

A FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

That They May Know

*24 Bible stories to read, talk about,
and pray through together*

*“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he
will not turn from it.”*

PROVERBS 22:6 (NIV)



CHARLES LOPER · WITH MARC RYLANDER, JIM & KAYE JOHNS



A FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

That They May Know

*Helping your children know and understand
the Word of God and the God of the Word*

Now you can share fascinating, familiar stories from the Bible—
and build a firm foundation of truth for your children... and
their children after them.

*“That they may know from the rising of the sun to
its setting that there is none besides Me. I am the
LORD, and there is no other.”*

ISAIAH 45:6 (NKJV)

© 2010 Charles Loper, Master's Foundation. Redesigned edition, 2026, shared freely through P3 Fellowship (p3fellowship.org). Not for sale.

Scripture quotations marked ESV, and all “Hide it in your heart” verses, are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version®, © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Illustrations created for this edition.

DEDICATION

To the Greatest Family

*This family devotional guide, That They May Know,
is dedicated to the greatest family that anyone could ask for:*

my loving wife Carol of 44 years;
our daughter Lovi and husband Jeb, their sons Bobby and Chas;
our son Chip and wife Nicki, their children Sophia, Kaitlin and Chase.

*If God had chosen to give me nothing more than Jesus, the Word of God
and my precious, treasured family, life would have been great. To God be
the glory!*

Charles Loper

SPECIAL THANKS

I would like to thank **Marc Rylander**, my pastor at the Prestonwood North Campus, for not only contributing material to this devotional but encouraging me to go forward with it.

I would also like to thank my pastor and friend **Jack Graham**, who for over 20 years has helped me and my family grow in the Lord.

I will always be indebted, and words are not enough to begin to say THANK YOU to **Jim and Kaye Johns** for their love and the endless hours of work they have poured into writing this devotional. They have contributed enriching insight, and I feel as though I handed them a seed that they planted and watered, and as a result, it's become a beautiful flower.



A GIFT TO YOUR FAMILY

This guide was first provided free of charge through the Master's Foundation and Jim and Kaye Johns' PrayerPower Ministries. This redesigned edition is shared freely by **P3 Fellowship** for families who want to build a foundation of faith at home. Find more resources on the Grow page at **p3fellowship.org**.

Contents

GETTING STARTED

Resources	5
A Note to Parents	6
Parent Overview	7
Prayer Guidelines	9
Parent Commitment	10
Family Celebration Trail	11

OLD TESTAMENT

 01 Creation	12
 02 The Fall of Man	14
 03 Noah and the Ark	16
 04 Joseph	18
 05 Moses and the Burning Bush	20
 06 Miracle at the Red Sea	22
 07 David, the Boy	24
 08 David and Goliath	26
 09 Jonah	28
 10 Daniel and His Friends	30

NEW TESTAMENT

 11 Jesus' Birth	32
 12 Jesus' Temptation	34
 13 Money and Possessions	36
 14 Jesus Feeds Five Thousand	38
 15 Jesus Calms the Storm	40
 16 Jesus Walks on the Water	42
 17 Jesus Heals Ten Lepers	44
 18 The Good Samaritan	46
 19 How to Pray	48
 20 The Good Shepherd	50
 21 The Prodigal Son	52
 22 The Widow's Offering	54
 23 The Way, the Truth and the Life	56
 24 Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet	58

Resources

That They May Know is intended to help parents teach their children the timeless truths found in the familiar stories of the Bible, God’s written revelation of Himself, His will and His ways.

The devotion guides on pages 12 through 59 refer to the Bible stories as they appear in two helpful resources:

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

The Jesus Storybook Bible

Text by Sally Lloyd-Jones, illustrations by Jago. Published by Zondervan in its Zonderkidz imprint (2007). You will find these stories especially appropriate for very young children.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN & ADULTS

ESV Illustrated Family Bible

Published by Crossway (2008). Text and illustrations are appropriate for adults and older children.

ABOUT PAGE NUMBERS

Page numbers in this guide refer to the original editions listed above. If your edition is different, simply look up the story by its title or Scripture reference. You can also read any story straight from your family Bible.

All designed to enrich your family devotions and prayer times...

By reading the stories from one or both of these Bibles, by following the devotion guides beginning on page 12, and by a focus on praying together, you may lead your entire family to a deeper sense of God’s work in the world, and of His desire to be known and understood by His “kids” of all ages.



A Note to Parents

My children are grown now. I have learned the truth of what my parents once said—that I couldn't quite grasp when I was young—about children and how quickly they are grown and gone.

We only have them for a brief time. Most of what they will learn along the way is from the world's storehouse of the not-quite-true.

Now that I teach a class of young married adults (most of them with small children), I am moved deeply by an urge (from God, I believe) to help equip these young parents with something I wish I had had when I was their age. This teaching guide that you're holding—*That They May Know*—is the something that could have made our child-rearing task much more effective and rewarding. Carol and I agree that we would have welcomed some help in putting Bible stories into a structured, conversational and appropriate form for our nightly devotional sessions with Lovi and Chip.

We now recognize that our situation—and perhaps yours—was that we were the ones who needed some help. We could have used guidance in communicating the spiritual truths to be found in even the most familiar Bible stories. We knew the stories about Jonah and Noah and Moses—that it was God who spoke through the burning bush, and who gave the plan for that big boat, and who prepared a fish in whose belly a man could live for three days.

But how to engage our children in the story—that is where we could have used the most help. We could tell them the facts, but we were not so ready for the more practical step of thinking through, in child-terms, just how to plant the truths in their little minds and hearts. We wanted life-long results, but we were not adequately prepared to bridge the gap between the under-equipped minds of grownups and the eager, uncluttered minds of children.

If you sense a need for help, as we did, I hope you will find it in *That They May Know*. Read the Parent Overview beginning on page 7; it will help you get started and better understand just how helpful this approach can be for you and your children.

The quote from Isaiah 45:6, on the title page, reminds us that there is but one God, and that He has revealed Himself in His Word—and most completely in the person of Jesus Christ. At an even deeper heart-level, we consider our Lord's final prayer, as He declared the reality of our past, present and future:

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

JOHN 17:3 (NIV)

This is my prayer for you and your children, now and into the coming generations. May this book help you accomplish what you desire for those who follow after you.

Charles Loper

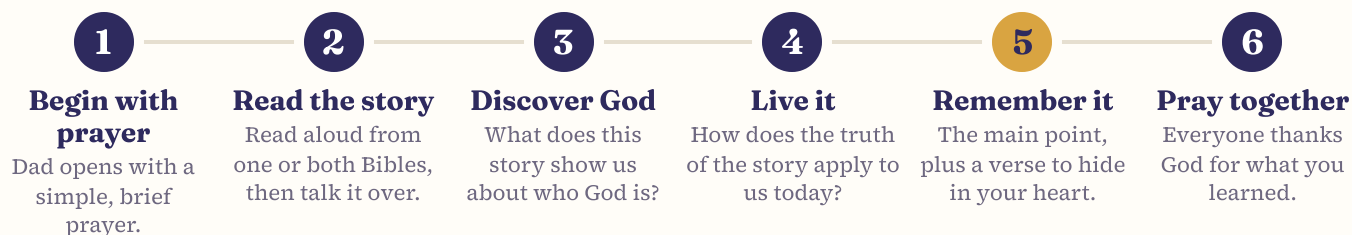
with Marc Rylander, Jim and Kaye Johns

Parent Overview

That They May Know provides a format for parents to use in planning family devotion times to read and discuss Bible stories with children. There are 24 devotion guides. At two or three times a week, you'll finish in eight to twelve weeks, and establish a consistent pattern that can easily be continued on your own.

The shape of every devotion

Each devotion is based on a single Bible story or passage of Scripture. Chapter references are provided, along with page numbers for the story in both the ESV Family Bible and the Jesus Storybook Bible. Each guide follows the same six steps, with suggested answers included:



WHEN YOU DISCUSS THE STORY

- Ask older children to let younger ones talk first.
- Clarify unfamiliar words.
- Prompt with questions by asking, "What else happened?"
- Make sure the main points of the story are brought out.

WHEN YOU DISCOVER GOD

- How did God reveal Himself and His purposes in the unfolding of the story?
- How did God work out His purposes?
- How did the characters in the story live out what they learned?

How to read each guide

Regular text	What to say or ask the children.	→ <i>Violet italics</i>	Just for you, the parent: suggested answers, Scripture references and ideas to guide the conversation.
Words to know	Terms to explain before or during the reading.	Parent Note	Background to read ahead of time.
Main point	The key truth you want the children to remember.	Hide it in your heart	A short verse to say together and memorize.



Making it work in your home

Why family devotions are important

If this is a two-parent family, this is a time for Dad to be the spiritual leader of the family. (Without a Dad, Mom leads.) Dad should make sure the children understand why it's important for the whole family to study the Bible and pray together. Mom can be included in the discussion, but Dad leads here and with every family devotion. (If Dad travels, it will be best to plan devotion times around his schedule, or when he can join by phone or video call.)

How these family devotions will work

- Schedule half an hour for family devotions, two or three times a week (not necessarily the same days each week).
- Plan to celebrate your successful family devotions after every eight stories, about once a month. Reward the family with something out of the ordinary that the children will look forward to: watch a movie, order in pizza, make popcorn, go out for ice cream, play a favorite board game.
- Let the children track your progress on the Family Celebration Trail (page 11). Each time you finish a devotion, they color in the next stepping stone.

Important to consider

- Read the stories from one or both Bibles, depending on the ages of your children. The guides include story details from both Bibles.
- Encourage older children to give younger children an opportunity to answer and share first.
- Ask open-ended questions that can't be answered "yes" or "no" to prompt discussion. Engage all the children in each devotion time, so they will feel they're part of it. Their comments will provide insight for parents.
- Open and close with prayer (suggestions and helps are on the next page).

