holy Ghost?

PRAYER:
Pray together for those who need the Holy Ghost and that you might be a witness for Jesus.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a revival preparedness activity. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

Revival!

Family Project

☐ Saturday

Is your family ready for revival?

- *World:* On the Day of Pentecost, Peter preached that the Holy Ghost would reach the entire world. Whether you reach the world by traveling, by giving, or by praying, your family can make an impact. Ensure you include world missions in your family prayer.
- *Local:* What would revival look like at your church? Talk as a family about being involved in sharing God's Word and have a time of prayer for your church and community.
- *Family:* Will you open your home to Bible studies? Pray over your kitchen table that God would use it for Bible studies. Make paper dolls and then write the names of people who you would like to see filled with the Holy Ghost. Pray over each name, attempt to show God's love to these people, and get ready for revival.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Proverbs 22:6 establishes the principle that if we train up a child in the way they should go, they will not depart from God when they get older. God has tasked parents and teachers with the role of discipleship. That mission includes introducing children to God, preparing them to receive the Holy Ghost, encouraging them to experience it, and continuing to help them learn and grow in following God.

Children should not feel pressure to receive the Holy Ghost. Instead, they should feel delight in having a growing and thriving relationship with their Lord and Creator. If you continually put them in environments where they can experience the joy of the Lord, they will receive the Holy Ghost. Let the Holy Spirit guide you as you focus on discipleship and let God empower your children to become mighty for Him.

Let the Children Come

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Psalm 146:5-9; Isaiah 61:1-3; and Mark 10:13-16 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Jesus made our whole world and everything in it, and Jesus loves what He made. From scaly fish darting through oceans, to colorful flowers dotting hillsides, to furry animals scurrying through forests, and to fluffy clouds floating across the sky, Jesus' creations are wonderful. However, one creation is more "fearfully and wonderfully made" than all others, and that special creation is people. Jesus loves people—all people—and He wants to bless them.

The Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, said God would one day walk among His creation. Just as Isaiah foretold, Jesus came, and He came to preach good tidings to the people. For people who were sad and hurting, Jesus gave them beauty and joy. For people who were bound in sin, Jesus gave them freedom and justice.

One day, Jesus was sitting among the people and teaching them about all the good tidings He was here to bring. Some parents brought their children to Jesus and asked Him to touch them and bless them. Jesus' disciples saw this, and they thought the children would bother Jesus. So, the disciples told the parents, "You need to keep your children back because Jesus has important work to do and can't be interrupted by kids."

When Jesus saw His disciples preventing the children from coming to Him, it made Jesus angry. He wanted to bless them. They were His special creation. Jesus said, "Don't stop the children. Let them come to Me. Every one of you should come to Me as eagerly as these children because the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like them. Anyone who does not come to Me like a child will never enter into My Kingdom."

The disciples moved aside, and the children ran to Jesus. He picked them up and blessed them.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Jesus wants to bless every child.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 146:5–9; Isaiah 61:1–3; and Mark 10:13–16. Find the different kinds of blessings Jesus came to give people.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- In life, when are times people might feel sad, weak, or hurt?
- Can Jesus help people who feel sad, weak, or hurt?
- Does Jesus want us to ask Him to bless us?
- How has Jesus blessed you with joy for sadness, strength for weakness, or healing for sickness?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus wants to bless every child.

Holidays are special because they are filled with blessings, from gifts and candy, to meals with distant family members. With blessings, we experience a warmth and inner happiness as something within us seems to come alive. People go out of their way in hopes of receiving a blessing.



In Mark 10:13–16, the parents brought their children to Jesus for a blessing. What type of blessings? When Jesus placed His hands on these children, He blessed their futures. God would be with them through anything they faced. Gifts and candy are quickly consumed, but the blessings of Jesus offer so much more.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How do children ask for things they want badly?
- How should we come to Jesus when we want blessings from Him?

PRAYER:

Take prayer requests, and then pray in the spirit of Isaiah 6:3, asking Jesus to trade the request for the desired outcome: sickness for health, fear for faith, sadness for joy, and so on.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will get close to Jesus.



Fun Facts!

What is your favorite name for baby animals?

- Baby goats are called kids.
- Baby bats are called pups.
- Baby doves are called squabs.
- Baby frogs are called tadpoles.
- Baby kangaroos are called joeys.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 146:5–9; Isaiah 61:1–3; and Mark 10:13–16. Look for the disciples' actions throughout the story.

Did You Know?

Spiritual blessings were important in Jewish culture. In Jesus' day, it was tradition for fathers to bring their children to the local synagogue where elders joined the father in a prayer of blessing. The traditional prayer was for the child to know the Law, be faithful in marriage, and abound in good works. The father laid hands on the child as elders encircled them. It was a special event for the entire local community. When Jesus blessed the children, He did something the religious rulers of His day, the Pharisees, never did: He touched them. Jesus showed He loved everyone—young or old, rich or poor, hurt or whole. He came to help, bless, and make all people part of His Kingdom.



Write your own song about receiving God's blessings.



Sit in a circle and do a rhythm chant: (leg pat, leg pat) / "Jesus" (clap, clap), / (leg pat, leg pat) / "blessed me" (clap clap), / (snap snap) / "with _____."



Journal about a time you felt sad, weak, or hurt and Jesus blessed you with joy, strength, or healing.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Psalm 146:5–9; Isaiah 61:1–3; and Mark 10:13–16.

- “No More Waiting”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Unspeakable Joy”
from *Truth Odyssey VBS*
- “Never Break a Promise”
by Brittani Scott

Featured Song
“I’m Blessed”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Name and pray for children you would like to see God bless in a special way.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

As you drive, count the children you see and pray for them to be touched by the blessings of Jesus.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will get close to Jesus.*

Priscilla squealed with excitement. Today, she was finally getting a dog. Priscilla and her parents visited the local animal shelter. They walked down row after row of dogs. Priscilla pointed to a black and white spotted dog and said, “I want to see that one.”

They took the dog to a room to play with it, but the dog seemed interested in everything but Priscilla. She tried to hug and pet the dog, but it squirmed out of her arms and ran away from her. That made Priscilla sad.

Upon leaving the shelter, Priscilla noticed a small, brown dog jumping excitedly at its cage and wagging its tail when she approached. “Can we see this one?” Priscilla asked.

Once again, they made their way to the playroom. Immediately, the dog jumped into Priscilla’s lap and licked her hand. This dog wanted Priscilla more than all the toys in the room. Priscilla rubbed the dog on its head and said, “You are my doggy, and you are coming home with me.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How do you think it makes Jesus feel when we are excited to be close to Him?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:

When was the first time you remember coming to Jesus?

ASK YOUR CHILD:

What can you do to get closer to Jesus?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for God to bless your parents, especially when they are having a tough day.
- Parents, pray for your children to always be excited be in Jesus' presence.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is Blessing Bags. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

□ Saturday



Family Project

Just as Jesus blesses us, we can bless others. Prepare Blessing Bags by filling gallon-sized zippered bags with a variety of non-perishable food items and/or toiletries. Include an encouraging Bible passage, possibly Isaiah 61:1-2.

As you fill the bags, discuss how you are putting the Life Lesson in action: drawing closer to Jesus by doing what Jesus did. Pray over the bags. Keep them in your car and distribute them to people in need.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Create a “Blessed” sign to hang outside or inside your home as a daily reminder of God’s blessings. Many examples can be found online, whether you use a chalkboard, posterboard, or scrap of wood. Trace the letters for the word *blessed* and allow all family members an opportunity to fill them in with chalk, marker, or paint accordingly. Add extra words or embellishments as desired. Display the sign where it will be seen every day.

Throughout the week, make a point to acknowledge the sign’s message and ask whoever is near how they are blessed. A constant reminder of God’s blessings, whether on rough days or happy days, will help ensure that we draw close to Jesus at all times and give Him thanks for our blessings. Emphasize to your family that the greatest blessing is not our material things but God’s love for us.

Jesus Heals the Sick

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Leviticus 13:42-46; Mark 1:40-45; and Luke 17:11-16 in your family Bible.

Week

42

☐ Sunday

As far back as Old Testament days, people with the disease of leprosy were called “unclean” and treated as outcasts. Leprosy caused terrible sores all over a person's body, and people were afraid to touch a leper for fear of getting this painful, ugly sickness.

Most lepers stayed far away from people because they did not want anyone mocking them, so when a leprous man ran up to Jesus and blocked His path, Jesus took notice.

The man knelt and said, “I know You can heal me and make me clean if You want to.”

Jesus' heart was touched, and He had compassion on the man. Jesus said, “Yes, I want to help you.” Jesus touched the leprous man. “Be healed!” Jesus commanded, and immediately the man's sores disappeared. The man was healed! He went on his way and told everyone.

