

HomeFront

a spiritual parenting resource

SERVING

*Serving asks the question,
"What needs to be done?"*

RESPONSIBILITY

*"God has entrusted me with
the things and people He
created around me."*

KNOWING

*"God knows me, and
I can know Him."*

COURSE CORRECTION

*"When I get off track, God
offers me a path of healing"*



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A Note From Michelle



If your family is anything like mine, fall can feel like a full sprint of our energy and time. Between school schedules, sports practices, church activities, homework, and work responsibilities, the calendar fills up almost overnight. In seasons like this, it's easy to wonder if meaningful spiritual conversations will simply have to wait for a less busy time.

But what if this busy season is exactly where God wants to meet your family?

This issue of *HomeFront* was created with real families in mind...families who are juggling carpools, dinner, backpacks, and bedtime. Each lesson is designed to fit naturally into everyday life while helping children discover the character of God and grow to reflect Him.

Together you'll explore what it means to serve like Jesus, faithfully care for what God has entrusted to you, know God's gentle and faithful heart, and experience His grace when life requires a course correction.

Along the way, you'll laugh together while building Blindfolded Cup Towers, untangling a Human Knot, and racing through a Kindness Relay. You'll create meaningful reminders of God's truth with projects like the Faithfulness Jar, Covenant Chain, Freedom Footprints, and a beautiful Mason Jar Lantern that reflects the Fruit of the

Spirit. Most importantly, you'll spend time in God's Word, pray together, and speak blessings over one another that we hope your children will remember for years to come.

My prayer is that these pages won't become another item on your family's to-do list. Instead, may they become simple moments that remind you that discipleship isn't something we squeeze into life but it's something God weaves into the ordinary moments we already share.

Thank you for inviting us into your home. It is a privilege to partner with you as you lead the next generation to know and love Jesus.

With blessing,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Anthony".

Editor, *HomeFront Magazine*

Dr. Michelle Anthony is the Sr. Executive Pastor of Family Ministries at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, CO and Director of The Initiative for Faith and Family. Michelle has graduate degrees in Christian education, theology, and leadership and more than 30 years of church ministry experience as a children's and family pastor. She is also the author of Spiritual Parenting, The Big God Story, Becoming a Spiritually Healthy Family, and 7 Family Ministry Essentials. Michelle loves spending time with her husband, adult children, and her adorable grandchildren who make faith come alive each day!



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SPIRITUAL PARENTING

It is our prayer that homes and churches would create environments for children to live in so their faith will grow in a community of common language and practice. To learn more about creating environments that can ignite a transforming faith in your family, we suggest you read:

SPIRITUAL PARENTING:
An Awakening for Today's Families

BY MICHELLE ANTHONY

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DISCIPLESHIP STEPS AT NEW LIFE CHURCH

Parents are the spiritual nurturers of their children's faith and are the main disciplers in their lives. We are committed to engaging, empowering, and resourcing our parents and families to succeed in their God-given role. Time and resources make this role challenging in our busy world. At New Life Church, we have created a clear path of discipleship for our parents with convenient times and locations. We hope to see you there!

PARENT ORIENTATION A first step toward engaging in our ministry. Hear philosophy, meet staff, and learn how to be involved.

SPIRITUAL PARENTING A six-week class that dives deep into what God's Word says about parenting.

HOMEFRONT MAGAZINE A magazine designed to aid in successful community groups or family nights for your own family.

FAMILY NIGHTS/COMMUNITY GROUPS Families meeting in homes to do life together (as individual families or combined with other families) and grow in their relationships with God and each other.

PARENT DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES/EVENTS Throughout the year, we offer special courses and events tailored toward inspiring, equipping, and supporting you as you nurture your children's faith.



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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

We believe parents and grandparents are the primary nurturers of their children's and grandchildren's faith, and we want to inspire, equip, and support you in that endeavor. Individual Family Nights or Community Groups (which participate in Family Nights together with other families) are an opportunity for you to gather with several other families who are in similar life circumstances and grow together. Your Community Group will gather for eight weeks each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer). This is a time for you to share a meal, learn more about God, engage with each other, and bless your children. *HomeFront* is the curriculum for our Community Groups, and each volume contains a full semester's worth of gatherings.