30

MINUTES A SESSION

2–3

TIMES A WEEK

24

STORIES TO SHARE

Prayer Guidelines

A word for parents

Before you schedule your first family devotion time, parents should pray about it together. Here are some prayer points you might want to include, perhaps taking turns as you pray through the list:

- Praise God for being our God who wants us to know Him.
- Worship Him as our Shepherd who leads us, and acknowledge His leading in your family.
- Thank Him for giving you the desire to lead your children in this way.
- Thank Him for providing these Bibles and guides for you to follow.
- Share your feelings of inadequacy and tell Him how much you're depending on Him.
- Submit your plan for family devotions to Him and ask Him to accomplish His will.
- Share your desire for your children to learn to enjoy studying His Word.
- Ask Him to help you make these devotion times a priority, no matter how busy you are.
- Ask Him to create a sense of excitement for you and the children, so you'll all look forward to these times together.
- Ask Him to help you become comfortable praying together as a family.

1 Open each devotion time with prayer

As spiritual leader, Dad should begin each devotion time with a simple, brief prayer, such as:

"Father, help us to understand this Bible story tonight. Lead us as we talk about it, for we ask this in Jesus' name, amen."

6 Close with prayer, thanking God

Dad takes the lead and gives direction for the prayers:

"As we finish our devotions this evening, let's all thank God for what we have learned. What will you thank God for?"

Take a moment to encourage the children to each think of something specific. Prompt them when you need to.

Then everyone prays, and Dad closes the prayer time:

"Okay, now let's turn that into prayer. Let's each thank God for what we've talked about. We'll let Mom pray first, and then each of you thank God, and then I'll be the last one to pray."

Both Dad and Mom should pray brief, simple prayers to be an example for the children.

Parent Commitment

These Family Devotional Guides are free to parents with the understanding that they will use them with their children at least two times a week—three times is recommended.

We anticipate the need for flexibility, and do not intend this to be a legalistic commitment, but a priority. We are praying that these family devotion times will be pleasant, joyful times that both parents and their children will look forward to.

Twenty-four devotion guides are provided, with the hope that each family will be able to complete them in about three months. The Family Celebration Trail on the next page will help you and your kids track your progress and stay on track, with rewards built in for encouragement.

As you prayerfully consider the opportunity you hold in your hands, think of what it will mean to you and your children if you will pray and discuss these Bible stories and lessons together. Then, if your heart's desire is to use these materials two to three times a week, sign your commitment here to indicate your intention, with God's help, to begin a new spiritual journey with your family, one that your kids will remember for the rest of their lives.

OUR COMMITMENT

“As best we know our hearts, we begin our Family Devotions with the intent to complete this series and move forward on our own. We know we will need God’s help, and we are counting on Him!”

SIGNATURE

SIGNATURE

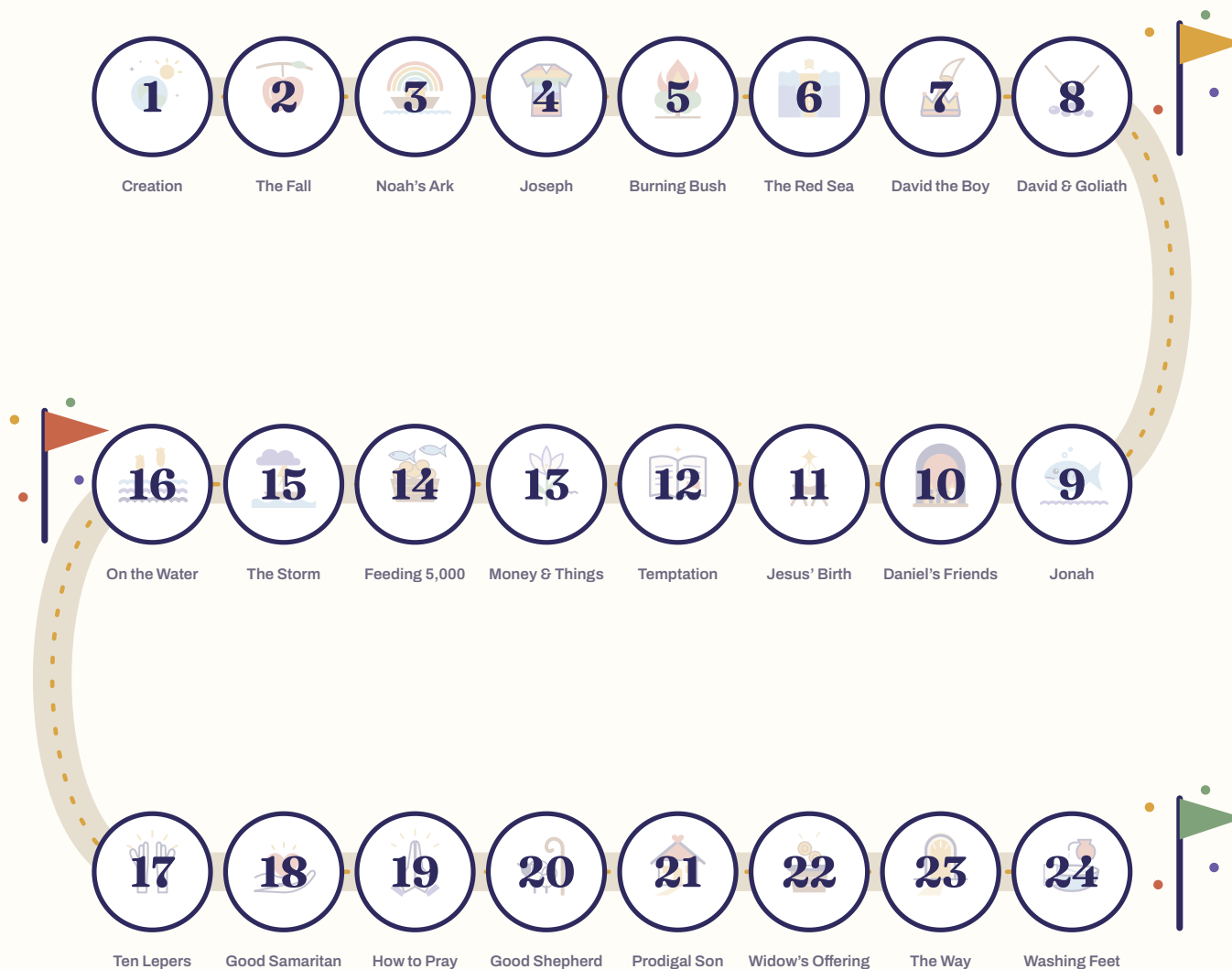
OUR CHILDREN

DATE WE BEGIN

COLOR IN A STONE AFTER EACH DEVOTION

Family Celebration Trail

Each time your family finishes a devotion, let the children color in the next stepping stone. When you reach a flag, it's time to celebrate!



CELEBRATION 1 · STORY 8

Here is what we'll do:

CELEBRATION 2 · STORY 16

Here is what we'll do:

CELEBRATION 3 · STORY 24

Here is what we'll do:



STORY 1 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

Creation

Read: Genesis 1–2

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“The Beginning: A Perfect Home,” pages 18–27

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 12–18 (plus Genesis 1:27)

TONIGHT'S STORY

Where did we all come from? Let's find out!

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

Clarify any terms they might not understand.

PARENT NOTE · MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

We want to emphasize that God made us in His image. The ESV Family Bible skips over Genesis 1:27, “So God created man in his own image.” You’ll want to include it in the story as an extra point, and then explain that we have a body, soul (mind, emotions, will), and spirit. This is important because our spirit is where the Holy Spirit comes to live (John 14:16–17). It’s in our spirit, our heart of hearts, that Jesus lives (John 17:23; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17). It’s our spirit that’s made alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5) when we are born again (John 3:3, 5). Through our spirit, made alive with God’s Spirit, we are able to know (John 17:3) and experience God personally (1 John 1:3).

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

Q Before creation happened, what was there?

→ *...the world didn't exist: no sun, no stars, no earth.*

Q Who was there?

→ *...only God, and He created everything by simply speaking. He said, and it was so!*

PARENT NOTE · ONE GOD, THREE PERSONS

Depending on the age of your children, you may want to introduce the idea that the Hebrew word for “God” (Elohim, el-o-HEEM) is plural; it means “more than one.”

- God our Father is our Creator. He existed before creation. He spoke the world into being.
- Jesus is the Word who was with God, who was God. By Him all things were made (John 1:1–3).
- God’s Spirit is the One who “hovered over the waters” of creation (Genesis 1:2).

Q Of all the things God made, what did God think was His best thing? What did He love the most?

→ *...man and woman, Adam and Eve—human beings, people.*



Creation

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God has always existed. He didn't have to be created.
→ *...He is eternal, without beginning or end.*
- He created the world because He wanted to. He had a plan, and it gave Him joy to create everything.
→ *...He has a plan for our lives today, Jeremiah 29:11; He has created good works for us to do, Ephesians 2:10.*
- God saved the best until last—He created Adam and Eve, and made them a beautiful garden to live in, the Garden of Eden. He created people to love, and to love Him in return.
→ *...nothing can separate us from His love, Romans 8:35–39; He loves us so much, He sent Jesus to save us, John 3:16.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- God is the One who gives us life, just as He gave life to Adam and Eve.
→ *...He forms us inside our mothers before we are born, Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:13–14.*
- Each one of us is as special to God as Adam and Eve were. Just as God made them, He has made each of us—because He wanted to, because He loves us.
→ *...He loves us so much, He sings over us! Zephaniah 3:17.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

In the beginning, God had a plan to create the world for His glory—He made us in His image, and we are each a part of that plan!

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Genesis 1:27 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____

FAMILY NOTES & PRAYER REQUESTS



STORY 2 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

The Fall of Man

Read: Genesis 3

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“The Terrible Lie,” pages 28–36

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 18–21

TONIGHT'S STORY

Adam and Eve's story will show us how lies can get us into big trouble!