Another time, ten lepers met Jesus as He was entering a village. They cried out, “Master, have mercy on us!”

Again, Jesus had compassion, which is care and concern, for them. He said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” As the men obeyed, they were healed.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: Jesus has compassion on those who are ignored by society.

Discuss any questions about these Bible events. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Leviticus 13:42–46; Mark 1:40–45; and Luke 17:11–16. Count how many times the words *unclean* and *leprosy* are mentioned.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- In life, what are some situations where people might need help right away?
- Would you help someone in need if you were able?
- What are some ways we can show compassion (care and concern) for those in need?
- Does Jesus have compassion on us when we are in need?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Jesus has compassion on those who are ignored by society.

Social invisibility refers to a group of unwelcome and unwanted people society has chosen to systematically ignore. In Jesus' day, lepers were banished to the outskirts of town and pressured to remain "invisible." Their mere presence made people uncomfortable, so they were shamefully forced to beg from the shadows for survival.

While leprosy may not be common today, *social invisibility* still exists for people like the elderly, orphans, the homeless, people with disabilities, and those with addictions. While society may look down on these people, Jesus had compassion on them. He expects us to do the same.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- If you needed help, what would you be willing to do to get someone's attention?
- How can we get Jesus' attention when we are in need?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will show compassion
to others.

PRAYER:

Identify and pray for people who need compassion—those who feel unloved, lonely, or forgotten.





Fun Facts!

As social outcasts, lepers were commonly forced into communities known as *leper colonies*. One such colony, called Kalaupapa, was formed by the Hawaiian legislature in 1866 along the cliffs of the island of Moloka'i, Hawaii. Six years later, a Belgian priest named Father Damien set up a community to minister to Kalaupapa's residents. At its peak, around twelve hundred men, women, and children lived there. By 2015, only six people remained, despite having long been cured, because it was the only life they knew.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Leviticus 13:42–46; Mark 1:40–45; and Luke 17:11–16 as a family.

Did You Know?

Jesus told the lepers to go to the priests because the priests' job was to confirm they were clean (healed) and to approve them to return to society. It took faith for the lepers to believe Jesus had healed them and to obey Him before having proof of their healing.



Write a song telling the story of the ten lepers or about Jesus healing someone.



Pass around a box of Band-Aids and take one for each need you have. Then for each Band-Aid you have, say something you are thankful for.



Journal about a time you willingly showed someone compassion (care and concern) like Jesus did.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Leviticus 13:42-46; Mark 1:40-45; and Luke 17:11-16.

- “Your Kingdom Come”
by PPH Kids Music
- “We Have Overcome”
by Brittani Scott
- “Perfectly Imperfect”
by Marcus Antonio and
Lauren Blenman

Featured Song

“Makin’ Me Whole”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray together for God to speak to each family member about how they can show compassion.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Have each person name a synonym of compassion. Keep going until no one can think of another word.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will show compassion to others.*

A month had passed since Priscilla’s family adopted that little brown dog from the local animal shelter. Every chance he got, he crawled into her lap and acted so happy to see her. Priscilla, however, couldn’t forget all the other dogs who didn’t have a lap to climb in.

“Mommy, I want to help the other dogs still in the shelter,” Priscilla said.

“We can’t adopt them all,” Mommy said. “But let me see if we can help another way.”

A week later, Priscilla’s mom loaded her in the car with three bags of dog food, ten chew toys, and a pile of old blankets and towels. When they dropped them off, the shelter manager said Priscilla had a compassionate heart. “Many people leave and forget about the other dogs,” the lady said. “You cared and came back.”

On the ride home, Priscilla said. “Mommy, I don’t ever want to forget about any of Jesus’ creatures.”

Mommy smiled and said, “I think that makes Jesus very happy because He never forgets about us.”

DISCUSSION TIME

What are some ways Jesus enables us to help other people?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever volunteered for something? What did you do?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
Is there anyone you feel like God is asking you to show compassion toward?

PRAYER:

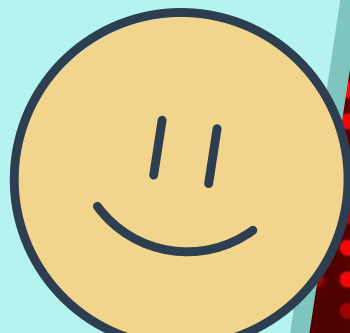
- Kids, pray for God to help your parents have ears to hear and eyes to see those in need.
- Parents, pray for God to give your kids a compassionate heart toward others.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is compassion cards. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible stories in your own words.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Make compassion cards to deliver to a local hospital, police station, and fire station. Use construction paper and a variety of art supplies to decorate the cards. Write a simple message of thanks inside such as, “Thank you for showing compassion to others.” Deliver the cards along with a basket of fruit, case of water, or container of small snacks.

Thinking
of you

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Compassion is not a single act; it is a life-long pursuit. Showing compassion was a way of life for Jesus. It should also become a way of life for us as we integrate it into the fabric of our hearts.

Consider doing the compassion cards activity every month. As a family, decide on a group of people who have captured your heart, such as hospital workers, police, firemen, teachers, nursing home staff and residents, church elders, ministry team, military, homeless, veterans, essential employees, missionaries and missionary kids, or your neighbors. Establish that as disciples of Jesus draw close to him (our lifelong goal) they reflect Him. So we show compassion as a result and a reflection of our relationship with God.

Mercy for Mistakes

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read John 4:5-42 in your family Bible.

Week

43

☐ Sunday

One afternoon, Jesus sat alone beside a well. He had sent His disciples into a village for food. As he sat, a Samaritan woman approached. Because she was divorced several times, many people in her village wouldn't talk to her. Jesus asked, "Would you please give Me a drink?"

Surprised, she said, "Usually Jews don't want anything to do with Samaritans, so why are You talking to me?"

Jesus responded, "If you knew who I was, you would ask Me for water." She was confused because He didn't even have a rope or bucket. Jesus explained, "I give living water. If you drink it, you will never thirst again."

She gasped, "That sounds amazing! I want Your water."

Jesus went on to tell her that he knew about her divorces. Thinking Jesus must be a prophet, the woman asked if He knew whether Samaritans needed to worship in their temple or the one in Jerusalem. Jesus answered, "Soon neither temple will matter because true worshipers will worship God in Spirit and truth."

The woman said, "When the Messiah comes, He'll explain everything." That's when Jesus told her He was Messiah.

The disciples approached, and the woman ran back to the village shouting, "Come see a man who told me all I ever did!" For the next two days, many Samaritans from that village listened to Jesus teach and believed He was the Savior of the world.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God shows mercy and love to those who make mistakes.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review John 4:5-42 as a family. Count how many questions the woman and Jesus asked.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- How old do you think people are when they finally stop making mistakes?
- Are the people you love perfect or have they made mistakes?
- Are you perfect or have you made mistakes?
- What can people say or do to show they still love you even when you make a mistake?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God shows mercy and love to those who make mistakes.

Cultural customs gave Jesus several excuses He could use to avoid conversing with this woman at the well. First, she was a Samaritan. Second, she was immoral. But Jesus had a divine appointment with this woman, and grace prevailed over tradition as Jesus offered her living water.

Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well shows that He knows everything about us (even our mistakes), still loves us, and wants to save us.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Does Jesus still love us, even when we make mistakes?
- How can you be like Jesus and show love to people who make mistakes?



This Week's
Life Lesson

I will show mercy and
love to those who
make mistakes.

PRAYER:

Take turns as you pray, asking God to help us turn to Jesus when we make mistakes.



Fun Facts!

The well where Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman is thought to be one dug by Jacob when he purchased land in Genesis 33:18-20. In 670 AD, the well was reported to be four feet wide and about 240 feet deep. Over the centuries, however, the well became much shallower because of tourists throwing pebbles into it. To protect it, a group purchased the well and put it under guard. In 1861, a surveyor found that, due to the pebbles, it was now only seventy-five feet deep. Remarkably, the water remains pure enough to drink.

□ Tuesday

Read or review John 4:5-42 as a family.

Did You Know?

In 721 BC, Assyrian King Saragon destroyed Samaria, the capital of Israel's Northern Kingdom. He brought in people from other nations to intermarry with Jewish inhabitants and their offspring were called Samaritans. The "pureblooded" Jews disliked these Samaritans and usually avoided entering into their territory. Jesus ignored these Jewish stereotypes when He chose to travel through Samaria.



Sing "He Knows My Name," or write your own song about God's mercy.



Show how to trap water in a straw by placing your finger over the end. Then see who can be fastest in transferring water from one "well" (cup) to another.



Journal about a time God showed you mercy for a mistake.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to John 4:5-42.