You can still access previous editions of *HomeFront* magazine at homefrontmag.com. If you would like more information about Community Groups, or would like to sign up for a group near you, email parents@newlifechurch.org. Thank you for investing in the spiritual health of your family. We hope this magazine will serve as a practical guide for you as you seek to establish a spiritually-rich environment in your home.



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SUCCESSFUL FAMILY NIGHT/
COMMUNITY GROUP

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OUR MISSION

INSPIRE

parents with ideas to create fun, spiritually forming times in the normal rhythm of everyday life.

EQUIP

parents to become the spiritual leaders of God's truth in their own households.

SUPPORT

families to engage their communities and change the culture around them.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each lesson helps you lead your family through four sections.

GOD'S WORD:

Spending time together in God's Word is a powerful way for your kids to learn who God is while instilling a love for the Bible from an early age. Take some time to read the God's Word section together and then answer the questions in the discussion section.

CREATE or GAME TIME:

Sometimes the best conversations happen around creating or playing together. Don't forget to make this time engaging and purposeful.

WORSHIP RESPONSE:

Worship Response is a time to respond in a posture and attitude of worship toward God. There are many ways we can actively give our worship to God.

BLESS:

A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a Bible passage, or words of encouragement. Blessings can be spoken over a child for the purpose of declaring God's protection, joy, and wisdom over him.

RESOURCE

Thinking Ahead

Let's make a plan and set your family up for a successful and less stressful family night or homegroup. Consider gathering all the materials needed for each week, place them in a tote, and be ready to pull them out for the evening!

Week One

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 6 plastic cups (or blocks)
- Bandana or scarf for a blindfold
- Large peice of paper
- Markers and pens

Week Two

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Paper
- Pencil/Pen

Week Three

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Strips of paper
- Colored pencils/markers
- A big bowl

Week Four

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A clear jar or container
- Small pom-poms, marbles, buttons, or dried beans
- Permanent marker
- Paper and tape (optional)
- Small index cards or slips of paper
- A basket or bowl
- Pens or markersl

Week Five

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A small mason jar
- Battery-operated tea light (recommended for safety)
- Twine or jute rope
- Fresh or artificial flowers and greenery (optional)
- Ribbon (optional)
- Small plant of your families choice

Week Six

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Strips of colored paper
- Tape or stapler
- Markers
- Colored cardstock or construction paper
- Markers
- String or ribbon
- Hole punch (optional)

Week Seven

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Large open space
- Relay Course Stations
- Sticky Notes
- Pens

Week Eight

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Paper
- Markers
- Scissors



LESSON ONE

SERVING

"What needs to be done?"

GOD'S WORD

Read Mark 10:35-45 together as a family.

What do you think of when you think of greatness? Maybe you think of someone who is the GOAT (greatest of all time), like our favorite professional athlete or famous singer. We tend to think of a great person as someone who is above everyone else - someone other people serve, not someone who serves others.

One day, two of Jesus' disciples came to him and asked if they could sit at his right and left hand in glory. In other words, they wanted to be important, in charge, ready to rule the kingdom with Jesus. A bold request!

But Jesus tells them that they don't understand what they are asking for, and He takes the opportunity to turn our understanding of greatness upside down.

Jesus tells us that in His kingdom, what makes someone great is how they serve. In the world, people may try to be great by putting themselves above others, **but in Jesus' kingdom, the king is the first to serve.** "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve." And we are all called to follow his example.

Jesus tells us that we are truly great when we are willing to serve others. If we want to be like Jesus, we should always be asking, "How can I serve the people around me?"

Even though Jesus was the very Son of God, he chose to humble himself to serve us, so much so that he was willing to lay down his life for us! Because he has done this for us, we are now called and empowered to do the same by choosing to serve others every day. Just like Jesus chose to serve us even when we didn't deserve it, we can follow His example by serving the people in our lives, whether in big or small ways.

Jesus, the greatest person to ever live, came to serve. And because He serves, we can do the same.

DISCUSSION

1. How does it make you feel that Jesus chose to serve you even when you didn't deserve it?
2. What is one specific way you could choose to serve someone in your family this week?
3. How have you seen your family members choose to serve one another? Celebrate each other!

GAME TIME

How Can I Serve You?

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Six plastic cups (or blocks)
- Bandana or scarf for a blindfold

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. One person is blindfolded.
2. Another family member becomes the "server."
3. The server may only use encouraging words but may not touch the person in order to help them stack six cups into a tower (three at the base, then two, then one on top)
4. When finished, switch roles until everyone has had a turn.