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**Satan grew proud**” — pride: thinking you are the best, better than anybody else

“**enmity between you and the woman**” — bad feelings, deep dislike, between Satan (the serpent) and the woman

“**loincloth**” — underwear

“**cursed is the ground**” — things will not go right; they'll be hard, not easy

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

Q Why do you think Eve ate the fruit even though God told her not to?

→ *Satan convinced her that she would be smart like God and know the difference between good and evil. Her pride made her want to be wise like God. Satan lost his place in heaven because of his pride; he wanted to be like God (Isaiah 14:12–15). This is the sin he tempted Eve with, and a sin we still have to deal with today.*

Q Why did God make Adam and Eve leave the garden?

→ *Because they disobeyed Him.*



The Fall of Man

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God enjoyed being with them in the garden, letting them get to know Him.
→ *He loves being with us today too, and we can know Him, even if we can't see Him, John 17:3; 1 John 1:3.*
- God gave them one rule, or commandment: they were not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But He allowed them to choose whether or not to obey.
→ *He gives us the same choice with the commandments He has given us, Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15.*
- God knew they would sin and have to leave the garden, but He made a way for them to come back to Him.
→ *It is important to point this out: from the beginning God promised to send Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, John 14:6. He is the way back to God.*

PARENT NOTE · THE FIRST PROMISE OF JESUS

This requires explanation for children. In the Family Bible (page 20), God says to Satan, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring [in the future generations, Jesus will be born and...] he shall bruise your head....” [Jesus will defeat Satan. In biblical times, when an army was defeated, the king or commander of the losing army would have to lie on the ground, and the winning king would put his foot on his head as a sign of victory. Jesus won the victory over Satan at the cross.]

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- The devil tries to tempt us just like he tempted Eve. He tries to get us to question the things God has told us to do or not to do.
→ *We can trust that God knows and wants what is best for us, because He loves us. He loved us so much He sent Jesus to defeat Satan and make a way for us to come to Him.*
- Sometimes we think little things are not really that important. Eve couldn't see that much wrong with just eating a piece of fruit.
→ *But God knew that eating the fruit would lead Adam and Eve to other sin: “...lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life... the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden.”*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God knew that we would sin like Adam and Eve and be separated from Him. But Jesus defeated Satan and paid the price for our sins on the cross. He made a way for us to come back to God.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 3 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

Noah and the Ark

Read: Genesis 6–9

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“A New Beginning,” pages 38–47

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 24–29

TONIGHT'S STORY

At a time when everyone in the world was living evil lives except for one man, God had to do something drastic. We'll see what He did in our story about Noah and the ark.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“ark” — a huge boat

“having favor with God” — God blessing us with good things

God's “war bow” — used to explain the rainbow in the Storybook Bible; like the bow in “bow and arrow,” aimed to shoot an arrow into the sky

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Do you think the people in the world suddenly became evil?
→ *This is a good time to bring out that one little sin leads to another, and another. Little things take us further down the road to a sinful life.*
- Q** Why did God choose Noah?
→ *He was the only righteous man. He lived rightly, obeying God and walking with Him.*
- Q** How did Noah know what to do?
→ *God told him very clearly. God will speak to us, in our hearts, today.*
- Q** How do you think Noah felt when other people laughed at him? How would you feel?
- Q** What is the first thing Noah did when the water went down?
→ *He built an altar to worship God.*
- Q** Why did God make rainbows?
→ *To remind us of His promise to never again flood the whole earth.*



3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He wants His people to live in a right way that pleases Him.
→ *God gives us His rules and commands to live by because He knows they are for our own good.*
- God wanted to have a new beginning with Noah. He promised to never again destroy everything on the earth with a flood—and God always keeps His promises!
→ *You might mention some other wonderful promises: He will never leave us, Deuteronomy 31:6; Matthew 28:20. No one can separate us from His love, Romans 8:35–39. He has a plan for our lives, Jeremiah 29:11.*
- He showed Noah how to do something he'd never done before, and He will do the same for us.
→ *God tells us that when we need to know something, we should ask Him, Jeremiah 33:3.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- Noah lived so close to God that he was God's friend, and God loved and trusted him.
→ *As we live the way He wants us to and stay close to Him, He loves and will trust us too, John 15:15.*
- God's way is always best. When people turn away from God, it can lead to terrible things.
→ *Give an example. For instance, "The Bible teaches us not to lie, Leviticus 19:11; Colossians 3:9. What if we began to lie to each other all the time? Would we be able to trust each other? What if everybody lied all the time?"*
- Noah did what God told him to do, even when people laughed at him. This is how we should live.
→ *But isn't that hard? Where can we find the strength to do what God tells us to do? The Bible tells us that when we are weak, Jesus is strong, 2 Corinthians 12:10. We need to ask Him to help us.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

The rainbow reminds us of God's faithfulness, and how important it is to live as God wants us to. As we do, we can be close to Him like Noah was. He rescues those who love and obey Him from the world's sinful ways.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth."

Genesis 9:13 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 4 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

Joseph

Read: Genesis 37; 39–45; 50

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE
“The Forgotten Prince”

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE
the story of Joseph (Genesis 37–50)

TONIGHT'S STORY

A boy with a very special coat, a family full of jealousy, and a long road from a pit to a palace. Let's see how God was at work the whole time!

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**robe of many colors**” — a special, beautiful coat; a sign that Joseph’s father, Jacob, loved him most

“**Pharaoh**” — the king of Egypt

“**jealous**” — upset and angry that someone else has something you want

“**famine**” — a time when crops don’t grow and there is not enough food

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

Q How do you think Joseph’s brothers felt when their father gave Joseph the special coat, and when Joseph told them about his dreams?

→ *They were jealous. Their jealousy grew into hate, and hate led them to do something terrible. One sin leads to another, just as we saw in the story of Noah.*

Q Joseph was sold as a slave and later thrown into prison for something he didn’t do. How would you feel if that happened to you?

→ *Joseph had every reason to be angry and give up. But he kept working hard and doing what was right, and “the LORD was with Joseph” (Genesis 39:2, 21).*

Q Why do you think God let Joseph go through so many hard things?

→ *God was preparing Joseph, and putting him in exactly the right place, to save many people when the famine came.*

Q When his brothers came to Egypt and bowed down to ask for food, Joseph could have punished them. What did he do instead?

→ *He forgave them, wept with them, and took care of their whole family.*



Joseph

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God was with Joseph everywhere he went: in the pit, in Potiphar's house, and in prison.
→ *He is with us too, even when things seem unfair or we feel alone, Hebrews 13:5.*
- God can take what people mean for harm and turn it into something good.
→ *Read Joseph's words to his brothers in Genesis 50:20. See also Romans 8:28.*
- God keeps His promises. Through Joseph, He kept Jacob's family alive, the family through which Jesus would one day be born (Genesis 45:7).
→ *Joseph's story points to Jesus: rejected by His own brothers, He became the One who saves His people.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- Jealousy hurts families and friendships. Instead of being jealous, we can be glad when good things happen to others.
→ *Ask: Have you ever felt jealous of a brother, sister or friend? What could you do the next time you feel that way? (James 3:16; Romans 12:15)*
- When unfair things happen, we can keep doing what is right. God sees, and He is working even when we can't see it yet.
→ *Colossians 3:23. You might share a hard season in your own life when God was working behind the scenes.*
- Joseph forgave the brothers who hurt him. God wants us to forgive others, just as He has forgiven us.
→ *Ephesians 4:32. Is there anyone you need to forgive?*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

Even when life seems unfair, God is at work. He is with us, He can turn bad things into good, and He calls us to forgive others just as He has forgiven us.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

Genesis 50:20 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



Moses and the Burning Bush

Read: Exodus 3–4

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“God to the Rescue!”

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

the story of Moses and the burning bush (Exodus 3–4)

TONIGHT'S STORY

Moses was taking care of sheep in the desert when he saw something amazing: a bush on fire that didn't burn up! Let's find out who was speaking from the bush.

1 Begin with prayer See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 Read the story together from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**Israelites**” — God's people, the family of Jacob, who had become slaves in Egypt

“**holy ground**” — a place made special and set apart because God is there

“**taskmasters**” — harsh bosses who forced the slaves to work very hard

“**I AM WHO I AM**” — God's own name; He has always been, and always will be

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Why do you think Moses went closer to the bush? What would you have done?
- Q** Why did God tell Moses to take off his sandals?
→ *Because God is holy. Moses was standing in the presence of God, and taking off his sandals was a way of showing respect and worship.*
- Q** God told Moses He had seen His people's misery and heard their cries (Exodus 3:7). What does that tell us?
→ *God sees when His people are hurting, and He cares.*
- Q** How did Moses feel when God asked him to go to Pharaoh? What did he say?
→ *He was afraid. He asked, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11) and made excuses, like “I am not good with words” (Exodus 4:10).*
- Q** What was God's answer?
→ *“I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12). God also gave Moses signs of His power, and sent his brother Aaron to help him.*



Moses and the Burning Bush

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God is holy; there is no one like Him (Isaiah 6:3).
→ *We come to Him with love, and also with respect and awe.*
- God sees and hears the troubles of His people, and He comes to help them.
→ *1 Peter 5:7 tells us to cast all our cares on Him, because He cares for us.*
- God's name is I AM. He has always been, He always will be, and He never changes (Malachi 3:6).
→ *Jesus used this same name for Himself: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Hebrews 13:8 says He is the same yesterday, today and forever.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- When God asks us to do something hard, what matters most is not who we are, but who He is—and that He goes with us.
→ *Philippians 4:13. You might share a time God asked you to do something you didn't feel ready for.*
- Like Moses, we sometimes make excuses. But God gives us what we need to do what He asks.
→ *2 Corinthians 12:9. Ask: What is something hard you could ask God to help you do this week?*
- We can worship God with hearts full of respect, remembering how great and holy He is.

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

The God who spoke from the burning bush is the great I AM. He sees, He cares, and when He sends us to do something, He goes with us. (This story sets up our next one: watch what God does through Moses at the Red Sea!)