- “Nothing but the Blood”
by PPH Kids Music
- “That’s What Jesus Does”
by Shara McKee
- “My Story”
by Apostolic Collective

Featured Song

“Down, Down, Down”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray together for God to speak to each family member about asking for God’s mercy and showing it.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive through a neighborhood you usually do not. Consider the number of people living there. Discuss how amazing it is that Jesus knows them as well as He knows you.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will show mercy and love to those who make mistakes.*

“I broke it.” Aiden couldn’t bring himself to say those three words when Mrs. Wheeler asked who broke her snow globe. He didn’t mean to knock it off her desk. He had darted back inside the classroom to grab his jacket and accidentally bumped it. On his first week at a new school, Aiden didn’t want to end up in the principal’s office for a simple mistake.

After class, Mrs. Wheeler stopped Aiden. Peering over her gold-rimmed glasses, she said, “I know you broke it, and I know you were afraid to say so. The snow globe is replaceable, but trust is not.”

With wide eyes blinking back tears, Aiden asked, “Am I in trouble?”

Mrs. Wheeler offered him a reassuring smile and said, “No, you’re in need of mercy. Today, I’m giving it to you, and one day, you will need to give it to someone else when they make a mistake.”

Aiden couldn’t wait to tell his parents what he learned at school, and it wasn’t something about math or history. It was about mercy.

DISCUSSION TIME

What are some examples of showing someone mercy?

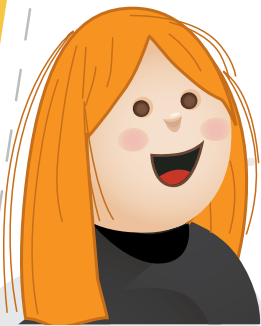
☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
When have you shown mercy to someone who made a mistake?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
When have you needed someone to show you mercy when you made a mistake?



PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for God to help your parents show mercy when others make mistakes.
- Parents, pray for your children to seek God's mercy when they make mistakes.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a "Well of Love." Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



Family Project

□ Saturday

Decorate a wide-mouth container and label it “WELL OF LOVE.” Display it in a well-traveled area within the home. Place a pen and slips of paper next to it. On the slips of paper, write the name of someone you’re thinking of and say a prayer for them. In addition to your family members, think of friends who don’t know Jesus. Just as Jesus reached to the woman at the well, you can pray for and witness to friends who have made mistakes and need Jesus. Drop the papers into the well. Do this repeatedly for each person you think of, and after one week, pull out the papers and read them together. Have a time of prayer for the names together.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Is *merciful* a word people would use when describing your family? People can see if a family is supportive of each other. Holding grudges is a bad witness, and can greatly hinder spiritual growth. When our feelings are hurt, we have a tendency to “keep score” and look for opportunities to get revenge, which is the opposite of showing mercy.

The closer someone is to us, the more we can see their mistakes. While some of these mistakes may impact us directly, God calls on us to show mercy. This means family grudges need to be addressed and resolved. Make a habit of picking each other up, not tearing each other down. God will take your family to new heights when you make it a habit to be merciful.

Are You a Good Neighbor?



Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-40; and Luke 10:25-37 in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Jesus reminded people of what God told Moses. “You should love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. That is the first great commandment, and the second commandment is like it. You should love your neighbor as yourself.”

One day, a religious expert asked Jesus how to gain eternal life. Jesus responded with a question. “What does the Law of Moses say?”

The man answered, “Love God with everything within you and love your neighbor as yourself, but who is my neighbor?”

Jesus responded with a story. “Once upon a time, a Jewish traveler was attacked and beaten by bandits. They left him bleeding by the side of the road. A priest came along but didn't stop to help because he was too busy. A temple worker came along, saw the helpless man, but kept walking. Finally, a Samaritan came along. He stopped.”

Gasps filled the crowd. Jews didn't like Samaritans and couldn't imagine them doing anything good, especially for a Jew. Jesus continued, “The Samaritan bandaged the man's wounds, carried him to an inn, and paid the innkeeper to take care of the man until he was better.” Jesus then asked, “So who was the neighbor?”

The religious expert answered, “The one who showed mercy.”

Jesus nodded. “Yes, now go and do the same.”

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37–40; and Luke 10:25–37 as a family. Take turns reading the parts where different people are speaking.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Who are some of your neighbors, either next door or down the street?
- When God talks about loving our neighbors as ourselves, is He only talking about those people?
- In life, will your next-door neighbors always remain the same or will they change?
- Will God's definition of a neighbor ever change?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

When should you stop and be a good neighbor? When you see a house on fire? When you see a child who has fallen off his bike? When someone comes up a few bucks short at the cash register? When a turtle is crossing the road? When an elderly lady is struggling with her bags at the grocery store? When someone falls out of a tree?

We tell ourselves we are good neighbors, but when put to the test, how many people do we walk past every day without helping? Loving like Jesus loves means being selfless—willing to sacrifice our pride, possessions, and interests for the sake of others. Jesus has this kind of love for us, and He wants us to have this selfless love for others.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Who does God say our neighbors are?
- How can we be a good neighbor according to God's definition?

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will be a
good neighbor.

PRAYER:

Ask God to help you take time for others and to be the good neighbor that He wants you to be.



Fun Facts!

Can you sing the jingle for State Farm Insurance? “Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.” In 1971, a singer named Barry Manilow was paid \$500 to write this catchy tune. Fifty years later, it is still a widely recognizable melody. The lyrics draw upon Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan, comparing State Farm to the traveler who was there to help the man in distress.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37–40; and Luke 10:25–37 as a family.

Did You Know?

In Bible times, some inns were simply empty buildings surrounded by high walls with a well in the courtyard. At most inns, travelers had to supply their own food and sleeping pads. The inn the Good Samaritan chose may have been a Greek type with an innkeeper, food, and entertainment.



Write your own song about the Good Samaritan or helping someone in need.



“Bandage” a designated “hurt traveler” in toilet paper until he is entirely wrapped as you retell the Bible story.



Journal about a time someone went out of their way to help you.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-40; and Luke 10:25-37.

- “Help Me” by Cortt Chavis
- “Give It Away” by David and Stephanie Hutton
- “We Are One” by First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock

Featured Song

“Friend Like You”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Pray for God to help you be aware of people around you so you can be a good neighbor to them.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Count neighborhoods and apartment complexes you pass driving to church. Consider the difference it would make if everyone were a good neighbor to those living on either side of them.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will be a good neighbor.*

Dayna stood inside the school doors, watching a busload of kids trying to run from the bus to the door without getting soaked by the rain. One of the kids tripped and fell named Aiden. Dayna watched Aiden scramble to pick up his backpack and the contents of his busted lunchbox. Then he stopped to grab his knee. Aiden was hurt.

At least five students passed him, not stopping to help. Some even laughed as they splashed by. Without another thought, Dayna bolted through the doors into the rain. She helped Aiden stand, and then gathered up his backpack and lunch. As Aiden limped into the school, he surprised her with a smile.

“Why would you get drenched just to help me?” Aiden asked. “I’m practically a stranger to you.”

“We go to the same school, right?” Dayna asked. “According to the Bible, you’re my neighbor. When your neighbors need help, you help.”

Rubbing his knee, Aiden’s grinned wider. “Well, thanks, neighbor.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How are you showing God’s love like a good neighbor?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
When have you done something like the Good Samaritan?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
When have you been a good neighbor and shown someone God's love?



PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for God to help your parents show His love to others.
- Parents, pray for God to help your children be like the Good Samaritan.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is Sweet Neighbors. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.





□ Saturday

Family Project

Prepare to be a Sweet Neighbor by choosing one or more of your neighbors to bestow a sweet treat upon. As a family, bake some treats, such as decorated cookies or cupcakes. Then deliver them to your neighbors with a handmade card signed by your whole family. The note inside the card can be as simple as, “We prayed for you, our sweet neighbors.” Try to deliver them when they are home, so you can introduce yourselves face to face.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

The balance between being a good neighbor and being safe needs to be openly discussed with your children. Kids might think Jesus wants them to help anyone who comes along, but unfortunately, without family supervision, this behavior can put a child in danger. Make sure your children know they should only talk to neighbors while you are present, and they should never go to their house without permission.

With this in mind, continue your Sweet Neighbor campaign. Mailing a card or stopping to say hello will build a relationship. Don't be afraid to ask if you can help pray about something. You may be surprised to find that you are exactly the good neighbor they and Jesus need you to be.