TALK ABOUT IT

Was it easier to build when someone patiently served you?

Jesus didn't just tell people what to do He helped them. Serving often looks like encouraging, guiding, and helping others succeed.



Having the Mind of Christ

SCRIPTURES

- Philippians 2:11

These verses tell us to have the mind of Christ. One of the ways that we can be like Christ is in the way we serve and love others. Philippians gives an incredibly practical way we can do this - thinking of ourselves and our needs less, and instead, thinking about the needs and interests of others. Take some time with your family to create a "mind of Christ list". You will work together to find ways to replace your interests, wants, and things you enjoy with ways you can love and serve others.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Large piece of paper
- Markers or pens

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. On the left side of the paper, have each family member write down 2-3 things that are important to them or that they really enjoy. It may be something like going out to eat, shopping, a special toy, or a favorite activity. Think of something that receives your time, energy, and resources.
2. Discuss as a family why you wrote each thing down and share why it is important to you or why it is something you enjoy.
3. Then on the right side of the paper, write "the mind of Christ".
4. Now work as a family to substitute or replace one of those things on the left side of the paper with a way to love and serve somebody else. Take a few minutes and ask the Lord to highlight one thing for each person that they can think about replacing.
5. After the Lord has highlighted something, draw an arrow from the left side of the page to the "mind of Christ" side. You will now write down a way that you can "look to the interests of others." It may be using money that would usually be spent on yourself and replacing it with a way that you can give that money to someone in need or an organization that serves people. It could look like giving up time spent playing with your favorite games or toys to serve one of your family members.
6. When you are finished, hang the paper somewhere visible to remind you to have the mind of Christ and put the needs and interests of someone else first.
7. Close your time together praying to have the mind of Christ.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"JESUS, WE THANK YOU THAT YOU ARE THE HUMBLE KING WHO COMES TO SERVE. YOU HAVE SHOWN US YOUR GREAT LOVE IN HOW YOU HAVE SERVED US. NOW WE ASK THAT YOU STRENGTHEN US TO THINK THE SAME WAY AS YOU DO. HELP US TO SEE, LOVE, AND SERVE OTHERS LIKE YOU DO. AMEN."

BLESS

The Greatest Servant

SCRIPTURE Mark 10:45

BLESSING (Child's name), may your hands become quick to help, your words quick to encourage, and your hearts quick to love. May you learn to follow Jesus, the greatest Servant of all, and discover that true greatness is found in serving others. Amen."

LESSON TWO

SERVING

"What needs to be done?"

Working Together

GOD STATEMENT: God is the Head of the Church

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12:14-19

GOD'S WORD

Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-19 out loud together.

In this passage, Paul is comparing the Church to a human body. Christians will refer to Christ followers as the body of Christ. Just as we know the different parts of our human body have different abilities and we use them for different things, we as Christ's followers are a part of a bigger purpose and we all play a special part. We are all part of the body of Christ and as part of the body we are called to use the gifts that God has given us.

Being a part of the body of Christ means we want the body to flourish and do well. Think about if your hand throws a ball, is the foot jealous or happy? Think about the part your foot plays when you throw a ball? If you step with your foot and throw with your hand, your body is working together to accomplish a task. The same is true about us and other Christians. We all have a part to play, but it is not always the same part. And sometimes we are given the chance to help someone else to see them do well. Just like our foot helps our hand throw the ball. **This is what serving is: using our gifts to help others use their gifts.** We need each other because we all have different gifts and strengths.

God has given us gifts and abilities, and we get to use them to help the people around us, and when we help the people around us, we glorify God. God has called us to love and serve the people around us, but this isn't something that we can do by ourselves. God gives us friends to help us, and He gives us the Holy Spirit to guide, strengthen, and teach us. We do not have to love and serve others out of our own strength; we get to do it with God.

DISCUSSION

1. What is a body part that you use a lot and wouldn't want to lose?
2. Is serving others fun or hard for you? Why?
3. Who in your life have you seen use their abilities and gifts to help others?

GAME TIME

Body Builders

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Any items in your room

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Call out different challenges that require two family members to work together using different "body parts."

Examples:

- Pick up a pillow using only your elbows.
- Carry a balloon using only your shoulders.
- Walk across the room connected back-to-back.
- Hold a book together using only one finger each

TALK ABOUT IT

After every challenge ask: Could one person have done that alone?