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.'"

Exodus 3:14 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____

FAMILY NOTES & PRAYER REQUESTS



STORY 6 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

Miracle at the Red Sea

Read: Exodus 13–14

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“God Makes a Way” (from Exodus 14), pages 92–93

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

(from Exodus 13–14), pages 86–89

TONIGHT'S STORY

We'll see that God is a miracle-working God!

1 Begin with prayer See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 Read the story together from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**sea**” — a large body of water, bigger than a lake, smaller than an ocean

“**pillar of cloud**” — a tall column of cloud, like the smoke that rises out of a fire

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** How do you think the people felt when they escaped and didn't know where to go?
- Q** What do you think the people thought about the cloud in the daytime and the fire at night? What would you think?
- Q** The people were scared when they saw the soldiers coming. How would you have felt?
- Q** How do you think the people felt when they saw the wind blow a path for them through the sea? How would you have felt?



Miracle at the Red Sea

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He has great power (Exodus 9:16), and nothing is impossible for Him to do (Luke 1:37).
- He loved His people and He was there to help them.
- God wants us to trust Him to help us. Jesus wants us to trust Him too. He said, “Trust in God; trust also in Me” (John 14:1). Why do you think we can trust Him?
→ *Because He loved us enough to die for us! John 3:16.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- God’s people were scared because they didn’t know what to do. At first, they didn’t trust Him. How can we learn to trust Him today?
→ *We can read how He rescued His people in the Bible, and He never changes, Malachi 3:6.*
- When they saw God work to save them, their faith in Him grew stronger.
→ *Jesus’ disciples had to learn this lesson too. We’ll talk about some of those stories, for instance, how Jesus stopped a storm when His disciples’ boat was about to sink.*
- When we don’t know what to do, we should ask God to help us. Sometimes that seems to be the last thing we think to do, but it ought to always be the first thing we do when we face a problem.
→ *Share one or more times when you prayed for God’s help and He came through for you. If you think your children will have their own examples, ask them to share too. Hearing real-life examples from one another helps us all build faith!*
- God loved His people then (Jeremiah 31:3), and He loves us today (Romans 8:39). He is willing to help us (Psalm 118:7).
→ *Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be our Helper, John 14:16–17.*
- There isn’t anything God can’t do to help us with a problem. Nothing is too hard for God! (Jeremiah 32:17)

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God is faithful, and He will make a way for us, even when there doesn’t seem to be a way. He is in control of the world He made. He allows His people to face impossible situations so He can show us His great power and give us the opportunity to tell others how great He is. That’s one way we give Him glory!

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

Exodus 14:14 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let’s thank God for what we’ve learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 7 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

David, the Boy

Read: 1 Samuel 16

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

"The Teeny, Weeny... True King," pages 116–121

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 146–147

TONIGHT'S STORY

David had many older brothers that people thought were better choices to be king than he was, but God saw it another way: He picked David!

- 1 Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9
- 2 Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking "What else happened?" until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

"anoint" — in biblical times, people were anointed by pouring oil over their heads as a way of preparing them for service. It was an honor.

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** How do you think Samuel felt when God rejected the sons that looked like they would make good kings? What about David's dad, Jesse? Would he have thought Samuel was making a mistake?
- Q** What about the other sons, how would they feel?
- Q** Why do you think God chose the youngest and smallest son?
→ *He knew David's heart would be set on God.*
- Q** What do you think would have happened if David had not come when Jesse called him to meet Samuel?
→ *This shows how important it is to be obedient to our parents, doesn't it? Ephesians 6:1–3.*
- Q** How do you think David felt when Samuel gave him the news that he would be king?



David, the Boy

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He sees things differently. We consider how people look, but God knows our hearts (1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 139:23).
- He has a long-range plan. In choosing David as a young boy, He was not only looking forward to the man he would become; God could see David's family line through the generations, to the coming of Christ.
→ *You might make the point that God made a covenant with David: He promised that David's throne would last forever (2 Samuel 7:16), and Jesus is the King who fulfills that promise (Luke 1:32–33). Jesus' family line goes all the way back to David, Matthew 1:6, 17. You may need to explain "family line," using grandparents and great-grandparents as examples.*
- God taught David how to be a shepherd before He made him king.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- We can trust God to know what is best for us, for our families and for our nation.
- We see God's power at work through us when we submit to Him and follow His direction.
- God's people are not perfect, and we often want to do things our way instead of His way, but His patience and grace are endless.
- God has us where He wants us, and will let us know about the next step when the time is right.
- Like David, out back with the sheep, if we do our best where we are today, we'll be ready for the next thing He wants to do in our lives.
→ *You might share ways in which God has worked in your life as you have grown and become more spiritually mature. Have you had opportunities to serve Him—in your family, with individuals, in your church, your business, your community? Your children need to see God at work in your life—and in theirs. Point out ways you may have seen God working in them.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God has a place for each of us in His plan. He may give us a very simple thing to do right now—tending sheep, like David, or just going to school. These are times when He is building our character to become men and women He can use when the time comes for us to do something far more important.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

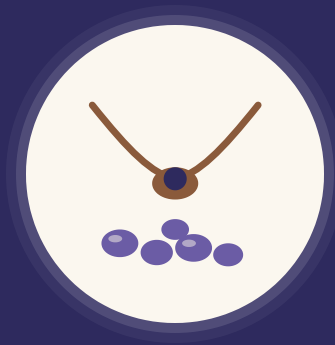
1 Samuel 16:7 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 8 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

David and Goliath

Read: 1 Samuel 17

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

"The Young Hero and the Horrible Giant," pages 122–129

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 149–151

TONIGHT'S STORY

Have you ever had to deal with a bully? David took care of the biggest bully of them all!

- 1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9
- 2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking "What else happened?" until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

"Philistine" — a person from the region of Philistia, an enemy of God's people

"disdained" — looking down on someone, thinking you are much better than he is

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q How do you think God's people felt when this huge giant threatened them?
- Q What about David? How had God prepared him for this?
→ *God had already helped him kill a lion and a bear to protect his sheep, 1 Samuel 17:34–37.*
- Q What did God want His people to learn from this battle?
→ *That it didn't depend on their strength, but His. He would fight their battles for them when they did their part. Note that David had to put the stone in his sling and throw it at Goliath himself, but God made sure it hit the mark.*
- Q What do you think the Israelites felt when they saw this young boy challenging the giant?
- Q How do you think things would have turned out if David hadn't done what he did?
→ *It's always important for us to do as much as we can to prepare and do what needs to be done, but to know that what we do must be empowered by God. We can do nothing without Him, John 15:5!*



3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God will see His people through every trial in order to accomplish His purposes (Isaiah 46:10).
- Sometimes God allows conflicts in our lives in order to show His own power and will. Jesus did this with His disciples when He told them to get in a boat to go across the Sea of Galilee and they were caught in a storm (Luke 8:23–24). We'll read what He did in one of our later Bible story devotions.
 - *Use an illustration from your life or theirs if you have one. Bring today into your discussions as often as you can.*
- God is never uncertain about what to do in any situation (Psalm 147:5).

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- When we trust God and obey Him, He wins the victory and gets the credit instead of us.
- Sometimes the enemy (the problem) looks like more than we can handle, and that's when God can be glorified in what we do—when we pray and ask Him to help, and then tell others what He did.
- When we know what God wants us to do, we know He will enable us to do it.
 - *This is not only true when we face problems and battles with others, but when we have battles inside us too. Discuss examples that may apply in their lives in practical terms—for example, God wants us to tell the truth, but that's hard when we're caught doing something we shouldn't be doing. Jesus gives us strength to tell the truth no matter how hard it is.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God often demonstrates His own strength by helping us to face “giants” in our lives. Our giants may not be big men like Goliath, but problems and difficult situations that are too big for us to handle on our own. We can trust Him without fear. When we belong to Him, He will help us fight every battle.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“...the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's.”

1 Samuel 17:47 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 9 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

Jonah

Read: Jonah 1–3

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“God’s Messenger,” pages 160–169

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 182–189

TONIGHT’S STORY

Jonah was a man who didn’t want to go where God sent him, and he found that disobeying God can lead to all kinds of consequences.

1 Begin with prayer See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 Read the story together from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“fare” — the price of a ticket to ride in the boat

“cast lots” — like rolling dice to decide what to do

“mariners” — sailors

“hurled” — tossed or threw

“tempestuous” — stormy, with strong wind

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

Q Why did God ask Jonah to go to Nineveh?

→ *God wanted the people of Nineveh to hear the truth spoken by His prophet, Jonah.*

Q Why didn’t Jonah want to go?

→ *He didn’t like the people of Nineveh. Do we ever wish we didn’t have to be with people we don’t like?*

Q How would you feel if God asked you to do something really good for kids who were really mean and disobedient?

Q Why were Jonah and the sailors on the ship caught in a storm?

→ *Because Jonah had disobeyed God, and God sent the storm.*

Q What did the sailors do? What did Jonah do?

→ *The sailors threw the cargo off the ship, then went to Jonah. He told them the storm was his fault, and they threw him overboard. You might ask: Is it hard to admit we are the cause of a problem? Have you ever had to do that? What happened?*

Q Do you think this is a true story?

→ *The Bible says God “appointed a great fish” to swallow Jonah (Jonah 1:17). Some sea creatures are big enough to swallow a man whole. Besides, God can do anything He wants to do—He is God, and nothing is impossible for Him!*

Q How can we know it’s true?

→ *Because Jesus said so, in Matthew 12:40.*



Jonah

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He can do anything He wants to do, even cause storms and control big fish (see also Luke 8:24; 5:4–6).
- He wants us to obey Him, even when He tells us to do something we don't want to do.
- The will of God will be accomplished, one way or another (Isaiah 46:11). He always knows what is right and best, no matter what we think.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- Sometimes we try to avoid doing things we know we should do, but we can't run away from God.
- It is important to obey God and do whatever He asks us to do. If we don't, there will be a price to pay.
- No matter how awful people are, God loves them and wants to save them. And that includes us!
- Sometimes not obeying God will not only cause us trouble, but will affect those around us (like the sailors in the storm)—maybe even those we love (like our family).