The Suffering Servant

Read and discuss Psalm 22 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday

Week

45

Psalm 22

- ¹ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?
- ² O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.
- ³ But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.
-
- ⁷ All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
- ⁸ He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.
-
- ¹⁸ They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.
- ¹⁹ But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.
-
- ²³ Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.
- ²⁴ For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.
-
- ²⁶ The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.
- ²⁷ All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.
- ²⁸ For the kingdom is the LORD's: and he is the governor among the nations.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God is with His people, especially in suffering.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 22 as a family. Find the points and share how the Psalmist must have felt in this trial.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- Why would the psalmist say that he felt God had forsaken him?
- What can happen to our faith when we suffer?
- Reading verses 23–28, what did the psalmist do that helped get beyond the turmoil he was experiencing?
- What do you think helps us get beyond our feelings when we suffer?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is with His people, especially in suffering.

God is always with us. He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5–6). That's His promise. Sometimes we might think that if we feel Him, He is present, but when we don't, He is not. God is not a feeling; God is God. He is always with us.

When God manifested Himself in flesh, He exposed Himself to sorrow, suffering, and anguish. Through this extraordinary sacrifice, we are able to experience hope, joy, and salvation from our sins.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- How important is it to trust in God when we suffer?
- What does trust in God do in and for us?
- How can we praise God in the middle of suffering?



PRAYER:

Find 1 Thessalonians 5:18, read it together, and then give thanks to God for who He is in our lives.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I can trust God
in my suffering.



Fun Facts!

Psalm 22:18 prophesied how the Messiah's enemies would throw dice (cast lots) to divide His garments. John 19:23-24 gives more detail how this occurred, "After the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, they took his clothes. They divided them into four parts. Each soldier got one part. They also took his long shirt. It was all one piece of cloth, woven from top to bottom. So the soldiers said to each other, 'We should not tear this into parts. We should throw lots to see who will get it.' . . . so the soldiers did this" (International Children's Bible).

Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 22 as a family. Take turns finding phrases that refer to trusting God and then underline them.

Did You Know?

Written by David nearly one thousand years before Jesus' birth, Psalm 22 prophesied about the crucifixion of the Messiah. Verses 6-8 detail how Jesus was despised and mocked by the crowds. Verses 12-18 reveal His experiences as He suffered with verse 16 adding, "They pierced my hands and my feet." To make sure the connection wasn't missed, Jesus cried out the psalm's first line as He hung in anguish. (See Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34.) The psalm's last ten verses are dedicated to praising God who will rescue His people.



Sing "Trading My Sorrows," or write your own song about God's goodness toward us.



Have one trustworthy family member guide a blindfolded person to a destination. Share how the psalmist trusted God even when he could not understand what was happening.



Journal how we should praise God in the good times and the bad, and how He is with us even when we are having a very bad day.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Psalm 22.

- “All to Jesus” by PPH Kids Music
- “It Is Finished” by Urshan College
- “Jesus, So Worthy of Love” by PPH Kids Music
- “King of Every Battle” by Brittani Scott

Featured Song

“Down from His Glory”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Thank God for taking care of you on good days and bad.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On the way to church, look for areas where people may be in need, such as hospitals, homeless shelters, and police stations. Pray for the people who may be suffering.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I can trust God in my suffering.*

“Mom, why does God let people suffer?” Brittany asked as they stood by grandma’s bedside.

Grandma last words before she suffered a stroke were, “I trust You, Jesus. You are my keeper.”

“I really don’t have an answer for you,” Mom responded, “but I do know that God is able to take care of anything we face. Your grandma has amazing faith, and she is trusting God no matter what happens.”

Days later, Brittany visited Grandma again. This time she was sitting up and smiling as Brittany walked in. “Hi, Grandma! I am so glad to see you smiling again.”

“Me too. The Lord is truly my keeper. I didn’t doubt for a moment that He would take care of me, no matter what happened. He is so good to us,” Grandma explained. “Even when we don’t understand why things happen, we can trust God will take good care of us.”

“Yes,” Brittany said quietly, “I learned that even in suffering I can trust God, but I sure am glad you are better.”

DISCUSSION TIME

How does suffering help us learn to trust God?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
Have you ever had a time when you wondered why God was letting you suffer?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
How do you think you might react if you were going through something very difficult?



PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to help you know what to do when suffering takes place.
- Parents, pray for your children to accept suffering as a lesson in seeing what God can do with the suffering.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project involves ministering to the suffering. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



□ Saturday



Family Project

Ask your church's pastoral team for people or families who have requested prayer.

With permission, assemble a care basket and then make plans to deliver it. As you present the basket, give words of encouragement, and take time to pray with the people.

After the visit, discuss how you think the people may have felt about the baskets. If you were in their shoes, is there anything more you would desire? Discuss if there are any additional things your family can do to help the people. Then discuss how God is pleased when we show each other compassion.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

This week's study of God's presence with us in suffering is crucial to grasp. In our lifelong mission to know and follow Him, we must be willing to stay steadfast during difficult times. Society suggests happiness comes from a life of ease free from hardship. Use this week to instill in your kids that what matters in our life is not the accumulations of things but our covenant with God. Look for ways to emphasize this truth frequently.

The Wild Man Trusts God

Read and discuss Psalm 34 below or read it in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



Psalm 34

¹ I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

² My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

⁴ I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

⁸ O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

⁹ O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

¹¹ Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

¹³ Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

¹⁴ Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

¹⁹ Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

²⁰ He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

²² The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God is always worthy of our praise.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 34 as a family. Look for the praise phrases and highlight them.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What are some of the promises given to us from this psalm?
- What member of our body are we to guard carefully and what does it say we should do about it?
- Though we suffer afflictions, what does the Lord do for us?
- What does the word *desolate* in verse 22 mean to us?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is always worthy of our praise.

God has many promises for those who will turn to Him, follow Him, and trust Him. We simply need to follow, trust, and always praise Him. He takes care of the rest of our life each day.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Do you think you can praise God all the time?
Why or why not?



PRAYER:

Ask all family members to think of one thing for which they can praise the Lord. Take time to have a praise session, thanking God as each one shares thoughts.

This Week's
Life Lesson

I will bless the Lord
at all times.



Fun Facts!

- The tongue is about three inches long and has between two thousand to four thousand taste buds.
- Your tongue is made of eight different muscles that work together like an elephant's trunk .
- If a tongue is healthy, the muscles in it never get tired, and unlike other muscles, they work independently of any bones in your body.
- Your tongue can get fat, but your tongue print is as unique as a fingerprint. It can say a lot about your health.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 34 as a family. Underline or take turns finding the key phrases that specifically promise deliverance.

Did You Know?

The Bible explains that the tongue is the one part of the body that no man can tame (James 3:8). It is the unruliest part of the body because it can both bless and curse (James 3:9). James compared us to a fountain and asked if we could “send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter” (James 3:11). He answered his own question by declaring no fountain can “both yield salt water and fresh” (James 3:12). The tongue must be brought under control, and we need the Spirit to help us do that.



Sing “Praise Him” or write your own song about praise.



Play a quick round of Praise Hot Potato. Pass around a ball or other item while playing or singing a song. When the ball lands, have the one holding it say a praise phrase to the Lord.



Journal about God's goodness and what you can do to praise Him every day.

□ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Psalm 34.

- “Stones” by POA Worship
- “Power in the Name”
by Draylin Young and Bryan Pound
- “Forever (I Am)”
by PPH Kids Music

Featured Song

“Hallelujah, King Jesus”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Have a praise session. Play music and simply praise Him without asking for anything.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Think of some praise songs that can be sung on the way to church and do so as a family.

□ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will bless the Lord at all times.*

What a challenge! Mom asked everyone to think of ways they could bless the Lord and be ready to share with the family tomorrow night during devotions.

“Think...Think...Think, Jerry,” Jerry mused over the challenge given before complaining, “I don’t know how to do this.”

As he was mulling over what to come up with, Cali walked by, looked at him, and chuckled, “If the wrinkles get any deeper on your forehead, they are going to be there permanently.” She smiled as she sat down next to her brother and asked, “What are you thinking about so hard?”

“Mom’s challenge,” he answered. “I just don’t get how I’m supposed to come up with ways to bless the Lord. How can you bless the Lord when He has everything? How do you do it?”

“Easy—just go through your day tomorrow and talk to the Lord. Thank Him for anything that’s happening. Practice it all day and you’ll probably come up with some ideas by tomorrow night.”

Jerry did just that, and guess what happened? He had all sorts of thoughts to share at family devotions that night.

DISCUSSION TIME

What ways can you think of to bless the Lord?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Has there been a time you blessed the Lord and something special happened? What was it like?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What do you think blessing the Lord means?

PRAYER:

- Parents, pray for your children to have a heart of praise.
- Kids, pray for your parents to show you how to have a heart of praise.



Well Done!

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is Tongues of Blessing. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

Great Job excellent!

