

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 34

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 – Psalm 100:3-5
 - 2nd Grade – Matthew 7:7-11
 - 3rd Grade – Matthew 7:24-27
 - 4th Grade – 1 John 3:1, 2
 - 5th Grade – Psalm 51:1, 2

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: 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:11-16

Questions:

- What is part of the Holy Spirit’s job according to these verses?
- What do these verses have to say about what an unbeliever will understand about the things of God? Why doesn’t an unbeliever understand such things? Why would God do things this way? Since this is true, how does an unbeliever ever come to faith in Christ?
- How does the truth of these verses affect how we share the gospel with unbelievers?
- What does it mean to have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16)?
- For Christ-followers, since we have the mind of Christ, how should this affect how we live, act, talk, and what we think about?

Bottom Line: If someone is not a Christ-follower, then they will not understand the truths about God because they do not have the Holy Spirit inside of them to teach them and to help them understand such things.

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

- After Jesus went to Heaven, whom did he send to earth to live with us?
- The gift of the Holy Spirit is for all those who believe.
- Does the Holy Spirit guide us in making decisions?
- If you do something wrong, do you feel sorry for it?
- If you help another person, do you feel joy? The Holy Spirit guides us and makes us think before we act upon something.
- Is the Holy Spirit a Christ follower’s assurance that God has not left us, even though we have never seen Him or Jesus in the flesh?
- The Holy Spirit is very powerful.
- Can the Holy Spirit give you the power to tell others about Jesus?

Children

- When you read the Bible do you understand it? What is one of your favorite verses in the Bible, and why is it your favorite?
- Why do you think Christians are able to understand God’s Word?
- Do you think that a non-Christian will be able to understand God’s Word the same way a Christian can? Why or why not?
- Read 1 Corinthians 1:18 and 2:11-16.

- Do you know what special gift God gives to a Christian after they put their faith in Him? It's not the kind of gift you can see and hold in your hands, but it's a really important gift.
- These verses tell us that Christians have the Spirit of God living inside of them and He helps them understand God's Word.
- Does a person who is not a Christian have the same ability to understand the Bible?
- What are some things that a Christian can learn from God's Word that will change the way he or she lives, acts, talks and even thinks?

Students

- Have you ever been lost? Not like, "I missed that last turn lost," but you absolutely had no idea where you were or how to get back to a place that was familiar?
- What was it like?
- If a friend were with you and knew you were lost, what would you want them to say if they knew how to go back in the right direction?
- What if you were lost but thought you knew where you were? Would you, in hindsight, still want your friend to speak up and help get you going in the right direction?
- How is this similar to how Scripture describes someone who is lost spiritually?
- If you are a follower of Christ, are you as fervent about sharing the gospel as you would be if you were in the back seat of a car headed in the wrong direction?
- Is the "lost-ness" of those who do not follow Christ something that truly concerns you?

SING

This week's worship song is "Holy Spirit Have Your Way" by Leeland, a song that highlights how much we need His Spirit to strengthen, grow, and sustain us. May our prayer this week echo these words from the song: more of You and less of me!

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

WHERE WE ARE IN THE STORY

Readings for August 25-31

1 Samuel 17-24, Romans 15-16, and 1 Corinthians 1-5

Where We Are In The Story (1 Samuel)

Background of 1 Samuel: Originally, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book but were divided into two books (probably because of length) in the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament. 1 Samuel spans Israel's history from the era of the judges to the establishment of a monarchy in Israel, and Samuel, Saul, and David stand as the main characters in this book. While we do not know who wrote 1 and 2 Samuel, one common conjecture assigns 1 Samuel 1-24 to Samuel and the rest to Nathan and Gad who were two prophets and contemporaries of King David.

Structure of 1 Samuel:

- 1 Samuel 1-7 describes the life of Samuel, the last judge of Israel.
- 1 Samuel 8-12 expresses the establishment of a monarchy in Israel with Saul as the first king.
- 1 Samuel 13-15 records the circumstances that led God to reject Saul and his line as rulers in Israel.
- 1 Samuel 16-31 chronicles the life of David beginning when God appointed him as the next king of Israel and concluding with the death of Saul when David assumed the throne.