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

Just as God sent Jonah to the people of Nineveh, He sent Jesus to us. Jonah spent three days in the fish; Jesus spent three days in the tomb. And, like Jesus, we should be ready to obey whatever God says.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"Salvation belongs to the LORD!"

Jonah 2:9 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____

FAMILY NOTES & PRAYER REQUESTS



STORY 10 OF 24 · OLD TESTAMENT

Daniel and His Friends

Read: Daniel 1, 3

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

(does not include this story)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 193–194, 199

TONIGHT'S STORY

Daniel and his friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were young men who chose to do the right thing.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**eunuch**” — a special kind of servant who carried out certain duties for the king

“**enchanters**” — people who claimed to have special powers, like fortune tellers

“**golden image**” — a huge statue, covered in gold

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** At the time of this story, God’s people had been defeated by the king of Babylon. The king brought Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, away from their homes and families to live and serve him in another country. How do you think they felt about that? How would you feel?
- Q** The king made a rule that everyone in the country must bow down and worship a huge golden image—a statue—that he had set up. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were God’s children, and they knew they must not worship another god. But they faced a terrible choice: if they did not worship the statue, they would be thrown into a fiery furnace. What did they do?

→ *They said they would not bow down and worship the statue. How do you think they felt?*



Daniel and His Friends

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God was watching what was happening, just like He is always watching us: what happens to us, the choices we make and the things that we do.
→ *Do you think God was pleased with their decision?*
- God is faithful, and He rescued Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when they were in an impossible situation. Nothing is too hard for God to do (Jeremiah 32:17)!

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- There will always be people—including both adults and other kids—who will try to make us do things that are sinful and not honoring to God.
→ *You might ask if they can think of a time that someone tried to convince them to do something they shouldn't. How did they handle it? If they don't have an example, you might make up an age-appropriate example they can relate to and ask how it should be handled.*
- God will give us the strength to make the right decision. Why would it take God's strength to help Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego make their decision not to worship the golden statue?
→ *Because their lives were at stake!*
- We can trust God to give us that same strength to do the right thing (Psalm 29:11).
- God is with us, just as He was with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. God is faithful! (Deuteronomy 31:6; 7:9)

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego knew that God was able to save them, but that's not why they made their decision. They clearly said that even if God chose not to save them, they still would not worship the statue. They trusted God and were willing to obey Him, no matter what. That's the way we are to trust Him too.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace."

Daniel 3:17 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 11 OF 24 · NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus' Birth

Read: Luke 1–2; Matthew 2

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“He’s Here!,” “The Light of the Whole World,” “King of All Kings,” pages 180–199

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 235–239

TONIGHT'S STORY

How wonderful that God sent Jesus to be our Savior! But why was He born in a barn?

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**swaddling cloths**” — it was the custom to wrap newborn babies snugly in soft cloths to help them feel cozy and warm

“**inn**” — a small hotel

“**manger**” — a trough, like a wooden box, where food for the animals was put

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** After hundreds of years of waiting for God to send a Savior to rescue His people, what might they have thought He would be like? What would you think?
→ *He would be a really important person, maybe a king.*
- Q** How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they were finally able to hold their precious baby?
→ *If your children have had experience with a new baby, let them describe how they felt. Tell them how you felt the first time you were able to hold each of them.*
- Q** How did God announce that the Savior had been born? Whom did He tell? What did they do?
→ *He sent an angel of the Lord to make the announcement, and other angels came, praising God. He told the shepherds. They went to Bethlehem to find Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus; then they told others.*



Jesus' Birth

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God had promised hundreds of years earlier that He would send a Savior to His people. As we've seen in other stories, God keeps His promises—and this is the best promise of all!
- Jesus is the Son of God, but He was willing to become a baby, to live an ordinary life as a little boy who would grow into a man. He set aside His glory to become like us in every way but one: in all His life, He never sinned.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- Simple, humble people can be greatly blessed by God.
→ *Mary, Joseph, the shepherds.*
- Sometimes we have to be flexible and ready to change our plans. Mary and Joseph had their lives interrupted several times. First, when the angel told Mary she would have a baby. Then they had to stop what they were doing and go to Bethlehem. And when they got there, they had to be willing to sleep in a stable because they couldn't find a room anywhere else. But they trusted God and did the best they could.

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God saw that people, because of the sin nature they inherited from Adam, would never be able to fully obey Him and would always fall short of His original purpose of personal fellowship with Him. He saw that the only way mankind could be rescued from that sinful condition would be if He—God Himself—would take on human nature; that He would become a man and bear the penalty for sin in His own body on the cross. That is who Jesus is—God in a human body—and that is why He was born as a baby in Bethlehem.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2:11 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 12 OF 24 • NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus' Temptation

Read: Luke 4

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

"Let's Go!," pages 208–209

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 256–257

TONIGHT'S STORY

What do you think would happen if Satan tried to get Jesus to do something wrong—to actually sin? Our story shows us Satan didn't get far with that plan!

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking "What else happened?" until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

"pinnacle of the temple" — the highest point, like the steeple of a church today

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** How did Jesus defeat the devil when he tried to tempt Him?
→ *He quoted Scripture, just as we can.*
- Q** Why do you think God allowed Jesus to be tempted?
→ *It was important for Jesus to be tempted and defeat Satan from the very beginning of His ministry.*
- Q** What do you think the devil thought when his temptations didn't work? What did the devil learn?
→ *One thing he learned is that he couldn't trick Jesus—Jesus knew the truth of God's Word and used it against him.*
- Q** What do we learn from Jesus' experience?
→ *That we can defeat Satan the same way!*
- Q** How does it make you feel to know that Jesus defeated the devil?



Jesus' Temptation

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- Jesus is smarter than the devil—He saw right through the temptations.
→ *So can we, when we stop to think about it—especially when we know God's Word!*
- God's truth, the truth of the Bible, is enough to defeat the lies of the devil.
→ *It's also enough to defeat "self," our own tendency to want to do things we know we shouldn't do.*
- God will let us be tempted, as Jesus was, and give us opportunities to defeat the devil too.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- The devil likes to tempt us to sin against God, but we don't have to give in.
→ *You might discuss some age-appropriate sin issues you've seen your children facing. Prompt them to come up with biblical truth that could give them victory if they would stop and consider it.*
- It's important to know the truth that is in the Bible, to learn verses we can use when we are tempted.
- Jesus was one of us, and He didn't use His supernatural power to defeat the devil. From that we learn that God's people can use the truth of the Bible in the same way.
→ *We have the Holy Spirit within us. He is greater than Satan and will give us strength to defeat Satan's temptations, 1 John 4:4. Plus, God has promised that He will never let us be tempted beyond what we can bear, and He will provide a way out, 1 Corinthians 10:13.*
- Often temptations come when we are physically weak, as Jesus was. He had not eaten for 40 days! But Jesus was still stronger than the devil, and so are we when we use God's truth against him.

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

The devil has been tempting God's people since the Garden of Eden. But we, like Jesus, have God's Word to give us His truth about every situation we face. Truth will defeat Satan every time, and we have the Bible to prepare us to meet every temptation. That's one of the reasons we learn the lessons from this great Book!

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."

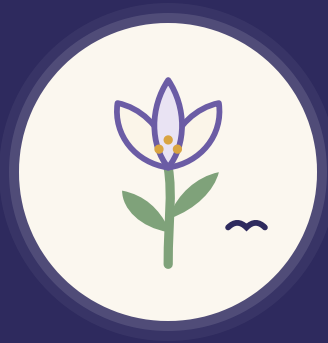
Psalm 119:11 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



Teaching About Money and Possessions

Read: Matthew 6

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

(does not include this teaching)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

page 280

TONIGHT'S STORY

Sometimes people worry about not having enough to eat or the right clothes to wear—or lots of other things. But Jesus shares a powerful promise that will keep us from worrying!

- 1 Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9
- 2 Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**anxious**” — very worried

“**kingdom of God**” — the rule and reign of God in the lives of His people

“**righteousness**” — living according to God’s will

“**sufficient for the day**” — enough for one day

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Why do you think Jesus gave His followers this teaching about being worried and anxious? Do you think people in those days might have had a reason to be worried about having enough to eat or clothes to wear? What about people today?
→ *We may have enough to eat and clothes to wear, but there are other people in our country and around the world who don’t. People today face the same problems they did in Jesus’ time.*
- Q** Why did Jesus tell them they didn’t have to worry about those things?
→ *God knows what we need, and He will take care of us. He wants us to be concerned with things He considers more important.*
- Q** What did Jesus say was much more important for them to be concerned with?
→ *Seeking God’s kingdom and His righteousness—that must come first in our lives, and when it does, He will provide for our needs.*



Teaching About Money and Possessions

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God's kingdom is here on earth right now, even though we can't see it (Luke 10:9). If we are His children, we are in His kingdom. This means He is our King (1 Timothy 6:15), and we live the way He tells us to in the Bible because we love Him and want to please Him (1 John 3:21-22).
- God will provide the things we need to live, like our food and clothes. He will make sure we have what we need. But He expects us to put His kingdom first in our lives and live the way He wants us to live.

→ *You might discuss the difference between things we need and things we want, using illustrations they can relate to. You might also refer to God's generous Father's heart in Matthew 7:9-11.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- It's easy for us to want the things we see advertised or that other kids (or adults!) have. But rather than working hard to get such things, or worrying because we don't have them, we should focus on being content with what we have (Philippians 4:11-13).
→ *That's a kingdom principle to live by. If you can think of a time in your life when you wanted something, didn't get it, and realized you were better off without it, share that. Materialism is an important issue to address—we're to lay up treasures in heaven, Matthew 6:19-21.*
- We often get anxious, worrying a lot about tomorrow, what's going to happen or not happen. Instead we should focus on today, because each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:34).

