

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 25

MEMORIZE

- For those with 1st-5th graders at Brook Hills, focus on the verses that they are memorizing in Children’s Ministry for this unit.
 - 1st Grade – Matthew 22:37-39
 - 2nd Grade – Matthew 5:14-16
 - 3rd Grade – Proverbs 3:5-7
 - 4th Grade – Proverbs 4:10-15
 - 5th Grade – 1 John 4:9-12

READ

As our church reads through the Bible for the next two years, each day will include a chapter from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. As a family, decide if you want to read one or both of these passages. The Faith Family Worship Guide will look ahead to the readings for the upcoming week.

Read: Deuteronomy 31:6-8; Joshua 1:5-9

Questions:

- What kinds of things are you afraid of? Why do you fear those things?
- What do you do when you are afraid? How do you respond?
- Why did God command Joshua and the people of Israel not to fear?
- What does fear about our circumstances or about other people indicate about our faith in God?
- How do we practically respond to fear with faith? How can we trust God even when we are afraid?

Bottom Line: Because God is with His people, we should not fear.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship him together.

Preschool

- Who is with us everywhere we go?
- Is God with us in the car? Is God with us at home? Is God with us at church? Is God with us all the time?
- Does God take care of you? How do you know God takes care of you?
- If God is with us everywhere we go, then we have no reason to be afraid. He always takes care of us!

Children

- Name some things you are afraid of.
- Count how many times God tells us to “be strong and courageous” in this week’s passage.
- In verse 7 of Joshua 1 God tells us to “be strong and very courageous.”
- God really wants us to be brave.
- When we trust and obey God we have no reason to be afraid.
- What should we do when we are afraid?

Students

- It can be incredibly difficult to trust the things we cannot see, and even more so to trust things that we have never experienced before.
 - Have you ever been to a theme park?
 - Think back to the first time you saw a giant roller coaster soaring through the open skies with your own eyes.
 - For most of us, even though it looks really exciting and awesome, there is still this moment of doubt in our minds that says, "Is this really a good idea? Are we sure this thing actually works?"

- But as you are watching the majestic coaster smoothly roll through its loops, you can begin to discern whether or not you can trust it by watching what it is doing.
- By the time you reach the coaster you have maybe seen it run a few times.
- Therefore, you can base your trust on whether or not it's going to work on what you have already seen it do.
- The same thing happens in the Bible!
- Moses instructs the people to not fear because God's presence was with them.
- Thinking back through the books of the Bible leading up to this one, what reasons had God given His people to trust Him rather than walk in fear before this point?
- How can God's people trust Him in new situations based on His previous actions and revelations?

SING

As believers who serve the risen Christ, we have no reason to be afraid. If Jesus can conquer sin, defeat death, heal the sick, restore the blind, and control a storm, then there is *nothing* that is too hard for Him. We can joyfully trust God with every circumstance of our lives. In light of this, let's continue in worship by singing "Our God". Written in 2010, this modern anthem reminds us that we have nothing to fear since God is fighting for us. The bridge asks the rhetorical question:

*And if our God is for us
Then who could ever stop us?
And if our God is with us
Then what could stand against?*

Let's worship our all-powerful God!

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

WHERE WE ARE IN THE STORY

Readings for June 23-29

Deuteronomy 28:20-34, Joshua 1, and Psalm 119:25-122

Where We Are In The Story (Deuteronomy)

Background of Deuteronomy: Deuteronomy picks up with Moses' word from the Lord to the Israelites at Mount Horeb at the end of their forty years of wilderness wanderings. Deuteronomy presents the Law (much of what is in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers) in a preached format, and it contains three of Moses' sermons to the people of Israel that both rehearse their history and instruct them in how they are to live as God's people in the Land of Promise. While Moses wrote this book, the end of the Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy) has an unnamed author since Moses did not write about his own death in Deuteronomy 34.

Structure of Deuteronomy:

- Deuteronomy 1:1-4:49 review Israel's history from Mt. Sinai through their wilderness wanderings.
- Deuteronomy 5-28 rehearse God's covenant with Israel and exhorts the people to keep the covenant.
- Deuteronomy 29-30 record a renewal of the covenant between God and Israel.
- Deuteronomy 31-34 report Joshua's succession of Moses, Joshua's commission, a song of Moses, and the death of Moses.

This Week in Deuteronomy: We pick up in Deuteronomy 28 with the curses God establishes for Israel should they disobey Him. These things later took place in the nation and resulted in the Assyrian Captivity (722 B.C.) and the Babylonian Captivity (587 B.C.). While the consequences of disobedience may appear harsh, they highlight the magnitude of the offense of infidelity to God, and while punishing the guilty, God offers grace and mercy when His people repent. All of this describes how Israel's prosperity in the land stemmed from God's provision and blessing, which hinged on the covenant faithfulness of the people.