Explain that every part of the body matters, just like every believer matters in the Church body..



Do a one hand push up!

Love the Lord Your God

SCRIPTURES

- Matthew 22:37-39 and Deuteronomy 6:5

As Christians, we are called to love God and to love others with all that we have. One of the ways that we can do that is by using the gifts and talents God has given us. When we are generous with those gifts and use them to serve God and support others, we are worshiping and loving God.

This worship response invites your family to reflect on how you can use your gifts to love God and love others.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Paper
- Pencil/Pen

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Trace your hand on the paper.
2. On the hand, write down a gift that you have! What is something you are good at that you can use to serve others?
 - Are you good at making friends? Maybe you can make friends with the kids who sit by themselves at school!
 - Are you good at giving compliments? Maybe you can encourage others with your words!
 - Are you good at a certain subject in school? Maybe you can help your friends with their homework!
3. Now, ask the Lord to help you serve the people around you with your gift.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"JESUS, THANK YOU FOR GIVING EACH OF US GIFTS. HELP US TO USE THOSE GIFTS TO LOVE YOU, OUR FAMILY, AND OUR FRIENDS. AMEN."

Flourish

SCRIPTURE Ephesians 2:10

BLESSING (Child's name), may God help you discover the gifts He has placed inside of you. May you never compare your gifts with someone else's but instead celebrate the way God designed you. May you work together with others like one body, serving Jesus and helping one another flourish. Amen."

LESSON THREE

RESPONSIBILITY

"God has entrusted me with the things and people He created around me."

Working As One

GOD STATEMENT: God Invites us to Care for the Kingdom

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 2:15 NIV

GOD'S WORD

Read the verse below together as a family.

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

In volleyball there are 6 positions on the court. They all have different roles and require different skillsets, but they are all crucial to the success of the team when they are working in tandem with one another.

Each position also has varying areas of responsibility on the court. For example, the middle blocker covers the middle, left, and right of the net on defense, and at the same time the libero (middle back) takes care of anything that comes to the back of the court.

But what if someone falls over and can't get to the ball in their area? Then it's the responsibility of the next closest person to take over and cover for their teammate.

The same is true in the Kingdom of God. We are all on a team with varying gifts, talents, and offerings and we are living according to our purpose when we can work in unity with one another, taking ownership of the different things entrusted to us. **And when someone can't do something that they are**

typically tasked with, we as the people who are part of the team jump in to make themselves available to pick up where they left off.

When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, he was given the responsibility to work and take care of the land; and when Eve came along, he was able to share that duty with her. It is a JOY to be able to take care of the things that the Lord has given to us with one another! Everyone gets to play, and in this game the more the merrier! So be on the lookout to invite people in and enjoy life in community as we each do our best to look more like Jesus.

Isn't it encouraging to know that we never have to be alone in God's kingdom? The Lord's great design has made it so we never have to be alone in any part of our lives! **God loves us so much that He always gives us family and friends around us to love and support us, just like in Genesis, when He put Adam and Eve together in the Garden.** This week, find a time to work and play together, just like God meant for it to be! **Note:** You can use the game in this lesson if you need an idea!



GAME TIME

Human Knot

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Place all family members in a circle

WHAT YOU'LL DO

- Everyone grab hands with a different person across from you in the circle (each hand with a different person. Make it as tangled up as possible!)
- Without breaking the "human knot," untangle everyone to get back to a perfect circle as fast as you can.
- One person alone cannot solve this, so everyone has to work together to untangle the knot!
- Responsibility is a big word and an even bigger job. Every day you have opportunities to show responsibility by completing your schoolwork, doing your chores, and being kind to others. But have you ever wondered, "Why do I actually need to be responsible?"
- As Christ's ambassadors, we are called to be responsible so that we can reflect Him and honor Him. In James 4:17, we learn that we should live our lives by doing what is right. The best way to do that is by being accountable for our actions, words, and thoughts.
- You want to know something cool? Every day you wake up with the chance to tell others about God just by being responsible. What an amazing job! Instead of saying something mean, you can choose kindness. Instead of blaming others, you can own up to your mistakes. Instead of ignoring a messy room, you can help clean it up. This is responsibility in action!
- When we model responsibility, we show the world that we want to live a life of good - one where we are dependable reflections of Christ.