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God has promised to provide for every real need of our lives. This doesn't mean we can have whatever we want, but it does mean that when we learn God's Word, get to know more about Him, and make up our minds to obey what He says, He will see to it that we have everything necessary for living.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Matthew 6:33 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

Read: Matthew 14; Mark 6; Luke 9; John 6

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“Filled Full!” pages 244–249

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

(Matthew 14–15), pages 298–299

TONIGHT'S STORY

There were 5,000 hungry men plus their families to be fed, and just a little bit of bread and a few fish. But Jesus fed them all! Let's see how He did it.

Note: This guide follows the Jesus Storybook Bible account of this story, which includes details (like the little boy's lunch, from John 6:9) that are not in the ESV Family Bible passage.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

five loaves — enough for one little boy's lunch! These were probably what we would call “rolls.”

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** How big was the crowd of people?
→ *5,000 men, plus women and children.*
- Q** Why did the disciples want to send the people home?
→ *They had no idea what Jesus was about to do, and they didn't want the people to go hungry.*
- Q** The little boy gave away his lunch to help people. He did this before he knew what Jesus would do—so he must have thought he would have to go without lunch. Do you think that was hard for him? Would it be hard for you?
- Q** Why didn't Jesus want to send them home to eat?
→ *He wanted to teach them, and He must have seen this as an opportunity to show them what God would do, to help build their faith in God, and in Him.*
- Q** How do you think the people felt when they saw how many people were fed from one little boy's lunch? What would you have thought if you had been there?



Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- Jesus didn't want the people to be hungry; He wanted to help them.
 - *God is not only able to take a little boy's lunch and work a miracle to feed a huge crowd of people—this shows that He cares about the little things in our lives. He didn't want anyone to miss having lunch. He is concerned with every detail in our lives.*
- Jesus knew that God would be able to feed all those people. He trusted God to help Him.
 - *We can know that God is able to help us too, 2 Corinthians 9:8. Nothing is too hard for Him, Genesis 18:14! He wants us to trust Him when we have a problem, rather than trying to solve our problem without Him.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- The people wanted to learn from Jesus, and He taught them. How does He teach us today?
 - *If you have a red-letter Bible, show the children the red type that indicates what Jesus said. The whole Bible teaches us, but we can learn directly from what Jesus taught, just as His followers did.*
- Jesus was thankful to God for the little bit of food they had.
 - *We should always be thankful for what we have too, even when it doesn't seem like enough, Ephesians 5:20.*
- The little boy was willing to give up all that he had to help. He did what he could.
 - *God wants us to be willing to give what we have. We may not feel like we have much to offer, but when we give it to Him, it will be enough in His hands!*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

When we give Jesus everything we have, He can use it to show His compassion, His goodness and His power.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"For nothing will be impossible with God."

Luke 1:37 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____

FAMILY NOTES & PRAYER REQUESTS



STORY 15 OF 24 • NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus Calms the Storm

Read: Mark 4; Luke 8

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“The Captain of the Storm,” pages 236–243

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 286–287

TONIGHT'S STORY

We'll learn about Jesus' power, and how important it is for us to believe in Him and ask Him for help.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“hurled” — threw

“blown and buffeted” — tossed around by the wind and pounded by the rain

“rebuked” — told it to stop

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Who told the disciples to sail the boat across the water?
→ *Jesus did! We need to see that sometimes our Lord puts us into difficult places where we must trust Him to do what we can't do.*
- Q** What was Jesus doing when the storm first began to blow the waves?
→ *He was asleep in the back of the boat. He wasn't afraid, because He knew what He could do.*
- Q** What did the disciples do when it looked like the boat might sink?
→ *They woke Jesus up and begged Him to save them. Should we ask Jesus for help when we face scary things in our life?*
- Q** How did Jesus keep the boat from sinking?
→ *He simply spoke to the storm and it stopped.*
- Q** What did Jesus ask His disciples after He stopped the storm?
→ *“Where is your faith?”*
- Q** What did they think about Jesus when the wind and water obeyed Him?
→ *They were amazed and wondered, “Who is this?”*



Jesus Calms the Storm

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- Sometimes God asks us to do things that will put us in the middle of a storm—maybe not a real storm with wind and rain, but the kind of storm when things just seem to go wrong in our lives. Why do you think He does this? Why did Jesus allow the storm on the lake?
→ *To teach lessons about faith and trusting Him.*
- God is always in control of things, whether we recognize it at first or not (Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 46:10).
- If God tells us to do something, He will make sure we are able to do it. He brings us through storms (Luke 8:24).

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- Sometimes we forget that Jesus is with us, but we can trust that He is always there (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5). With Him at our side, we don't have to be afraid of anything. He can take care of whatever happens.
- Sometimes we're so overwhelmed by the wind and the waves—by the problems we face—that that's all we think about.
→ *Instead of waiting until the last minute, like the disciples did, we should pray to God when we first realize we're about to be overcome by a storm, a big problem, or a difficult situation, Psalm 50:15.*
- Going through storms in life builds our faith, because we see God at work in our lives.
→ *Share a time when you saw God at work in your life to build your faith. Ask if the children can think of such a time in their lives. Prompt them if you need to.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

There will always be storms in our lives—usually unexpected and more severe than we would like. But as we live in the center of God's will, and keep ourselves in His presence, He will help us make it through the storms and help us to show our faith in Him for the benefit of others.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

““Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”

Mark 4:39 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 16 OF 24 · NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus Walks on the Water

Read: John 6:16–21; Matthew 14:22–33

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

(does not include this story)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

page 301

TONIGHT'S STORY

Here was a miracle even greater than the one the disciples had just witnessed—the feeding of 5,000 with a little bit of bread and a few fish. How could the disciples be ready for this one?

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“dismissed” — let them go home

“terrified” — very scared

PARENT NOTE · ADD PETER'S PART OF THE STORY

The ESV Family Bible quotes Matthew 14:22–27. Please add verses 28–31: “And Peter answered him, ‘Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.’ He said, ‘Come.’ So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, ‘Lord, save me.’ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’”

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** The disciples had just seen a great miracle. Why do you suppose this one scared them?
→ *They were fishermen; everything they knew about water would tell them this was impossible.*
- Q** Peter had begun to walk on the water, just like Jesus did! Why did he begin to sink?
→ *Because he took his eyes off Jesus and worried about the wind, and it made him afraid. His faith failed.*
- Q** How do you think this miracle prepared them for things yet to come in their life with Jesus?
→ *They would be able to trust Him no matter what He might ask of them.*



Jesus Walks on the Water

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He is the Master of all creation; everything in nature is under His command (Psalm 104:2–3).
- He is patient with us, just as He was with Peter.
→ *He didn't let Peter drown, but reached out and saved him.*
- God never does—or allows—anything without purpose; we can learn from every event in Scripture.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- God knows we are weak, so when we are fearful, Jesus speaks words of comfort to us: “It is I. Do not be afraid.”
→ *How many times we find Jesus using these words to calm His followers and reassure them! We are not to be afraid, because our Lord brings peace and strength in every circumstance. It is true in both the Old and New Testaments: Genesis 15:1; 26:24; 46:3; Joshua 8:1; Isaiah 44:8; Matthew 17:7; Mark 5:36; Luke 12:32; John 14:27; Acts 18:9.*
- It's not about our peace of mind, but about our awareness of who He is, and what He can do.
→ *That's why Scripture tells us His name is a strong tower, Proverbs 18:10. His name represents who He is and what He can do. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who leads us, John 10:11, 14; the Bread of Life in whom we find nourishment, John 6:35, 48; the bright Morning Star whose light brightens the darkest night, Revelation 22:16—and more!*
- No matter what we face, He is able to control it and encourage us (Ephesians 3:20–21), and He will.

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

It is important to keep our eyes on Jesus, to remember His power over everything, and not be afraid of the circumstances we find ourselves in. He is always close enough to reach out and help us, as He helped Peter.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.”

Matthew 14:27 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 17 OF 24 · NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus Heals Ten Lepers

Read: Luke 17:11–19

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE
(does not include this story)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE
page 310

TONIGHT'S STORY

Jesus healed ten men. We'll learn how many came back to thank Him.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**Samaritan**” — a person from Samaria. These were people the Jews did not like and didn’t want to be around.

“**leprosy**” — a very serious skin disease that was contagious; people were afraid of catching it. No one wanted to be around lepers. No one wanted to touch them.

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Why did the ten men who had leprosy stand at a distance from Jesus?
→ *There was a law that kept them from going close to other people. They even had to live in a separate place.*
- Q** Why did Jesus tell the men to go show themselves to the priests?
→ *You might explain that the priest had to see that they were healed before he could let them return to living with their families and friends.*
- Q** If you had been one of the men Jesus healed, how would you have felt? How do you think they all felt? Why didn’t they all come back to Jesus to thank Him?
- Q** Why do you think Jesus pointed out that the one man who thanked Him was a Samaritan (a foreigner)?
→ *To make the point that even if God’s people are not always thankful for what He does for them, others will be. Samaritans were looked down upon by the Jews, but Jesus pointed out that this Samaritan behaved better than they did.*



Jesus Heals Ten Lepers

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God is willing for all kinds of people to come to Him, even the people that others avoid (Luke 5:30–32).
- God expects us to obey Him, and sometimes He asks us to do things as a test to see if we will.
- God wants us to be thankful for what He does for us. He wants us to tell Him how thankful we are.
 - *This is why we end our devotion times by thanking God for what we have learned. This would be a good place to have a brief discussion of the things each one in the family is thankful for.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- When Jesus told the ten lepers to go show themselves to the priests, they immediately went to do that—but they weren’t even healed yet. “As they went they were cleansed [healed].” By leaving right away to obey Him, they were demonstrating their faith, believing that they would be healed. Sometimes God wants us to step out in faith before He provides what we need (2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:6).
- We should come to God—we should pray—about our problems, and expect Him to help.
- It’s important to obey anything God tells us to do, even if it doesn’t make sense at the moment.
 - *If an illustration comes to mind from your life, share it. Or, an example would be someone saying yes to go on a mission trip without having the money at that moment, and trusting God to provide.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

How important it is for us to show our gratitude when Jesus has brought His wisdom, grace and almighty power to bear upon our needs! The healing of the lepers showed His power over illness. Our gratitude—or the absence of it—reveals the state of our heart. That matters, because our gratitude pleases God.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let’s thank God for what we’ve learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 18 OF 24 · NEW TESTAMENT

The Good Samaritan

Read: Luke 10:25–37

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE
(does not include this story)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE
pages 314–315

TONIGHT'S STORY

Being a good neighbor is about more than living next door to someone.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**priest**” — a religious leader of the Jews, like the pastor of our church

“**Samaritan**” — a person from Samaria, not liked by the Jews

“**Levite**” — men who served in the Temple, like our deacons

“**denarii**” — money; one denarius was about a day’s wages for a worker in Jesus’ time

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

Q What do you think of when you hear the word “neighbor”? Does it mean more than just the friend next door or down the street?