This Week in 1 Samuel: Although he had been anointed as the next king of Israel, David did not immediately assume the throne because God had not yet removed Saul from his position, and David was to wait on God's timing. David served Saul as a musician then later as an armor-bearer. During his service to Saul (and during his own rule), the Philistines waged war against Israel. The Philistines were originally Greek people who were expelled from their land and then from Egypt after the fall of Troy, and they eventually settled on the coast of modern day Israel and Lebanon. They brought iron with them, which put the Israelites at a severe disadvantage in battle because their weapons were made of bronze (all of

this is during the Iron Age of history). Warfare was necessary to obtain and to keep land, particularly for people like the Philistines who were not originally from the Middle East, and 1 Samuel 17 opens with a battle scene. Instead of each army losing thousands of soldiers, they decided to choose a warrior from each side to fight as a representative of the nation. The Philistines chose Goliath, a nine foot, nine inch giant, whose armor would have weighed almost as much as a Jewish person (126 pounds). Who would be willing to fight such a man? Who could fight him and prevail?

In defeating Goliath, David became famous in Israel, and it moved him into a position of leadership in Saul's army, which would be necessary training for him since he would spend most of his reign in battle against surrounding nations. It also enabled him to meet Jonathan, Saul's son, who would become a close friend and supporter of David's. Their relationship would have been more like father and son because of the significant age difference between them (Jonathan was about thirty years older than David), and although Jonathan would have inherited the throne from Saul, he recognized God's choice was David. 1 Samuel 18:1-5 demonstrates Jonathan's love for David, but it also indicates that he was pledging his loyalty to David and acknowledging him as the next ruler of Israel (see also 1 Sam. 20:14-16, 42; 23:17-18). Some liberals have interpreted Jonathan's actions to suggest a homosexual relationship existed between Jonathan and David, but these conjectures are unsubstantiated by Scripture.

Saul's jealousy of David's military fame leads him to attempt murder on several occasions, but God protected David during these years when he lived as an outlaw on the run. Keep in mind that Israel was in the initial stages of a monarchy at this time, so the rift between Saul and David presented a threat to the fledgling nation-state. 1 Samuel 21-23 demonstrates that David did not have the unanimous support of the Jewish people at this point in time. Despite Saul's attempts on David's life, David resisted what must have been a strong fleshly urge to kill Saul at En Gedi (1 Sam. 24). David continued to wait on God's timing for him to rule as king in Israel, and this perseverance, faith, and self-control would serve him well as king over the nation.

Where We Are In The Story (Romans)

Background of Romans: Paul's wrote the letter to the church in Rome, which was a church he had not visited prior to writing the letter, to prepare them for his arrival before attempting to take the gospel to Spain. However, Paul did not make it to Rome until he was under house arrest while he appealed to Caesar (Acts 28), and as far as we know, he never made it further west than Rome. The church in Rome contained both Jewish and Gentile Christians, and this mixed community provided opportunity for conflict as seen in Romans 14-15. Romans 1:16-17 marks the thesis of Romans, for it explains the gospel as "the righteousness of God" that is available to all who believe. Romans 1-11 gives an overview of God's plan to redeem humanity, and Romans 12-16 describes how we should live in light of what God has accomplished.

Structure of Romans:

- Romans 1:1-15 contains Paul's greetings to the church at Rome and his tentative travel plans.
- Romans 1:16-4:25 unpacks God's wrath towards sinners and His grace towards those who trust in Christ.
- Romans 5-8 describes the hope and obedience of Christ-followers, despite a continued struggle against sin.
- Romans 9-11 surveys God's plan to save both Jews and Gentiles.
- Romans 12:1-15:13 explains how Christians are to live in light of the gospel.
- Romans 15:14-16:27 includes Paul's concluding remarks to the Roman believers, his upcoming travel plans, and his personal greetings.

This Week in Romans: Romans 15 concludes Paul's discussion that began in chapter thirteen regarding humility and unity between the stronger and the weaker in the Roman church. He upholds Christ as the example to emulate in this (Rom. 15:3, 7), for Christ limited His freedom for the sake of others. As Christ set aside Himself for others, so the believers should act in the best interests of other people instead of doing what was best for themselves. Paul's references to Christ transition into the reason for Christ's first coming – to confirm the God's promises to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and to bring salvation to even the Gentiles (Rom. 15:8-13). Therefore, Christ welcomes both Jews and Gentiles to the faith.

Romans 16 opens with a lengthy list of personal greetings and final instructions to the Roman believers before concluding with another doxology in which Paul prays for the believers to be strengthened according to the gospel and praises God for His wisdom.