Be Faithful Stewards

SCRIPTURES

- Matthew 25:14-23

God has given us many gifts, talents, and blessings that some people may not have. As followers of Jesus, we get to use those things to glorify God and help people around us. What is so incredible about our God is that He gives gifts to every person, no matter how old or young or how rich or poor. The question we can ask ourselves as people who want to be faithful stewards like the servants in Jesus' parable is: **What has God called me to carefully steward?**

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Strips of paper
- Colored pencils/markers
- A big bowl

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Give 3 strips of paper to each person.
2. Designate a different color pencil/marker for each person
3. With their designated color, have each person write down something that God has called them to take care of, 1 on each strip of paper.
4. After everyone is done writing their strips of paper, place them in the bowl.
5. Then go around in a circle, draw a strip of paper and have each other share ideas of how the person who wrote the strip of paper drawn can take care of the thing they wrote down.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

FATHER, THANK YOU FOR ENTRUSTING US WITH PEOPLE, GIFTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CARE FOR YOUR WORLD. HELP US TO BE FAITHFUL WITH BOTH THE LITTLE THINGS AND THE BIG THINGS. GIVE US WILLING HEARTS TO WORK TOGETHER, SERVE ONE ANOTHER, AND HONOR YOU IN EVERYTHING WE DO. MAY OUR LIVES REFLECT YOUR GOODNESS SO OTHERS CAN SEE JESUS THROUGH US. AMEN."



Joyful

SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 4:2

BLESSING:(Child's name), may God give you a joyful heart that faithfully cares for everything He has entrusted to you. May you be dependable, trustworthy, and willing to help whenever someone needs you. May you become known for taking responsibility with love. Amen."



LESSON FOUR

RESPONSIBILITY

"God has entrusted me with the things and people He created around me."

In All Things

GOD STATEMENT: God is Faithful

SCRIPTURE: Luke 16:10; Colossians 3:23-24

GOD'S WORD

Read the verses above together as a family.

Responsibility isn't just about chores. It's about being faithful with whatever God places in front of us, even the little things.

Children hear "responsibility" constantly from parents and teachers. **What they rarely hear is why responsibility matters in God's Kingdom.**

In these verses we learn that God considers us to partner with Him in His Kingdom. He wants us to work hard, with honesty, and integrity, and to give Him our very best. When we show God we can be trusted with the little things, He often gives us even greater opportunities to serve Him.

DISCUSSION

1. Take a moment to think of an area of your life that you are not working heartily as unto the Lord? What is an area that you are not giving your best work or best attitude?
2. First, have everyone share their area and why they don't always give their best. Then take time to confess that to God.
3. Close in prayer asking God to empower each of you to give your best whether with household duties, at work or school, or with attitudes that are pleasing to Him.

Faithfulness JAR

CREATE



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A clear jar or container
- Pom-poms, marbles, buttons, or dried beans
- Permanent marker
- Paper and tape (optional)

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Decorate the jar and write "Faithfulness Jar" on the outside.
2. As a family, decide on several responsibilities that everyone wants to practice this week (examples: completing chores without complaining, finishing homework, speaking kindly, cleaning up after yourself, being honest, or helping without being asked).
3. Every time someone faithfully completes one of those responsibilities, add one item to the jar.
4. When the jar is full, celebrate together by choosing a favorite family activity, such as playing a game, making dessert together, or going to the park.

REMEMBER

We don't earn God's love by being faithful because He already loves us completely. The Faithfulness Jar simply reminds us that honoring God with the little things is worth celebrating!

An Offering of Our Best

SCRIPTURES

- Colossians 3:23-24

Everything we do can become an act of worship when we do it for the Lord. Whether we're making our bed, finishing homework, helping a sibling, or doing our job at work, God sees our faithfulness. He isn't only pleased when we do "big" things for Him but He also delights when we honor Him by doing ordinary things with extraordinary love.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Small index cards or slips of paper
- A basket or bowl
- Pens or markers

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Give each family member three cards.
2. On each card, write one responsibility God has entrusted to you (examples: schoolwork, chores, friendships, caring for a pet, work, practicing an instrument, encouraging others).
3. Place all the cards in the basket.
4. Take turns drawing one card at a time. As each responsibility is read aloud, the family says together: "Lord, help us be faithful with what You've entrusted to us."
5. End by placing the basket somewhere visible for the week as a reminder that every responsibility is an opportunity to worship God.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"JESUS, THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING US WITH PEOPLE, GIFTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES. HELP US TO HONOR YOU BY GIVING OUR BEST IN EVERYTHING WE DO. TEACH US TO BE FAITHFUL IN THE SMALL THINGS SO OUR LIVES BRING YOU GLORY. AMEN."