→ *Jesus taught that “neighbor” doesn’t just mean living close to someone; it is a condition of the heart. The man who was hurt and the one who helped him are neighbors, because they are brought together by circumstances that call for overlooking personal likes and dislikes. One is in need, and the heart of the other is touched by that need and moved to help him.*

Q What should be your attitude toward people who are not like you?

→ *We should love and care for them.*

Q Why do you think Jesus used the Samaritan (a foreigner) as His example?

→ *Have you ever noticed your friends, or others in your class at school, criticizing or making fun of somebody who is not like them? Is that how God wants us to act?*



The Good Samaritan

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He wants us to show love to our neighbor, and to understand that our neighbor may be somebody very different from us.
→ *We learn the true meaning of the word “neighbor” in this teaching from Jesus. The greater lesson is that God has acted toward us with kindness, forgiveness and acceptance when we didn’t even know to ask for help. Jesus is our true neighbor, and we are to be neighbors one to another.*
- He wants us to be like Jesus in our attitudes and actions. Is that possible?
→ *Yes, because we have Jesus in our hearts, John 17:23; Ephesians 3:17.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- How do you think you might apply this lesson?
→ *By making friends with kids others don’t like, or speaking up for them when others pick on them; by doing what we can to help others no matter who they are.*
- Our love for God and for others will lead us to acts of kindness and compassion.
→ *Like Jesus, we are to take time to show love and kindness to others, whether they are lovable or not.*
- We must always be ready to do what we can to help others.
→ *Ask the children to think of a time when they helped someone, or when someone—especially another kid—helped them. How did either situation make them feel? What did they learn?*
- We express Jesus’ love to others with more than words. We show our love with our actions.

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God doesn’t treat people differently, and neither should we. When He leads us to someone who needs help—spiritually or materially—we must be ready to show a Christlike spirit in the way we treat them. Giving help to those in need, regardless of who they are, is Christlike, and it pleases God.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... and your neighbor as yourself.”

Luke 10:27 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let’s thank God for what we’ve learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 19 OF 24 · NEW TESTAMENT

How to Pray

Read: Luke 11:1–13; Matthew 6:5–13

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“How to Pray” (from Matthew 6), pages 222–227

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

(from Luke 11), page 317

TONIGHT'S STORY

Jesus teaches us that we can come to God as our loving Father.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**disciples**” — followers and learners, like the men Jesus chose to learn from Him

“**hallowed**” — recognized as holy: set apart, different from us, and much higher

“**indebted**” — owing something to another person

PARENT NOTE · READ FROM BOTH BIBLES

Be sure to read from both Bibles this time. The Storybook Bible has important information about not praying to be seen by others and using ordinary words when you pray (Matthew 6:5–8). But the prayer in that Bible is more of an illustration of what a prayer might sound like following Jesus’ teaching than a presentation of what He actually taught, which is covered in the ESV Family Bible passage from Luke 11.

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

Q How do you think Jesus’ friends felt when they heard Him pray?

→ *There must have been something special about His prayers, because it was after they heard Him that they asked Him to teach them.*

Q Why did God hear and answer when Jesus prayed?

→ *Jesus had a personal relationship with God the Father. Jesus spent time talking with God, and God showed Him what He was to do, Mark 1:35–39. The life of Jesus was a life of prayer; He prayed wherever He was, and especially when He had major decisions to make, Luke 6:12–16. This is how we should live, too.*



How to Pray

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He wants us to talk to Him, so He can answer and we'll get to know Him.
→ *Knowing God is the basic purpose of prayer, John 17:3. God wants us to know Him, and that is the reason we have the Bible. When we pray, God shows us more of Himself and His purposes for our lives, as He did with Jesus and with His disciples.*
- God is not only our amazing Creator, but our loving heavenly Father. We are His children, no matter how old we are, when we have Jesus in our hearts (John 1:12; Ephesians 3:17).

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- We can't see God (John 4:24), but we can know that He hears our prayers (Psalm 65:2; Matthew 6:6).
→ *Share a time when God heard and answered one of your prayers. Ask the children for their own examples.*
- Prayer helps us to worship God in our hearts, and to ask Him to provide what we need in life.
→ *Jesus taught us to "hallow" God's name (this is worship) and to ask for "our daily bread" (the things we need). He wants us to do both, every day of our lives.*
- When we pray, Jesus said we should think about God who made us and loves us, and wants us to know Him as our Father, before we ask Him for things.
- God is our heavenly Father. How do you think He feels if all we do is ask Him for things, without ever stopping to tell Him we love and appreciate Him and all He does for us? How would you feel?

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

When Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, He was very specific in His answer. He gave them a sample prayer, a model to follow, on at least two occasions, recorded in Matthew and Luke. It's an important guide for us to follow today—every day—as a reminder that prayer is meant to be more than asking God for things.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.'"

Matthew 6:9 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 20 OF 24 • NEW TESTAMENT

The Good Shepherd

Read: John 10

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

(does not include this teaching)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

pages 318–319

TONIGHT'S STORY

Let's see what this teaching tells us about Jesus.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

PARENT NOTE • WORD PICTURES

This is a good time to help young children understand how the Bible uses word pictures to help us understand things. Think of the many names for Jesus: Shepherd, Light of the World, Bread of Life. For example: If I said, “Your mom is like a rose,” what would you think I meant? If I said my friend is like a fireman, how would you describe him? (Let the children respond.) Sometimes, when we want people to understand what someone is like, we use word pictures like that. Didn't that help you understand how I feel about Mom, or what kind of man my friend is? Jesus used word pictures to help people understand who He was and what He had come to earth to do for them.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children bring out the points Jesus made. Keep asking “Anything else?”

WORDS TO KNOW

“**sheepfold**” — the pen where sheep are kept

“**hired hand**” — someone who does ordinary work for daily wages

“**demon**” — one of the evil spirits controlled by Satan, trying to do harm to people

“**insane**” — out of his mind, acting “crazy”

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Jesus said He is the Good Shepherd. In this word picture, if He is the Shepherd, who are we in the story?
→ *We are the sheep. Jesus uses this picture to say that our actions are not always smart; we tend to wander away from Him and from the other sheep, and can't find our way back when left to ourselves.*
- Q** Jesus said a good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. What was He saying about Himself? What was He preparing His disciples to know was going to happen to Him?
→ *That He was going to lay down His life for us, to die on the cross, 1 Peter 3:18.*
- Q** Jesus gave another word picture of Himself. He said He is the door of the sheep. What did He mean by that? What did He want them to understand?
→ *That He is the way into the kingdom of heaven, the way to God, our heavenly Father. He didn't say He was one of the doors, but the door.*



The Good Shepherd

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- Jesus was willing to lay down His life for us. No one forced Him to; He did it of His “own accord”—because He wanted to.
→ *Present the gospel in an age-appropriate way, 1 Corinthians 15:3–4. If your children are older, it would be good to have them explain the gospel, rather than you.*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- There is only one way to enter the sheepfold (a word picture of the kingdom of heaven): through the door (or gate). If Jesus said He is the door, can there be any other door? Will trying hard and doing the best we can open the door? Never!
→ *Ephesians 2:8–9; John 14:6.*
- Jesus said His sheep will listen to His voice. How do you think we usually hear His voice today?
→ *Primarily, when we read the Bible. As we learn the stories and verses of the Bible, sometimes during the day they come to our minds. This is one of the ways God speaks to us. The better we know the Bible, the more clearly and the more often we can hear His voice. We hear Jesus’ voice “in our heart” rather than with our ears.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

Jesus came to be our Good Shepherd, to lay down His life for us. He came to be the door through which we can enter heaven. There is no other door!

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let’s thank God for what we’ve learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____

FAMILY NOTES & PRAYER REQUESTS



STORY 21 OF 24 · NEW TESTAMENT

The Prodigal Son

Read: Luke 15:11–24

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

“Running Away,” pages 272–279

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

page 325

TONIGHT'S STORY

We'll learn about a son who learned from his mistakes, and a father who never stopped loving him.

- 1 Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9
- 2 Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“squandered” — wasted

“famine” — a time when there's not enough food to eat

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** Why do you think the son was unhappy with his life at home? Are you ever unhappy? Why?
→ Try to bring out honest feelings that kids have sometimes, for example that the rules are too much and they would be better off on their own; this is emphasized in the Storybook Bible. Emphasize that one of the things Jesus was teaching is that running away is never a good idea.
- Q** What do you think the son expected to happen to him when he left home for a different kind of life?
→ Such things as being free of rules, able to do what he wanted without anyone interfering.
- Q** Why do you think his father gave him the money and let him go?
→ To let him learn about life.
- Q** What do you think it means that he “came to himself”?
→ He realized how foolish he had been, leaving behind the things that really mattered in life—not only food and shelter, but loving family relationships.



