

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 22

MEMORIZE

1 Corinthians 4:15-16 – For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

READ

Read 1 Corinthians 4:8-16.

The ministry of church leaders is a weighty, yet sometimes thankless, task. These men are called to be faithful stewards of God's truth, foolish spectacles in the eyes of the world, and loving fathers to God's children. Understanding how God measures and evaluates church leaders will help believers not play favorites with them or create disunity because of them. As far as we go, though, what response are we to have toward our church leaders? Listen to them? Respect them? Support them? Pray for them? Hold them accountable? Certainly we are to do all these and more. However, in this passage we discover a unique attitude we are to take toward those leaders to whom God has entrusted the leadership of His church: we are to imitate them.

Questions:

Who are our church leaders?

Why should we imitate them?

What makes church leaders deserving of imitation?

Bottom Line: Believers should imitate their leaders in the church as they minister the love of Christ through the gospel.

SING

The beauty of imitating Christ-like leaders is that the gospel is more clearly displayed in our own lives. Through the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, we are sanctified into the image of our Savior. So ultimately, we are not pointing the world to men, but to Christ.

As we continue in worship, let's sing the song "Holding Nothing Back". Written in 2007 by Martin Smith and Tim Hughes, this upbeat tune expresses how the gospel has freed us from the chains of sin so that we might live for Christ. The chorus reads:

*My chains fell off, my heart was free
I'm alive to live for You, I'm alive to live for You
Amazing love, how can it be?
You gave everything for me, You gave everything for me*

Let's point the world to Christ as we pursue Him together!

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, look for some pictures of fathers and children together, or choose some of your own special family photos. (Ex: father reading Bible to child, praying with child, playing with child, etc.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 4: 15-16 with your preschooler.
- Explain to your preschooler that the Bible tells us God has called some men to do a very important job for Him.

- Show the pictures to your preschooler and explain that this man loves his children very much. He loves them so much that he wants to spend time playing with them, teaching them about Jesus, and praying for them. Tell your child that a loving Father takes good care of his children.
- Ask them if they know that God has called some men to be like Fathers to His people, the church. Explain that this is a very important job. These leaders are called to teach God’s Word, pray for God’s people, and love and spend time with them. They do the same things a loving father does for his own children. They are called by God to take good care of His church so that one day the people of His church will grow up to take care of the next generation of the church.
- The Bible tells us that we should listen and watch these leaders carefully so that we will know how to love others like God loves us. We can learn a lot about God and His love by trying to be like them.
- Let’s pray and thank God for the men He has called to be loving leaders and fathers to us.

Children

- Play a game of “Follow the Leader” with your child, where first you serve as the leader and your children have to mimic your actions. Be sure to make the actions silly and fun. Switch and let your child serve as the leader as you follow them.
- Ask them:
 - What did we have to do in that game? (Follow the leader)
 - How did you know how to follow the leader? (By watching them closely and then doing what they did.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 4:15-16.
- Who does this verse say we are to imitate? (Paul, who wrote 1 Corinthians; but we can also apply this to all church leaders.)
- Who are some of the people who lead you at church? Describe them. What do you like about them? In what ways do they act like Christ?
- Why does God give us leaders in the church? (To give us examples that help us better understand what being a Christ-follower looks like.)
- How can we imitate our leaders? (We can teach others around us about Jesus, be disciple makers among our friends, be like Christ to others—kind, loving, caring, etc.)
- Pray and thank God for our church leaders, specifically for those who interact regularly with your kids. Ask God to help us be better imitators of our church leaders, and ask God to help those leaders follow Christ closely, knowing that children are imitating them.

Students

- Have different family members look up these passages: 2 Timothy 2:2, 1 Cor. 11:1, 1 Cor. 4:16, Phil. 3:17, 1 Thess. 1:6, 2 Thess. 3:9.
- “Follow Me as I follow Christ.” This is not a statement to be taken lightly. Nor is it a one-time statement from Paul to the believers he came across. He encouraged many to imitate his actions as he planned to imitate Christ. What a bold statement! “Watch me and do what I do and you WILL be imitating Christ.” Wow.
- Take that in for a second and then think about that idea in the context of disciple-making. Who are you encouraging to watch how you live? Who’s life are you watching?
- As a family list those who you look up to. Who do you look to for fashion? Who do you look to for trendy music? Who are you watching for the sake of imitating?
- Gone are the days of imitating others because “Simon Says”. What makes someone worth imitating?