

Family Worship Guide – Week 4

MEMORIZE

- Choose either 2 Timothy 3:16-17 or Psalm 119:7-14, and make it the family emphasis for the month of January.
- 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 – John 3:16
 - 2nd Grade – Psalm 139:7-10
 - 3rd Grade – Psalm 23:1-6
 - 4th Grade – Philippians 3:20-21
 - 5th Grade – Colossians 1:15-18

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 back at the readings for the previous week, but for this first month, we will emphasize why the Bible is important, how to read and understand the Bible, how the Bible is supposed to change us, and why we pray. Included below are the readings for last week from the Bible Reading Plan.

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
Genesis 21 Matthew 20	Genesis 22 Matthew 21	Genesis 23 Matthew 22	Genesis 24 Matthew 23	Genesis 25 Matthew 24	Genesis 26 Matthew 25	Genesis 27 Matthew 26

Where We Are In The Story (Old Testament): As the first book of the Bible, Genesis explains that God is the all-powerful Creator who cares about His creation even when they disobey Him, and it teaches that God takes evil and transforms it for His glory (Gen. 50:20). Written by Moses when Israel was wandering in the wilderness, Genesis 12-50 emphasizes the development of the nation of Israel by focusing on their founding fathers – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This week’s readings specifically focus on the lives of Abraham and Isaac. God keeps His promise to Abraham and Sarah by giving them a son (Gen. 15; 17), and when Isaac is young, God tests Abraham’s faith by asking him to trust God enough to obey Him even though he does not understand the reason for the command (Gen. 22). Abraham demonstrates great faith in God by obeying Him and sacrificing Isaac and by relying on God to later provide a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24). Although God promised to use Abraham’s family to bless the nations, Abraham and his descendants were sinners, and Jacob’s deception in Genesis 25-27 demonstrates the sinfulness of man. However, God chose this family knowing their sinfulness, and His choice was not based on what they had to offer or what they could do for Him. Nor did their actions catch Him by surprise. God’s plan is unstoppable and perfect, even if we do not understand what He is doing.

Where We Are In The Story (New Testament): Matthew is the first of four Gospels that tell about the life of Christ. As one of the twelve disciples (Matt. 9:9-13), Matthew focuses on demonstrating how Jesus fulfills Old Testament promises concerning the Messiah. With regard to structure, Matthew includes five collections of Jesus’ teaching (Matt. 5-7; 10; 13; 18; 24-25), and each of these sections concludes with a statement saying “And when Jesus finished these sayings...” Matthew 21-25 tells of the week leading up to Jesus’ death (Passion Week), and during this week, Jesus taught the contents of the fifth collection of teachings recorded in Matthew (Matt. 24-25), which focuses on the second coming and on the end of the age. Matthew 26 begins with Jesus celebrating the Passover meal with His disciples when He establishes the new covenant (Matt. 26:26-29), and it focuses on the night of Jesus’ betrayal, arrest, and trial.

Read: James 1:22

The Bible teaches believers how to live in a way that pleases God, for God knows what is best for us. But if we do not heed the Bible’s instructions, then we disobey God. While *reading* the Bible is important, it is unproductive if we are not seeking to *apply* what we have read. God wants to grow our knowledge of Him, but our knowledge of Him and His Word should not be inordinate to our obedience. As we read Scripture, ask God what He wants you to do with what you have read. How does He want to change your desires? How does He want to transform the way that you think and what you think about? How does He want to alter your relationships? As James 1:22 teaches, we deceive ourselves if we only hear the Word and do not obey it.

Questions

- How is the Bible supposed to change me?
- Why is it important to do what the Bible says?
- How do I apply what I have read in Scripture?

Bottom Line: Reading the Bible should alter how Christ-followers live, think, and act.

SING

This week our family worship guide song is “Man of Sorrows” by Hillsong. Jesus is the Lamb of God, on whom the sin of man and wrath of God was laid. Jesus' death atones for our sin, and Jesus resurrection assures our eternal life. Praise God who has made propitiation for our sins through the work of His Son on the Cross. Let's sing together as we give praise and honor to the suffering Lamb of God, Jesus our Savior.