The Prodigal Son

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- He will let us make our mistakes in order to learn the truth of His love for us.
→ *Share a time when you learned from a mistake. Ask the children to share a time when they learned from a mistake.*
- God never loses sight of us, no matter how far away we try to go (Psalm 139).
- God forgives us and welcomes us when we repent of our sins and mistakes and return to Him (Luke 15:22-24).

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- The “far country” doesn’t have to be a physical distance. It simply means going away from God and our loving relationship with Him by disobeying and going our own way.
→ *Ask the children how they feel when they’ve disobeyed you: the barrier they may feel when they try to avoid you or cover up what they’ve done, the fear that they will be punished. That’s like going into a far country. We don’t want to do that with each other, and we especially don’t want to do that with God! We want to stay close to Him and to each other.*
- It’s never too late to come home to the Father, to say we’re sorry and we realize we’ve made a mistake.
→ *Share if there was a time when you “came back” to your father. Ask if the children can think of a time when some disobedience was put behind them and things were okay in your relationship again. How did they feel?*
- The father never stopped loving the prodigal son, regardless of his wayward behavior.
→ *What an important point to make with the children. Make sure they understand that not only does God always love us, even when we’re misbehaving, but you always love them too.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

This story is a warning to us: we shouldn’t choose to separate ourselves from God, disobey Him and do things our own way. If we do, He may let us learn our lessons the hard way. But this is also a story about His great love that never fails. He waits patiently for us to come to our senses and return to Him.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

“For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”

Luke 15:24 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let’s thank God for what we’ve learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



STORY 22 OF 24 • NEW TESTAMENT

The Widow's Offering

Read: Luke 21:1–4

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

(does not include this story)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE

page 347

TONIGHT'S STORY

We are always grateful to hear that somebody in our church has given a lot of money. Generous people play a major role in the work of the church. But how does God measure the value of our giving?

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“**abundance**” — having a lot; the rich could afford to give what they gave, and more

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** What does this story tell us about the way God measures the value of our gifts?
→ *It's not how much we give, but the spirit in which we give, and in part, the sacrifice we make—what it costs us.*
- Q** What about people who have a lot of money and give it generously? Does God not value what they give?
→ *Of course He does—when the gift is given sincerely, from the heart. God looks at the heart, and honors gifts that are given in the right spirit, no matter how large or small.*
- Q** Why did Jesus tell this story? Do you think He wanted to discourage people who want to give a lot?
→ *He was pointing out attitudes of the heart. The rich people only gave a little bit of what they had, but the widow was very poor and she gave all that she had.*
- Q** What do you think the religious leaders might have thought about Jesus' words about the widow's offering? Would they have been pleased?
→ *Jesus was really pointing a finger at them, wasn't He? They wouldn't have liked that.*



The Widow's Offering

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- His view of our giving may be quite different from our own.
- He values the attitude of the heart more than the size of the gift.
 - *This would be a good place to mention how much something the children made for you at school meant to you—much more than if they had spent a lot of money buying something at the store. Or use an example from your youth.*
- God is pleased with those who give from the heart, regardless of the amount.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- How do you think God wants us to understand and apply the truth of the story? Is it about our giving, or something else?
 - *It may have more to do with our thinking we can please God just by being religious, when His desire is that we surrender everything we are and everything we have, so He can pour out His great blessings on us! This is the kind of relationship He wants us to have with Him, where we give Him every part of our heart and life, Romans 12:1.*
- God is neither impressed nor disappointed by the amount we give.
 - *He wants us to give from the heart, and when we do, He is pleased. He wants us to give cheerfully, 2 Corinthians 9:7.*
- Studies show that, as people earn more, they often give a smaller share of what they have!
 - *That doesn't make sense, does it? This is a heart issue.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

God does not need our money; He wants to see hearts that are completely devoted to Him. The widow's gift showed her devotion to Him. He did not reject the other gifts, but pointed out the importance of the attitude with which we give.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



The Way, the Truth and the Life

Read: John 14:1–6

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE
(does not include this passage)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE
page 358

TONIGHT'S STORY

In the world's way of thinking, there are lots of ways to get to heaven. But today we learn the real truth from God and His Bible: Jesus is the only way.

- 1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9
- 2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“Let not your hearts be troubled” — don’t be upset or afraid

PARENT NOTE · SET THE SCENE

Explain that Jesus was with His disciples on the last night before He died. They had just had dinner together, and He had told them He was going to leave them (John 13:33).

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q Jesus told His disciples not to have troubled hearts. He knew they might be upset, because He had just told them that He would only be with them a little while longer (John 13:33). He had been their teacher and their friend for about three years, and they didn’t understand where He was going. Would you have been upset?
→ Ask if they can recall a time when they were upset when someone left—parent, grandparent, favorite teacher, good friend. Ask why they were upset: because they would miss them.
- Q He said He was going to prepare a place for them, and He would come back for them. What do you think Jesus meant?
→ He was going to heaven to prepare a place for them, and He has prepared a place for us. He was saying He would come back for them, so they could be with Him forever.
- Q Do you think this message is for us as well as for those disciples?
→ Yes, because He came to save all of us who believe!



The Way, the Truth and the Life

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- God has made a way for us to spend eternity with Him. Why did He do that?
→ *Because He loves us, John 3:16.*
- God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for us. One day He will send Jesus to bring us to that special place He has prepared for us, so that we can be with Him forever.
→ *How does that make you feel?*

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- Jesus' disciple Thomas said to Him, "We don't know where You are going. How can we know the way?" What was Jesus' answer? ("I am the way, and the truth, and the life," John 14:6.) Why is that important to us?
→ *We're like His disciples; we don't know the way to heaven, and we couldn't get there on our own. He was the way for them, and He is the way for us! That's why our hearts don't have to be troubled—we can count on Him, John 14:27.*
- Jesus didn't say He would show us "a" way to our heavenly Father. He said He is "the" way. What is the difference?
→ *If He had said "a" way, that would mean there could be other ways. Because He said "the" way, He meant there is no other way. Be sure the children understand this essential truth.*
- It's not just about our life here, but about eternal life, in the place He has prepared for us (John 10:28–30).

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

Jesus loves us so much that He gave His life for us. There was no other way for us to come to our heavenly Father—only through Jesus, who gave His life for our sins. He is the way; there is no other way. He has gone to prepare a place for those who believe in Him, who have received Him into their hearts. One day He will come again and take us to where He is. He has promised, and He always keeps His promises (2 Corinthians 1:20)!

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

Read: John 13:1–17

THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE
(does not include this story)

ESV ILLUSTRATED FAMILY BIBLE
pages 354–355

TONIGHT'S STORY

The disciples' feet were dirty because they wore sandals and walked on roads that were not paved. Let's see what lessons Jesus was teaching them.

1 **Begin with prayer** See Prayer Guidelines, page 9

2 **Read the story together** from one or both Bibles

WHAT HAPPENED?

Let the children tell what happened. Make sure they all get to contribute. Keep asking “What else happened?” until the main points are included.

WORDS TO KNOW

“betray” — to “sell out,” or turn a friend over to an enemy

“outer garments” — the clothes people wear over their underclothes, like a shirt, jeans or a dress

TALK IT OVER

Engage them in the story personally with questions that stimulate thinking.

- Q** How do you think it would feel to wash somebody else's dirty feet?
→ *You might consider taking extra time with this devotion, and take turns washing each other's feet—it would be fun and memorable.*
- Q** Why did Jesus wash His disciples' feet? What does this tell us about the kind of person Jesus was?
→ *This was something only servants did, and it showed He had a servant's heart, Mark 10:45. He was also showing His disciples the life He wanted them to live, with humble hearts, willing to serve others.*
- Q** Jesus told Peter he wouldn't understand what He was doing (washing his feet) until “afterward.” What did He mean by “afterward”?
→ *He meant after the cross. He was giving them a physical example of a spiritual reality that was coming: they would be washed clean, “bathed,” by the blood He shed for them, and would only need to wash their feet—a picture of confessing our sins to be forgiven daily, Matthew 6:12; 1 John 1:9.*



Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

3 What do we learn about God?

Let the children answer first.

- Jesus had a servant's heart. He was willing to humble Himself by washing the disciples' feet.
→ *Peter couldn't believe Jesus was willing to wash his feet. How would you have felt?*
- Jesus was also willing to humble Himself to come and live as a man, and to die on a cross for our sins.

4 What is the life lesson for us today?

As children answer, be sure to point out:

- It's important to serve others, to look for ways to help them. What could we do to serve each other?
→ *Help them come up with some very real ways to serve: helping out around the house, doing things for each other. You might all agree to do one act of service, individually or as a family, in the next few days.*
- Our "spiritual feet" get dirty when we sin. The way we wash them is to confess our sins to our heavenly Father, and He forgives us (Matthew 6:12, 14).
→ *Spend a little time talking about some of the sins they typically deal with at their age, and how to ask God to forgive our individual sins. You might refer to 1 John 1:9: if we confess our sins, God will forgive us.*

5

THE MAIN POINT TO TAKE AWAY

We must be willing to serve others, to do kind things for them. Jesus did the kindest thing that could ever be done for us when He humbled Himself to come to earth as a man and die on the cross for our sins. Because He did, we can have our "spiritual bath" and be cleansed of all our sins when we believe in Him and receive Him into our hearts (John 1:12). That spiritual bath cleanses us forever, but like Peter, sometimes we'll need to have our "spiritual feet" washed. We do this by confessing the sins we commit each day.

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Mark 10:45 (ESV)



6 Prayer time

Let's thank God for what we've learned. Coach the children so that everyone prays; this is a life skill.

☐ WE DID IT! _____



“Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

JOHN 17:3 (NIV)

That They May Know walks your family through 24 favorite Bible stories, from Creation to the Upper Room, with simple questions, clear explanations and a prayer time that teaches every child to pray. Thirty minutes, two or three times a week, for a foundation that lasts a lifetime.

SHARED FREELY BY P3 FELLOWSHIP

p3fellowship.org