Schoolwork

A Reflection

SCRIPTURE Colossians 3:23

BLESSING (Child's name), may the Lord strengthen your hands for every good work. May you be faithful in the small things, trustworthy with the gifts God has given you, and joyful in every responsibility He places before you. May your work reflect excellence, your words reflect integrity, and your attitude reflect the heart of Jesus. Amen."

Healthy Chicken Enchiladas

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 8 large flour tortillas (or 10-12 small)
- 2 chicken breast (or 2 cups leftover shredded turkey or chicken)
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese (I will use Monterey Jack only if I have it on hand)
- 3 tbsp butter
- 3 tbsp flour
- 2 cups chicken broth (I like to make my own with Better Than Bouillon) [Use low-sodium if you have concerns about sodium intake]
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 4oz can crushed green chilis

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cook chicken breasts. I like to poach them. Arrange in the bottom of a pot and cover with water. Add a sprinkle of salt (optional). Cover pot with lid and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Turn heat off and let sit for 15 minutes. Remove chicken. Test with a meat thermometer (should read at least 165 degrees F). Use two forks to shred chicken (debone if you're using bone-in).
3. While chicken is cooking, prepare sauce. Melt butter in a pot over medium heat. Add flour and whisk until smooth. Cook, whisking for about 1 minute.
4. Very slowly start to add broth to flour mixture, a few tablespoons at a time, whisking well between each addition. Mixture will seize up at first, but will gradually thin out as you add more broth. Continue until all broth is added.
5. Cook, whisking occasionally, until sauce thickens slightly, probably around 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add yogurt and green chilis. Set aside to cool slightly.
6. Shred cheese. Mix 1 cup of cheese with shredded chicken in a bowl. Divide it between the tortillas, roll them up and place, seam side down, in a lightly oiled pan.
7. Pour sauce over pan of rolled up tortillas. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes, until heated through. Broil for a minute to brown the cheese, if you want.



Taken from: deliciousonadime.com

Peanut Butter Banana French Toast Dips

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 12 slices soft white bread, crusts cut off
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 3/4 cup chopped banana
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 3 tablespoons butter, for sauté pan
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- melted peanut butter, for drizzling
- maple syrup, for servings



WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. In a shallow bowl, whisk together the eggs and milk. Set aside.
2. In another small bowl, stir together 2 tablespoons granulated sugar with 2 teaspoons cinnamon. Set aside.
3. After trimming the crusts from each slice of bread, roll one slice out to about 1/8-inch thickness with a rolling pin. Spread each slice with a heaping teaspoon of peanut butter and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon of chopped banana. Roll up tightly. Repeat with remaining bread slices, peanut butter and chopped banana.
4. Place 3 tablespoons butter in a large non-stick sauté pan and let melt over medium heat. (If using a small sauté pan, use just 2 tablespoons butter and sauté the roll-ups in two batches) Dip one roll at a time in the egg mixture and place in the sauté pan. Allow roll ups to sauté for 1-2 minutes per side until golden brown and slightly crisp all around the outside. Remove to a work surface and sprinkle each roll-up generously with the cinnamon-sugar mixture.
5. Serve immediately with a drizzle of melted peanut butter and maple syrup for dipping.

Taken from: thebakermama.com



Rice Krispie Pumpkins

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 6 cups Rice Krispies Cereal
- 6 cups Miniature Marshmallows
- 3 tablespoons Unsalted Butter
- Orange Gel Food Coloring
- 10 Tootsie Roll Candies
- 10 Green M&M Candies

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. In a large pot, melt butter over medium heat.
2. Once butter is melted, add marshmallows and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until melted.
3. Remove from the heat and stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of orange gel food coloring.
4. Add rice krispies cereal, stirring until well coated and color is evenly distributed. Add additional orange gel coloring if needed for your perfect pumpkin shade.
5. Spray your hands with non-stick spray and form the rice krispie treat mixture into 10 large balls.
6. Add a tootsie roll "stump" in the middle of each pumpkin ball and add a green M&M to make the "leaf."
7. Allow the pumpkin rice krispie treats to set for an hour.