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

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

- Before you begin, open your Bible to James 1:22. Read the verse to your preschooler.
- Tell your preschooler that you are going to play a game that will require them to follow directions. Play the game, “Simon says” for a few rounds.
- After the game, talk about how your child had to *do* the things they heard you say, and that the more closely they followed the directions, the longer they stayed in the game.
- Similarly, God says that those who act according to what the Bible teaches will be rewarded. That's why God's Word says to be doers of the word – to obey what you are taught or read in your Bible. Anyone can hear about doing the right thing, but a person who loves God should *do* the right thing.
- God is pleased when we hear His Word *and* obey it.
- Questions: How is the Bible supposed to change me? Why is it important to do what the Bible says?
- End your family time with prayer. Pray that God will help your family to hear God's Word clearly and do what it says.

Children

- Read James 1:22-25. Ask what they think God is saying through this passage.
- Read this story to your child:
 - *One day a man was going away on a long trip. He asked a good friend to come to his house and take care of all his house plants while he was gone. The man left very good instructions about how to care for them: when to water them, how much to water them, and when to put them in the sun. The friend agreed to care for the plants and the man went away on his trip. The friend read through the instructions every day. He read every word carefully and memorized parts of the instructions. He even called a few friends over to study the instructions with him. But there was one problem: although he knew the instructions inside and out, he never actually watered a single plant. When the man came home from his trip, his friend was there to greet him. The friend eagerly reported how well he had studied the instructions. However, the man was very sad that now every single one of his houseplants had died.*
- How does this story compare to what we read in James?
- Re-read James 1:22. Why is it important to do what the Bible says and not just read His word?
- How do I apply what I have read in Scriptures?
- To answer this question, use the following illustration: Take some dirt (or washable marker) and make a smudge on your child's forehead. Have them look at themselves in the mirror and ask the following questions:
 - After seeing yourself in the mirror with this smudge on your face, what should you do?
 - What if you just read in a book about how to remove smudges from your face, but then you went on about your day and never actually followed those instructions?
 - How does this compare to what God tells us in James 1:22?

- Pray together as a family, asking God to help each of us be doers of His word, and not just hearers.

Students

- Sometimes the best way to communicate the value of something is to experience life without it. To teach this lesson to your students make or pick up some salt-free crackers or potato chips. You can include them as a part of a meal or begin your Bible study together with this as a snack. When someone draws attention to or tries to remedy the fact that the chips don't have any flavor, have them first turn to James chapter one and read verses 19-27 together. Once they have finished reading, lead them through the following discussion questions.
 - In verse 22 James says that something is essential in addition to someone merely reading or listening to God's word. What is it? (Someone actually following through and doing/obeying it.)
 - If Psalm 119:11 says that just hiding God's word in their heart helps prevents them from sinning, why does someone need to concern himself or herself with doing it? (There are many "right" answers to this but we will explore two.)
 - In the surrounding verses of James 1:22 there are specific instructions regarding what our reading of God's Word and our faith are supposed to impact. What do you believe James' point is in listing things like being slow to anger, being careful how one speaks, and visiting people? (The point is that our study of God's Word and our faith are never intended to end with us, they are meant to impact the world around us.)
 - Now read James 2:17-19. James actually says that our study of the Bible is not only meant to impact others through our actions, but our very faith, our relationship with Christ, is directly related to what we do. What does he mean by "faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead?" (This verse can be misunderstood to mean that a person has to work for their salvation. This is not correct! James is simply stating that real saving faith does not simply seek to know something, but will act on what it learns out of loving obedience. Works are a natural outpouring of true faith.)
 - A person's study of God's Word, if not connected with sincere action related to it, is missing a critical ingredient (much like chips with no salt). James lists several examples of what it means to live out one's faith. What are areas of your life would you like to become more like what you have read in Scripture? (Parents, be sure to share your own areas to grow in as well.)
 - Once you have finished, assign each person another family member to pray for, and then pray out loud for one another.