□ Saturday

Family Project

Make this weekend one of good words that blesses others. Each family member must carefully guard their words and think of ways to say something that honors one another. Give each family member a small notebook to use as their personal tongue notepad. Agree that each time you speak a blessing, you make a note in your notepad. Sit down as a family and review your notes. Celebrate words of blessings and discuss what each could have done differently to turn a bitter word into a blessing. Take time to pray together about guarding our tongue and using it to speak blessings.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Managing our tongue is a challenge even mature disciples struggle with after years of walking with the Lord. That statement is not meant to discourage but to remind us of how much we need the Holy Ghost to help us guard our tongue. When a tense exchange of words occurs in your home, which is inevitable, encourage your family to take a moment to put the conversation in perspective. Extend grace to one another and ask the Spirit to help you with your communication.

Optionally, prepare a bulletin board or a place to pin notes somewhere centrally located where all can see. Place a basket and pens near the board. Make this the family praise and blessing board. Each day begin with an empty board that is then filled with praises and blessings throughout the day that each family member experiences and writes down. Share them at the dinner table each evening.

God of the Battlefield

Read and discuss Psalm 46 below or in your family Bible.

Week

47

☐ Sunday

Psalm 46

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
- ² Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
- ³ Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.
- ⁴ There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.
- ⁵ God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.
- ⁶ The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.
- ⁷ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.
- ⁸ Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.
- ⁹ He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.
- ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
- ¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God will lead us to victory.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 46 as a family. Find and discuss the promises of the Lord to His people.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What do you think the word *refuge* means?
- What does this word mean to you personally?
- What can we do to not fear with all the troubles mentioned in verses 2–3?
- How does the phrase “be still, and know that I am God” help us when facing difficulties?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God will lead us to victory.

We need not fear since God has promised us that He is present in all our difficulties and will lead us to be victorious over anything that comes against us.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What can we do to find victory amid troubles?
- What are some ways that God leads us to victory?

PRAYER:

List prayer needs you have as a family, gather around the list, and each take a turn praying for a need.

This Week's
Life Lesson

*I will face my fears,
knowing God is on
my side.*





Fun Facts!

- Many people want to have a refuge or a safe place.
- Safes, also known as strongboxes, protect special items and date all the way back to the tomb of Pharaoh Ramses II who had a safe in his tomb.
 - Fort Knox, an army installation in Kentucky, protects America's gold reserves. It is has been called the most secure vault in the world with a twenty-ton door of steel and concrete.
 - Iceland is known as the safest country in the world, and many people enjoy how protected from crime they feel there.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 46 as a family. Underline what God does in the earth and discuss what it may mean.

Did You Know?

This psalm may have been just what God's people needed. They had seen war all around them. While their enemies were defeated, they were kept in peace and safety and allowed to return to their homeland. Imagine the Jews celebrating and singing this song of deliverance as they proclaimed repeatedly that "The LORD of Hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge."



Sing "Victory Is Mine," or write your own song about having victory.



Write each word of the verse "Be still, and know that I am God" on an index card and shuffle them. Work together to put the words in the correct order. Time yourselves and compete to get the quickest time.



Journal ways you have seen God help take away your fears when they come.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Psalm 46.

- “King of Every Battle”
by Brittani Scott
- “Victory Medley”
by Indiana Bible College
- “Awesome and Powerful”
by Mark Crowder

Featured Song

“Power (I’ve Got Power)”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

As you pray together, each member takes a turn to say, “God is my Refuge and Strength.” After each person has repeated this phrase, say it together and praise the Lord to finish.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

While traveling to church, one family member reads Psalm 46 in phrases and the rest of the family recites it back together.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will face my fears, knowing God is on my side.*

Jamie was sweating bullets. The family was on a vacation and today they traveled over the mountains. “Jamie, you seem so nervous. What’s wrong?” Dad asked as they packed their bags into the car.

Jamie didn’t really want to admit she was fearful. The family had just talked about facing fear last night during family devotions. Now she faced it herself. She began crying and told Dad about her fear.

“Sometimes it is hard to face fearful things. That’s when we just have to trust that God will take care of us,” Dad explained. “Why don’t we pray together and ask God to help us stay safe and enjoy the day?”

Jamie agreed. After prayer, her fears seemed to settle down, and by the end of the day and on the other side of the mountains, she realized that God was on her side, taking care of them. She had enjoyed the whole day. During family devotions that evening, she shared her experience and the family rejoiced together about her victory.

DISCUSSION TIME

What was the key to Jamie’s victory?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
Are you ever afraid?



ASK YOUR CHILD:
What can you do when you feel fear?

PRAYER:

- Parents, pray for your children to learn to pray right away when fear strikes.
- Kids, pray for your parents to know what to do when they have to do hard things.



TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is blessing a shelter or the Tupelo Children's Mansion. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, create a song or rap using the words of Psalm 46.



Family Project

□ Saturday

Research a shelter in your community or discuss with your family the ministry of Tupelo Children's Mansion. Share details with care in a way that helps your children understand the needs others have for safety and refuge as is appropriate for their age levels. Have a time of family prayer for the shelter or the Mansion and discuss how your family could make a contribution of either goods or finances to bless the ministry. Consider also writing a note of encouragement to be mailed to the shelter or the Mansion.



tupelo **children's
mansion**

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Carry the idea of the family project into ministering to each other. Could it be that your child struggles with fear? Create a safe place for opening up to talk about what makes us afraid. Be vulnerable about your own fears, but resolute in the truth that God is our refuge and makes us brave to face our fears.

Too often we oversimplify the path of a disciple. Yes, a disciple of Jesus should walk in victory as Psalm 46 declares, but that path is not without harrowing obstacles that spark fear. Psalm 46:2, however, indicates that we are not to stay locked in fear. Have a transparent conversation about the reality of fear and how we look to Jesus for help. Likewise, remember in all teaching moments the need to be realistic about life as a disciple—we will face trouble, but God will be a refuge.

A Foiled Plan

Read and discuss Psalm 55 below or in your family Bible.

☐ Sunday



¹ Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

² Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

⁴ My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

⁵ Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

⁶ And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

⁷ Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

¹² For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

¹³ But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

¹⁴ We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

¹⁶ As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

¹⁷ Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

²² Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God cares about our problems.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Psalm 55 as a family. Discuss what was happening to the writer of this psalm.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What was the writer's complaint?
- What did the writer do about this problem?
- What does this tell us to do about our problems?
- What will God do when we cast our burden upon Him?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God cares about our problems.

The writer of this psalm knew God was there with him, helping him. He took time to pray several times a day. He counted on God to take care of him during the problem and solve it.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- When should we pray about a problem? Before, in the middle of it, or after the problem has been solved?
- What does the word *sustain* mean when it says, "he shall sustain thee"?



This Week's Life Lesson

I will cast my cares upon
the Lord through prayer.

PRAYER:

Pray for each family member that they remember to call upon the Lord throughout the day.



Fun Facts!

David was confident God would hear his prayer. For humans, we hear sounds because God gave us ears.

- Even when you are asleep, your ears don't stop hearing; your brain just chooses to ignore the sounds and vibrations.
- Your middle ear has three small bones, and their Latin names reflect that they look like a hammer, anvil, and saddle stirrup.
- Your earwax's chemicals help your ear fight off infections.
- Your ears even help you maintain your balance by sending messages to your brain to alert your muscles.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Psalm 55 as a family. Make one list of everything the psalmist asks God to do. Make another list of everything the passage indicates we can do as humans.

Did You Know?

The custom of devout Hebrews was to pray evening, morning, and at noon. They began their day in the evening, so David mentioned the evening first in Psalm 55:17 when declaring that he would call out to God. He had complete confidence that God would hear him, take care of him, and save him. We too can trust in and depend upon God to keep us safe during our problems.



Sing "I've Got Peace Like a River," or write your own song about casting your cares on the Lord.



Write your problems on slips of paper and then wad them up. Take turns tossing your wadded up problem into the trash. When it goes in, everyone should shout, "God takes care of our problems."



Journal about what it takes to have David's confidence in God when he wrote this psalm.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Psalm 55.

- “Wonderful Peace”
by PPH Kids Music
- “Prodigal” by Ryan Trimble

Featured Song

“Because You Love Me”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

In prayer, surrender problems to God and thank Him for the answers ahead of time.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Drive by a river moving quietly or another quiet body of water and compare having God’s peace when you have a problem to the quiet of the water.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will cast my cares upon the Lord through prayer.*

With his head in his hands, Deion stared at his science project.

As Dad walked by Deion’s room, he noticed the dejected look. “What’s up, Deion?” he inquired.

“I know I’m missing one step, and I cannot figure it out,” Deion moaned. “On top of that, it’s due Friday, and if it’s late Mr. Fredson takes points off our grade.”

“Well Deion, since it seems you’re stuck with a problem, need someone who can help you figure it out, and that someone is not me,” Dad smiled as he responded.