Where We Are In The Story (1 Corinthians)

Background of 1 Corinthians: Acts 18 records Paul's initial visit to Corinth where he met Priscilla and Aquila, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah, reasoning with the Gentiles about Christianity, and facing opposition from the Jews. Despite the opposition, a church formed, and although Crispus the ruler of the synagogue was part of this local church, it consisted mostly of Gentiles (see 1 Cor. 12:2). Believers in Corinth also represented many different social classes – tradesmen like Priscilla and Aquila as well as rich householders like Crispus, Stephanus, and Gaius (Acts 18:1-4; 1 Cor. 1:26). Sexual immorality, Pentecostalism, disunity, and pride plagued this young church, which necessitated the writing of this epistle, and throughout the letter, Paul makes mention of various reports he had received regarding behaviors and beliefs among the Corinthians. Therefore, Paul targeted three specific problem areas in his letter: peace and love among the Corinthian believers, adherence to the gospel, and holiness in the world.

Structure of 1 Corinthians:

- 1 Corinthians 1-4 describes divisions in the Corinthian church and the wisdom of the gospel.
- 1 Corinthians 5-6 addresses the Corinthians' sexual immorality and lawsuits against one another.
- 1 Corinthians 7 contains instruction on singleness, celibacy, and marriage.
- 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1 uses the issue of eating food offered to idols to segue into a discussion on rights, Christian freedom, and idolatry.
- 1 Corinthians 11:2-34 discusses the behavior of men and women in worship and abuses with the Lord's Supper.
- 1 Corinthians 12-14 focuses on the purpose and appropriate use of spiritual gifts in the body.
- 1 Corinthians 15 provides an explanation of the resurrection of the believer.
- 1 Corinthians 16 details Paul's travel plans and final instructions to the Corinthians.

This Week in 1 Corinthians: Significant division existed in the Corinthian church, and Paul sought to unify this group of believers (1 Cor. 1:10). A primary reason for disunity included allegiance to certain teachers and factions that resulted from those allegiances (1:10-16). As a result, their pride, jealousy, and strife hindered their witness and prevented them from focusing on what is truly important. In response, Paul launched into a description of God's wisdom, for their spiritual pride demonstrated a lack of understanding of the gospel. The Corinthians would have been accustomed to philosophers traveling through their city, demonstrating great oratory skills as they expressed their different beliefs, and it is likely that the Corinthian believers were judging their Christian teachers according to these humanistic standards of style and delivery rather than focusing on the content they espoused. It is unlikely that Apollos or Peter (Cephas) were involved in these disputes, for Paul directs no instruction to these two men. However, the nature of the division in Corinth led Paul to provide an explanation of wisdom and a defense of his ministry and his relationship with the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 2:1-5; 3:1-9; 4:1-20).

The division and arrogance of the Corinthians related to the instruction of their teachers stood as a symptom of a greater issue – a misunderstanding of the gospel. Pride has no place when salvation does not depend on the worthiness of a person to receive it. Also, according to human wisdom, a crucified Messiah seems ridiculous and weak, and Paul carefully distinguishes between worldly wisdom and divine wisdom as he corrects the Corinthians. In his commentary on 1 Corinthians, David Garland quotes P. Lampe in explaining Paul's method of handling the Corinthians' party spirit:

Applying both general thoughts to the specific issue [All human, worldly wisdom will perish, and all Christian wisdom only comes from the Holy Spirit.], one arrives at the following conclusion: Either the wisdom of the apostles is a human quality and therefore a reason for praising them – but then it is also bound to perish – or the wisdom of the apostles is exclusively a spiritual gift from God, justifying God alone as the object of praise. In both cases the way is obstructed for praising apostles, which sums up the whole thought figure of 1:18-2:16.

1 Corinthians 5:1-8 tells of a case of incest in the Corinthian church, and it seems to be a drastic change in conversation from the previous four chapters. The connection relates to pride. In 1 Corinthians 4, he describes the Corinthians as being "puffed up" and "arrogant" (4:6, 18, 19), and this haughty attitude also shows itself in their moral laxity (1 Cor. 5:2). This particular man engaged in incest, but the church body had not addressed this sin. They had developed a blasé attitude towards sexual sin. In relation, Paul's command for them to "cleanse out the old leaven" in 1 Corinthians 5:7 is a reference to the Feast of Unleavened Bread when the Jews would rid their homes of anything that had leaven or yeast in it, and they would not eat any foods containing leaven until the feast was over. This feast came right after the Passover, and whereas the Passover symbolized God's redemption of His people, the Feast of Unleavened Bread reminded the people of the purity and holiness that should occur in God's people as a result of their redemption. In these verses, Paul applies the principle of this feast to the Christian life.