

Family Worship Guide – Week 8

MEMORIZE

Matthew 10:39 – “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

READ

Read Matthew 10:37-39.

Upon first reading, these verses can be somewhat difficult to understand. They can seem not only confusing but also troubling. Does Jesus really want his followers to dislike their family members? Does he expect every Christian to die a death like he did? Upon closer inspection, of course, we discover that Jesus is using strong figurative language to teach his disciples about the serious cost involved in following him. He did not expect or desire us to really hate our mothers and fathers and sons and daughters. However, in order to be his disciples he did call us to completely abandon ourselves in order to fully give ourselves over to his will and purposes.

Questions:

How do we love Jesus more than anyone else in our lives?

What does it mean to take up our cross and follow Jesus?

How does losing our lives for Jesus’ sake help us find true life?

Bottom Line: Being Jesus’ disciple means abandoning everything else in order to follow him.

SING

This week our song is ‘Praise the Father, Praise the Son’ by Chris Tomlin. The lyrics of this modern hymn help underscore the point of this week’s scripture reading, namely that Christ should be our first and greatest love. Indeed, he is ‘the name above all names’ and should be first in our hearts, first in our minds, and first on our tongues. He is worthy of total obedience, submission and ‘highest praise’. Comparatively, all else pales. So, sing with joy and abandon today, and use this song as a prayer for God to work in your own life and in the lives of your family as well. ‘Praise the father, praise the son, praise the spirit, three in one!’

Visit our website for a link to this song: http://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, make hearts from red construction paper and cut one of the hearts in half. Then open your Bible to Matthew 10:39.
- Read the verse to your preschooler and show the pieces of the heart. Tell them that God doesn’t want only a piece of our hearts – he wants all of us! He wants to be in charge of all of our life – not just certain parts. Now show them a whole heart.
- When Jesus is most important and you love him most, then he changes your heart so that you can truly love and help others. He wants us to tell others about what he has done for us and what he wants to do for them. God wants everyone to know that Jesus is the Savior of the world. He wants us to share the good news with everyone. He loved us so much that he sent his only son, Jesus, to save us from our sins.
- Questions: How do we love Jesus more than anyone else in our lives? Do you want Jesus to be most important to you?
- Conclude by rereading the scripture and praying that we will give God every area of our lives.

Children

- Materials: Outside play area with a swing or a rope tied around a tree or limb with a loop tied at the end.
- Go outside to where the swing or rope is located. Have child(ren) hold onto to rope tightly. Explain that when you hold onto something tightly this is called "clinging".
- Explain to child(ren) that the word "abandon" is the opposite of clinging because it means to "leave completely".
- Tell your child(ren) to pretend that they cannot let go of the rope and to keep holding on to rope even while you call out "follow me" around the yard. Ask them why they can't follow you while holding on to the rope. Possible answers may include: "I am stuck here" or "I can only go a certain distance with the rope" or "the rope keeps me from going as far as you".
- Remind your child(ren) that there are many things that keep us from following Jesus and hold us back just like the rope.
- Tell you child(ren) to pull on the rope (but not too hard) and then let go of it so they can come to you when you call out "follow me". Ask them if they felt free once they had abandoned the rope that was restraining them.
- Share that a disciple, or follower, of Jesus must abandon anything that holds him back from following Jesus. Read the scripture memory verse for this week and then pray as a family that this might be true in your lives.

Students

- Our love for Jesus should be so overwhelming that it makes our family relationships look like hate in comparison.
 - Why would Christ demand this of his followers?
 - Discuss real-world scenarios that demonstrate someone loving Christ more than family.
 - Ex.: a daughter chooses to honor God's Word over the unbiblical wishes of her parents.
- In addition to today's text, consider Mat. 4:18-22, 7:21-23, and 8:18-22.
 - What do these passages tell us about the seriousness of following Christ?
 - Why is casual identification with Jesus not an option?
 - How does Jesus view those people who are unwilling to give up everything for him?
 - In what areas of your life have you seen greater obedience to Christ?
 - What areas of your life do you find more difficult to surrender? Why?
- Christ tells us that "...whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mat. 10:39) and "...I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). In addition, read Mat. 13:44-45.
 - What specific habits, possessions, attitudes, desires, and ambitions have you given up for the sake of Christ?
 - If a non-believer asked how you have experienced the true life of Christ, what would you say?
 - How has following Jesus brought you joy and satisfaction?