In a sudden lightbulb moment, Deion head nearly shouted, “Boy, did I ever forget. Pray, Deion, pray. God is here and knows what I need.”

“Right. Let’s do so right now,” Dad said as he joined Deion in prayer.

The next morning Deion came bounding down the stairs humming a tune. Dad knew what had happened. Deion was ready with his project by the due date.

DISCUSSION TIME

Does God always answer our prayers? How do you know?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
Why does God allow problems?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Why should we pray for our problems?



PRAYER:

- Parents, pray for your children to be willing to hear God whatever way He answers their prayers.
- Kids, pray for your parents to help you learn to accept answers from God that may say grow, no, slow, or go.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is a Prayer Jar. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

Go Grow
Slow No

□ Saturday



Family Project

Gather mason jars with lids for each family member. Have a decorating party for each to prepare their jar. Attach the words *Prayer Jar* to the front of the jar or on a tag hanging from it. Prepare prayer slips for each one. Practice using it throughout the weekend. Bring them to family devotions at the end of the week and share both the problems and answers that were given. For those not answered, keep them in the jar and continue believing for the answer.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

It's no secret that prayer is a prerequisite to becoming lifelong healthy disciples. The challenge is finding the way that best connects with your children so they develop healthy prayer lives of their own. Look for ways that best engage them to create prayer rituals for your home.

One prayer practice is developing an answered prayer journal for each family member. Instruct everyone that each time a prayer is answered, write about it in the prayer journal. Encourage family members to review the journal frequently to build their faith. Periodically, share the answered prayer journal at family devotions.

Write My Words

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Jeremiah 36:1-32 in relation to II Timothy 4:2-4 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

II Timothy 4:2-4 (King James Version)

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Jeremiah 36:1-32 (paraphrased)

God spoke to Jeremiah, "Get a scroll. Write these warnings to Israel. Perhaps they will repent." Jeremiah and a scribe named Baruch wrote down everything God spoke.

Jeremiah sent Baruch to the Temple to read the scroll. As Baruch read, the guards asked, "Who gave you these words?"

Baruch responded, "God spoke through Jeremiah, and I wrote down the message."

The guards warned Baruch and Jeremiah to hide as they took the message to King Jehoiakim. As each passage was read, the king cut it out with a pen knife and threw it into the fire. Several helpers warned that it was a bad idea to burn God's Word, but the king ignored them.

From their place of hiding, God again spoke to Jeremiah, telling him to write down everything contained in the first scroll. This time, however, God specifically added an additional punishment for King Jehoiakim's disobedience. Again, they wrote everything God spoke and shared it with the people.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: We must listen to and obey God's Word.

Discuss any questions about this Bible event. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review II Timothy 4:2-4 as a family.
Find the definitions for the words
in verse 2: *reprove, rebuke, exhort.*

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What does it mean to be instant in season and out of season?
- Why was Paul telling Timothy to preach as instructed?
- How important is it for us to listen to and obey God's Word?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

We must listen to and obey God's Word.

We may hear God's Word, but it is far more important to listen to and obey His Word. To obey is to do, to take action, and to respond positively to instructions. The Bible says that we are to "be doers of the Word and not hearers only" (James 1:22). When we obey, we do what we are instructed to do.

To be successful in something, you must follow the instructions. God's Word is our instructions how to know Him. If we really want to be close to Him and experience all the blessings that only come from that choice, we must listen to and obey God's Word.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What helps us plant God's Word inside us?
- What are we to do with the Word once we have studied it?

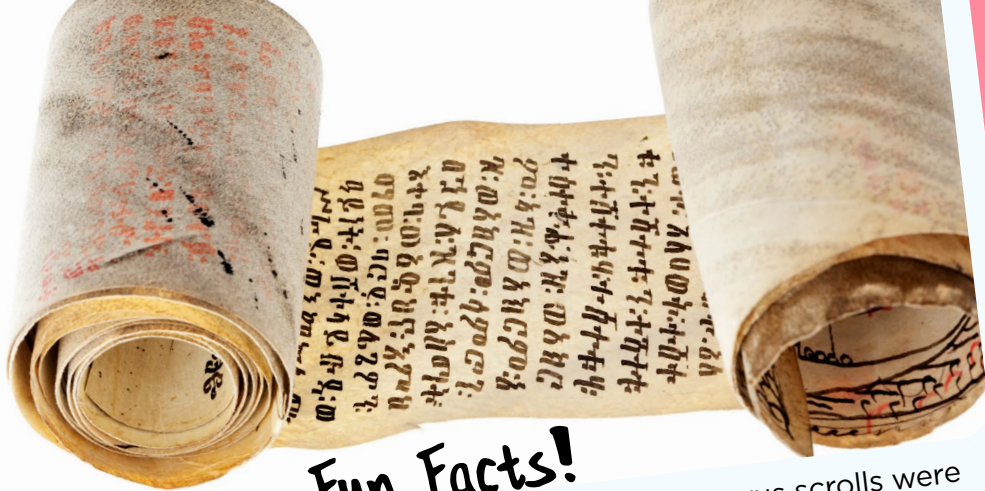
This Week's
Life Lesson

I will listen to, obey,
and preach God's Word.



PRAYER:

As a family, hold up your Bible.
Ask God's guidance to listen to and obey His Word.



Fun Facts!

Ancient scrolls were made of leather or papyrus. Papyrus scrolls were made from the papyrus stalk, cut into strips, soaked in water to soften them, and laid in crisscross rows. The sheets were pounded together and rubbed smooth with shells. When dry, they could be written on with black ink made from carbon soot mixed with water and tree sap and applied with pens made from reeds. Errors in writing could be erased with water. Leather scrolls eventually replaced papyrus as the preferred writing material.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Jeremiah 36:1-32 in relation to II Timothy 4:2-4. Find what the king did that revealed if he did or did not listen to and obey the Word of the Lord.

Did You Know?

In the Bible lesson we are studying, the guards warned Baruch and Jeremiah to hide because they knew that the king would be displeased with the written word. Because they believed the Word was from God, they wished to save both Jeremiah and Baruch, but they were required to inform the king of what they heard.



Sing “Obey” (*Kids in Praise*) or write your own song about listening to and obeying God.



Take turns and whisper a quiet command for others to respond. Those listening must close their eyes, hear the instructions, and do what they think they heard.



Journal about the importance of listening carefully and obeying instructions.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on II Timothy 4:2-4.

- “Forever My King”
by Frankie Taylor
- “Thank You, Jesus, for the Blood”
by Charity Gayle
- “Goodbye, Yesterday”
by Kristen Hicks

Featured Song

“A Love for Truth”
by Dylan Woodward



PRAYER:

Hold hands together and pray that everyone works in unity to listen to and obey God’s Word for the family.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

A parent gives a variety of commands the family follows. Then kids get a chance to give a command for everyone to follow. Discuss if you prefer to give commands or follow them.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will listen to, obey, and preach God’s Word.*

“Don’t preach to me, preacher boy,” Doug threatened as he thumped Zach’s chest. “I don’t have to listen to you. I’ll do what I want.” Doug stomped away angrily.

Zach shook his head. “I didn’t want him to make a mistake by not obeying Pastor. I didn’t think I was preaching.”

Then at Wednesday night’s Bible study, Doug approached Zach gingerly. Looking down, Doug said, “I, uh, I’m sorry I treated you so bad last Sunday.”

Zach responded, “That’s OK. I’m sure you had a reason.”

Doug explained, “Your words really cut through me. When I got home, my parents and I talked. I repented and God filled me with the Holy Ghost.”

Zach smiled, “That’s the kind of news I like to hear.”

Doug smiled back, “That’s the kind of news I like to share.”

DISCUSSION TIME

What ways can you share the good news with others your age?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What are some good Bible verses I can share with others?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What does listening to and obeying God's Word mean to you?

PRAYER:

- Kids, join hands with your parents and ask God to help you listen to and obey them.
- Parents, lay your hands on your kids' shoulders and ask God to help them learn to obey His Word.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is going out on outreach. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

Family Project Saturday

Plan to join the outreach team for the week's activity or ask the outreach director about an outreach activity your family can do over the weekend.



The Big Picture: Discipleship

Put together your own family outreach plan that can be implemented monthly. Examples: a home visit plan, visiting shut ins, a Bible study with acquaintances or friends. As a family, plan it into your schedule along with preparing needed materials. Remind everyone that this mission is one way of listening to, obeying, and preaching God's Word. In the big picture, healthy disciples seek to help others become disciples.

Building a Place of Worship

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read Ezra 3:1-13 in relation to Psalm 118:1-2, 28-29 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 28-29 (King James Version)

¹ O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

² Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

²⁸ Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.