Deuteronomy 29 begins Moses' third message in the book, and in Deuteronomy 29-30, he exhorts the people to "choose

life” (30:19) by determining to love and obey God. He calls them to renew their commitment to God. In Deuteronomy 31, Moses commissions Joshua as his successor in leading the people, and he encourages the people of Israel to “be strong and courageous” and not to fear the people of the land because God would go with them and would not forsake them (31:6). Such encouragement was needed in light of the epic fail of the nation forty years earlier. Then Moses offers the same instruction specifically to Joshua in front of the nation as he takes over leadership of the people.

God led Moses to write the words of the Law for the people to read them every Sabbath Year (31:9-13) as well as the words to a song of praise (31:30-32:43). During the Sabbath Year, the people were not to work the land, and instead, the proclaimed Law of the Lord was meant to remind them that God and His Word are their life and satisfaction. Deuteronomy 32-34 close with God’s instructions to Moses regarding his death, Moses’ final blessings on Israel, and his death on Mount Nebo, in modern-day Jordan. From this mount, even today, one can see the Promised Land, the Dead Sea, and Jerusalem to the west. While prohibited from entering the land because of his own sin, God did permit Moses a panoramic view of the Promised Land that Israel would inherit.

Where We Are In The Story (Joshua)

Background of Joshua: While authorship of this book is unknown, the book’s name derives from the name of its main character, Joshua, who was Moses’ successor in leading the people of Israel. His name means “Yahweh delivers” or “Yahweh saves,” which is an apt title of the book since it describes *God’s* work in defeating the nations of the Promised Land and giving the land to His people. Joshua presents the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give their descendants the land of Canaan, and it describes the military conquests that brought this to pass. Written as a historical book for Israel, Joshua also emphasizes God’s sovereignty, omnipotence, and faithfulness to His word, and Joshua 21:43-45 provides a fitting summary of God’s character as One who keeps *all* of His promises.

Structure of Joshua:

- Joshua 1-5 describe Israel’s preparations before taking the Promised Land.
- Joshua 6-12 depict the military conquests of the nation.
- Joshua 13-21 explain the distribution of the land among the tribes, highlighting the fulfillment of God’s promises to His people.
- Joshua 22-24 record Joshua’s final instructions and exhortations to the nation before his death.

This Week in Joshua: Joshua 1 includes both God’s encouragement to Joshua as he prepared to lead the nation into the Promised Land as well as the nation’s affirmation of his leadership. While placing on him the responsibility of leading His people, God promised to be with Joshua, and no matter Joshua’s fears or skills, God’s promises *His* sufficiency. The linchpin of Joshua’s success and the nation’s triumph is found in God’s charge to Joshua in verses 7-8 when God directs him to meditate on His law and to adhere to it. In the Old Testament era, meditation would have involved focusing upon God’s character, works, and words, and reminding one’s self of these things by reading or reciting them aloud. Inundating himself with God’s Word would be paramount for Joshua to lead effectively.

Where We Are In The Story (Psalms)

Background & Structure of Psalms: God used many different writers to write Psalms: David, Moses, the sons of Korah, Asaph, etc. The book is arranged in five parts, and this arrangement occurred after the people of Israel returned to the land after the Babylonian exile. A doxology concludes each book or arrangement of psalms (Psalm 41:13 for Book 1, Psalm 72:18-19 for Book 2, Psalm 89:52 for Book 3, Psalm 106:48 for Book 4, and Psalm 150:6 for Book 5), and the entire book of Psalms climactically ends with a grand doxology of several psalms (Ps. 146-150).

- Book 1: Psalms 1-41
- Book 2: Psalms 42-72
- Book 3: Psalms 73-89
- Book 4: Psalms 90-106
- Book 5: Psalms 107-150

This Week in Psalms:

- The longest psalm in the book, **Psalm 119** consists of 176 verses that are arranged in twenty-two stanzas of eight verses with the stanzas arranged in alphabetical order and with every line of the stanza starting with that letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The entire psalm focuses on the subject of God's law, and it includes many features of a wisdom psalm.
- **Psalm 120** begins a series of fifteen pilgrim psalms (Psalms 120-134) called the Songs of Ascent. As the Israelites traveled to Jerusalem for the yearly feasts (Passover, Pentecost, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles), they sang these psalms as they journeyed. In light of this context, Psalm 120 contrasts the heathen who surround the pilgrim and records the traveler's desire for peace and his prayers for God's deliverance.
- **Psalm 121** proclaims the pilgrim's trust in the Lord as he journeys. The psalmist reiterates the word "keep" six times in this short psalm, emphasizing God's preservation of His people and His loving care for them.
- The pilgrim would sing **Psalm 122** upon his arrival in Jerusalem, and in this psalm, the psalmist calls for the people to pray for Jerusalem's security and for peace.