²⁹ O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Ezra 3:1-13 (paraphrased)

The people of Israel were in Babylonian exile for seventy years. Finally they returned to Jerusalem and realized they needed to rebuild the Temple. It was God's house, and it needed to be rebuilt according to God's Word. So they read and closely followed the Law of Moses.

First, they realized that to worship in God's presence, it required repentance, which required a blood sacrifice, which required an altar. To build the altar, they followed exactly what was written in God's Word. Once the altar was finished and they could resume sacrifices, they were ready to rebuild the foundation.

Once the Temple's foundation was finished, the people were ready to give thanks because God had restored them to their home. The priests donned their robes, the musicians picked up their instruments, and everyone praised the Lord like King David. They sang with all of their might about how good God is and how His love endures forever. The shouts of "Praise the Lord!" could be heard for miles away.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's Word teaches us to worship Him.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

As a family, read or review Ezra 3:1-13 in relation to Psalm 118:1-2, 28-29. Find what was first required to worship in God's presence.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What do you believe worship is?
- Why is repentance required for us to be able to worship God?
- Why is an altar required to worship God?
- What did the people do that we should also do to worship God?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's Word teaches us to worship Him.

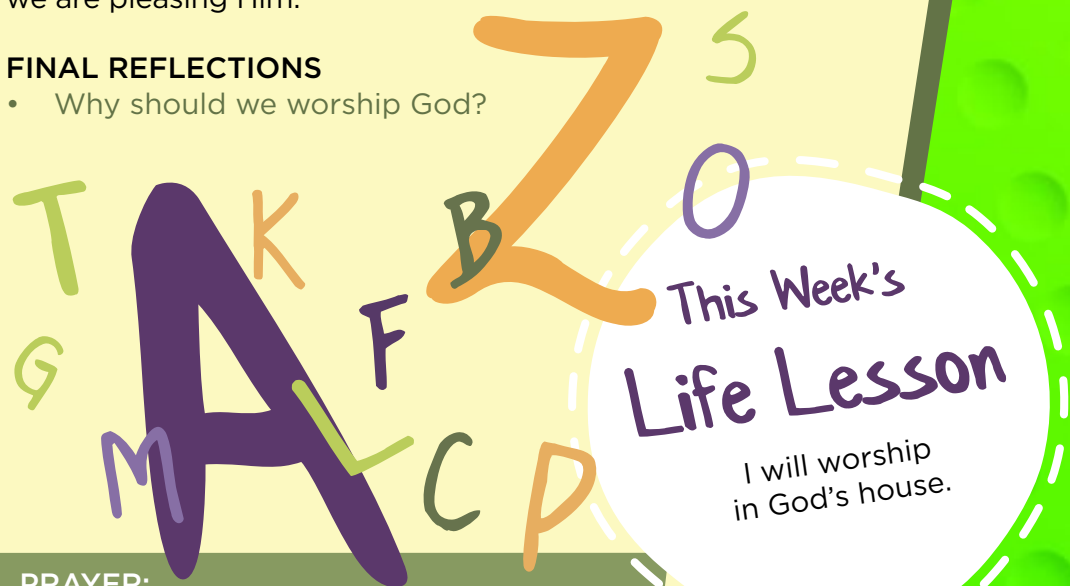
Worship is our human effort to honor the Lord with our words, actions, attitudes—all of our hearts. Worship includes praise, thanksgiving, and exaltation, which means to applaud and to compliment. We were created to worship God.

Worship brings us into God's presence. When we take time to worship Him, we give Him the highest compliment. We tell Him and others that He is the most important One in our life.

He loves the praises of His people. When we truly praise Him, we are pleasing Him.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Why should we worship God?



PRAYER:

In your prayer time, focus on praise. Using the alphabet, take turns so that each person shares something they love about God until the whole family has gone from A to Z.



Fun Facts!

Altars in early Bible times were made of earth or stones found in a field, and no tool could be used to build it. It could be made of a rock, a single large stone, or a number of stones. It had no certain shape. After the exile, the first thing to be rebuilt was the altar, and then the Temple was built. The altar was the first and most important part of rebuilding the Temple.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Ezra 3:1-13 in relation to Psalm 118:1-2, 28-29. Underline the steps it took to be able to worship.

Did You Know?

An altar is a raised area in a house of worship where people can honor God with offerings. It is referred to as “God’s table” often in the Bible.



Sing your favorite praise song, or write your own song about how great God is.



Stand and sing. Call out prompts like, “stand on one leg” or “clap your hands.”



Journal about what worship means to you.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Psalm 118:1-2, 28-29.

- “This Dwelling Place”
by Urshan College
- “Be Exalted/I Exalt Thee”
by Brittani Scott
- “Here on Earth
(As in Heaven)”
by First Church Worship

Featured Song

“Me and My House”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Have a glow stick praise parade around the house or outside while singing the songs.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

On the way to church, each person takes one or more letters of the word worship to think of a word that describes worship. Waving your hands...
Overcoming...

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will worship in God's house.*

“Mom, I’m confused,” Jia stated as she tucked her offering into the envelope. “Pastor said that giving our offering is an act of worship. How is that worship?”

“Any time we give something that we value to God, it is an act of worship,” Mom said. “We are honoring God. Whether we lift our hands, clap, pray, or give our tithes and offerings, we are honoring Him, so we are worshipping.”

“Okay, but sometimes I don’t feel like worshipping at all and I still give my offering. How does that work?” Jia asked.

“Well, if you only do it out of duty, then you really are not honoring God. If left unchecked, giving becomes a chore. That is why we must be sincere in our worship when praising Him, praying, or giving our offering.”

“That makes sense. Well, this offering is saved for honoring God,” Jia smiled as she tucked it into her pocket. “I, for one, plan to worship God any way that pleases Him.”

DISCUSSION TIME

What does “being a cheerful giver” have to do with worship?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
What does God think about worship?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
Why is worship in God's house important?

PRAYER:

- Kids, ask God to guide your family to worship the way that He likes.
- Parents, pray for your children to have the desire to worship God.



TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is finding ways to worship. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.



Family Project

□ Saturday

Throughout the weekend each family member jots down ways of worship that are mentioned in the Bible. Share your findings at your next family devotions, turn on some music, and take time to worship God by doing the things agreed upon on your lists.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Worship is certainly an important element of discipleship. We often think of it as how exuberant we are during the song service at our local church. Worship in those moments is beautiful, but worship extends into other areas of life. We should have times in our home we exuberantly praise God like we do at church. We also should think of how the various parts of our lives could honor God. Look for worship moments you can foster with your children so worship is second nature.

Incorporate into your family devotions regular times of worship using the different methods you found in the Bible. Take time to find each method in Scripture and discuss what it means and how it is pleasing to God. Set aside a few minutes at each devotional time to worship the Bible way.



Lost and Found

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below, or read II Chronicles 34:8–33 in relation to II Timothy 3:16–17 in your family Bible.

Week

51

☐ Sunday

II Timothy 3:16–17 (King James Version)

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

II Chronicles 34:8–33 (paraphrased)

When Josiah became king of Judah at just eight years old, the Temple was falling apart and God's Word had been largely forgotten. While everyone said they believed in God, nobody really knew much about Him. King Josiah sought to change this.

In his eighteenth year as king, Josiah directed workers to start fixing the Temple. As they did, they stumbled across a scroll containing the Law of Moses—God's Word. Nobody had seen this scroll in a long time. When they read this scroll to King Josiah, it made him so sad that he tore his clothes. He ordered, "Go ask God how angry He is with us for not obeying His Word."

The workers returned saying, "God says that Israel must be punished for their disobedience. Because you humbled yourself and repented, however, God is not going to punish Israel while you are king."

When King Josiah heard this, he was thankful God had honored his humility and repentance, and he hoped that Israel might still repent. He gathered all the people and read the Word of God to them. Then Josiah destroyed all of the idols in the land. Josiah ruled for thirty-one years, and the Israelites obeyed God during his reign.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God honors humility and repentance.

Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Monday

Bible Focus

Read or review II Timothy 3:16–17 as a family. Find the definitions for the words: *doctrine*, *reproof*, *correction*, and *instruction*.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What did Paul mean by saying that Scripture is profitable to us?
- What should we do to obey what is said in II Timothy 3:16–17?
- What reason is given to obey this advice?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God honors humility and repentance.

Having a humble and repentant heart is important because it means we respect our relationship with God. Repenting every day keeps our heart right with God and exposes those things for which we need to repent. Our prayers are more effective because we have a clear mind to understand and pray God's will for our lives and others.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What does repentance do for us?
- Why is humility so important to repentance?

This Week's
Life Lesson

*I will repent before God
and obey His Word.*

PRAYER:

Each family member finds a spot and prays a prayer of repentance.

Fun Facts!



Imagine becoming king over a country when you were only eight years old! Someone must have taught Josiah the Word of God. When he was sixteen, he sought God and discovered that the nation needed to repent. He destroyed all the idols in the land. Idols were false gods people worshiped when they strayed from the true God. When Josiah was only twenty-six, he hired men to repair the Temple. It was quite an undertaking for a young person.

□ Tuesday

Read or review II Timothy 3:16–17 as a family. Circle the word righteousness in this passage and discuss how it relates to God honoring humility and repentance.

Did You Know?

To tear one's clothes meant that the person was expressing strong emotion, such as anger, shame, or mourning. Garments were also torn at times of deep national significance. Such was the case of Josiah as he repented when he heard the words of the Book of the Law.



Sing a song about repentance, or write your own song about asking God's forgiveness.



Time how long it takes to pull all the tissues out of a tissue box. Compete for the fastest time. Then talk about how repentance means emptying everything out of our heart so God can fill it.



Journal about how you can remain humble and repentant.

□ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to II Timothy 3:16-17.

- “Control” by Dylan Woodward
- “Send Your Fire” by Bonilla Band
- “Whatever It Takes”
from *Truth Odyssey VBS*

Featured Song

“The Call”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

Write the words *humble* and *repentance* on index cards and lay them apart on the table. Lay hands on each card and pray together for hearts of humility and repentance.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Pray over your neighborhood. Drive through it and stop along the way, praying for different neighborhoods and praying at church to be ready to receive people from your community.

□ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I will repent before God and obey His Word.*

“I really blew it this time,” Rick thought to himself as he slumped into the principal’s office.

“Hi Rick,” Pastor Roberts said as he stepped into the office.

Startled, Rick quickly hung his head, “They called you, too?”

“Yes, it’s time we had a talk,” Pastor said. “Don’t you think it is time to turn around and go the right direction?”

“Yes,” mumbled Rick, “I’m tired of living this way. How can I get right with God, Pastor?”

“Well, you can begin right now. Simply humble yourself before the Lord and repent,” Pastor encouraged.

After prayer and many tears, Rick felt free. One final thing he prayed, “Show me how to obey Your Word every day, Jesus.” God honored that prayer of humility and repentance.

DISCUSSION TIME

How are humility and repentance keys to growing in the kingdom of God?

☐ Friday

Talk Time

ASK YOUR PARENT:
What does it mean to
repent daily?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What words of prayer
help us repent?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for your parents to love God's Word.
- Parents, pray for your kids to keep the Word of God in their hearts and obey it.



BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is cleaning up a mess. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

To teach that repentance is a daily part of prayer and life, at least once a week during family devotions, take extra time for everyone to repent. Encourage kids that repentance is something we do regularly, even when we feel we have no need to repent. Healthy disciples understand the principle from 1 John 1 that as fallible humans we will sin; each day we need to repent and ask God to clean out our hearts afresh. Teach your kids to cultivate a lifestyle of repentance.

□ Saturday Family Project

On Saturday morning ask everyone to hide their dirty laundry somewhere in the house. When someone finds a pile of dirty clothes, bring it to a designated place. (Then help get the laundry done.) At family devotions, help your children understand the correlation between the mess that dirty clothes create and the mess of sin in our hearts. Share the fact that each person has the responsibility to repent and obey God's Word.

Next walk around your neighborhood and pick up trash. As you do so, pray for your community. Ask God to show mercy to your neighbors. Pray that He would give you wisdom and an opportunity to share His Word with them.

God's Word Is My Sword

Read the summary of this week's Bible lesson below,
or read Hebrews 4:12-16 in your family Bible.



☐ Sunday

Hebrews 4:12-16

- ¹² For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
- ¹³ Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.
- ¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.
- ¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
- ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

TRUTH ABOUT GOD: God's Word judges the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

Discuss any questions about this Bible passage and how we can follow God today. Pray together for God to help you this week in following Him.

Read or review Hebrews 4:12-16 as a family. Find the phrases that describe the two-edged sword and discuss what the Word of God is.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What does the Word of God do?
- Can we hide anything from God? Why?
- Does God care about our thoughts and the intents of our heart?
- What are we allowed to do in times of need?

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's Word judges the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

God is a discerner, one who knows and understands us better than we know ourselves. He knows every thought we think and every plan we make. We cannot hide one thought from Him. He knows our thoughts before we speak.

God's Word judges the thoughts and intents of our hearts. His wisdom gives us direction when we turn our thoughts and the intents of our heart over to Him. We find His direction for us when we take time to enter His throne room, listen to His Word, and follow His instructions. Any judgments He makes, He makes on our behalf for our own good. We simply need to allow Him rule over our mind and heart.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- What did Jesus do that shows us He understands our thoughts?
- Do you think Jesus was tempted with thoughts contrary to His Word?

PRAYER:

Place one hand on your heart and ask God to keep your heart right. Place your hands on your head and ask God to direct your thoughts.



This Week's
Life Lesson

I must please God with
my words, thoughts,
and desires.



Fun Facts!

The high priest was the chief religious leader in the Temple of Jerusalem. He was the only one who could enter the Holy of Holies, (the innermost part of the Temple) once a year. The high priest had charge of Temple finances and was the administrator. In the early period of the second Temple, he collected taxes and maintained order as the recognized political head of the nation.

□ Tuesday

Read or review Hebrews 4:12-16 as a family. Discuss what duties the high priest may have had in ancient Israel.



Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” or write your own song about pleasing God.



Assign a number on the number cube to each person. Roll the cube and the person who has the number that comes up shares a word(s) or thought(s) that encourages others.



Journal about ways you can please God through your words, in your thoughts, and in the desires you have.

Did You Know?

In Hebrews 4:14 it says that Jesus is our High Priest.

The priests of the past had to sacrifice yearly. As a man, Jesus was subject to all the weaknesses and temptations that we are, so He could relate to our struggles. Jesus only had to offer His sacrifice once, suffering death, to gain redemption for all who come to God through Him. As our High Priest, he gives us the boldness to come directly to Him with our needs.

☐ Wednesday

Sing these songs and reflect on how they relate to Hebrews 4:12-16.

- “All to You” by Bryan Pound
- “Wonderful Peace”
by PPH Kids Music
- “All I Am” by Anthony Trimble

Featured Song

“Over and Over”
by PPH Kids Music



PRAYER:

March to the music and ask Jesus to order your steps every day.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

All passengers close their eyes tightly. When the driver says to open them and look at something he picks out, they are to say the first good thought that comes to mind.

☐ Thursday

Read the story below and discuss how the Life Lesson applies to you.

Life Lesson: *I must please God with my words, thoughts, and desires.*

“Today is report card day,” Seth mused as he rode to school. He felt good about most classes, but English was a real problem. Words challenged him, and some of his papers were barely passing.

After report cards were handed out and classes dismissed, Seth tucked the card into his backpack. “Aren’t you going to see how you did?” Megan, his sister, asked as she opened her card.

“Naw, I’ll look at it with Dad and Mom later,” He expressed.

As Seth and his parents sat down for devotions, Dad asked, “Seth, did you get your report card?” Seth slowly handed it to Dad and slumped. As Dad looked it over, he said, “This is a good report for you. You should be happy with your work.”

Seth looked the card over. He made a B in English! Noticing his surprise, his dad said, “Your teacher and I spoke. She said you made such a good effort that she felt you deserved a good grade.”

“Wow!” Seth beamed as he thanked God for all His help.

DISCUSSION TIME

What happens when we do our best in our thoughts and words?

☐ Friday

Talk Time



ASK YOUR PARENT:
How did you keep your thoughts and words right as you were growing up?

ASK YOUR CHILD:
What do you think you can do more of to make sure you think and say right things?

PRAYER:

- Kids, pray for God's guidance through your parents.
- Parents, pray for your kids to seek God daily for the right thoughts, words, and desires.



YOU ARE
Amazing

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Kids, retell this week's Bible story in your own words.

TIP FOR TOMORROW

Tomorrow's project is sending notes of encouragement. Preview the project on the next page and begin planning for it in the family schedule.



□ Saturday

Family Project

Purchase enough blank note cards for each person to have several. Instruct the family to take time throughout the weekend to write an encouraging note to others. At the end of the week, gather all the cards and pray over them. Ask God to use the notes to minister a word of encouragement, and send all the cards.

The Big Picture: Discipleship

Healthy disciples care for others. This week look for ways to prompt your kids to share a good thought or word with others. Look for opportunities to compliment your kids as well. This lifelong journey of discipleship should be joyful. It's important they not only are corrected, but encouraged. Find ways to speak affirmation for their efforts to follow the Lord. Conclude this annual journey with a celebration. Think of what would be your kids' favorite meal or treat and include it. Have a time that you make a speech to honor each child and how you've seen them grow this year. Pray blessings over one another and give God thanks for your family.