Pineapple Teriyaki Chicken

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 1.5 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1.5-inch cubes
- 1 medium fresh pineapple, cut into chunks
- 1/2 cup low-sodium soy sauce (120 ml)
- 1/4 cup brown sugar (50 g)
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar (30 ml)
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil (15 ml)
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
- Wooden or metal skewers
- Black pepper, to taste

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together soy sauce, brown sugar, minced garlic, grated ginger, rice vinegar, and toasted sesame oil to make the teriyaki marinade.
2. Add the cubed chicken breasts to the marinade, ensuring all pieces are coated. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, up to 4 hours.
3. Cut the fresh pineapple into chunks about the same size as the chicken. Soak wooden skewers in water for 30 minutes if using.
4. Thread the chicken and pineapple alternately onto the skewers, leaving a little space between pieces for even cooking (usually 3 pieces chicken and 2 pieces pineapple per skewer).
5. Preheat the grill to medium-high heat (about 5-10 minutes).
6. Place the skewers on the grill and cook for 5-6 minutes per side, turning carefully with tongs. Baste with leftover marinade once or twice during grilling, discarding any marinade that touched raw chicken.
7. While skewers grill, toast sesame seeds in a dry skillet over medium heat for 2-3 minutes until golden and fragrant.
8. Check chicken internal temperature to ensure it reaches 165°F (74°C). Remove skewers from grill and let rest a few minutes.
9. Sprinkle toasted sesame seeds and sliced green onions over the skewers. Serve hot.

LESSON FIVE

KNOWING

"God knows me, and I can know Him."

GOD'S WORD

Read Galatians 5:22-26 together as a family.

What is your very favorite fruit? Fruit is so yummy and good for you. It has good nutrients to help keep your body strong and help you have a great day. Isn't it also cool that God's word tells us about characteristics that are called the Fruit of the Spirit?

These fruits are not ones you eat, though - they are things you are! It is awesome that God calls them "fruit" because that is how we know they are characteristics that are good for us, that make us strong and help us have a full life! When we spend time with Jesus and learn more about Him, we should grow each of these characteristics. The more we know God, the more we will be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, gentle, faithful, and self-controlled. Do you want to know why? **Because God is all those things. God is love. God is joy. God is peace. God is patient. God is kind. God is good. God is gentle. God is faithful. God is self-controlled.**

A lot of times, we talk about how God is strong and powerful. He is! AND God is also gentle. Maybe it can

Fulfilling Fruit

GOD STATEMENT: God is Gentle

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 5:22-26

feel surprising that God is both of those things. And yet, He is! God's character includes all the Fruit of the Spirit, and that is how we come to know Him.

Just like in a garden, growing plants and fruits takes time and intentionality. You must be firm with the plants and very gentle. Maybe during this season, as a family, you can watch for God's gentle hand on each of you. Because He loves you, and He is perfectly gentle with those He loves! Just like a gardener.

DISCUSSION

1. What is your favorite fruit?
2. What is one Fruit of the Spirit you love about God and why?
3. Take time to say characteristics from the Fruit of the Spirit that you see in each other. What ones are your family members full of?

WORSHIP

Watch it Grow!

SCRIPTURES

- Psalm 119:105

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Small plant of your families choice

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Show your family the special plant.
2. Create a watering schedule and take turns caring for it.
3. Enjoy watching it grow together! Use it as a reminder of the Fruit of the Spirit and how it takes time and intentionality to grow in it. And maybe, the plant can be a little reminder of God's presence in your home!



PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"JESUS, THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS KEEPING YOUR PROMISES. JUST AS THIS LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, HELP US REMEMBER THAT YOUR PRESENCE IS ALWAYS WITH US. TEACH US TO KNOW YOU MORE DEEPLY AND TRUST YOU MORE FULLY EVERY DAY. AMEN."

A Light of God's Fruitfulness in Our Lives

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A small mason jar
- Battery-operated tea light (recommended for safety)
- Twine or jute rope
- Fresh or artificial flowers and greenery (optional)
- Ribbon (optional)

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Wrap twine securely around the mouth of the mason jar, leaving enough length to create a hanging loop.
2. Add a small arrangement of flowers or greenery around the twine if you'd like.
3. Place the battery-operated tea light inside the jar.
4. Hang your lantern from a tree branch, shepherd's hook, porch beam, or another safe outdoor or indoor location where your family will see it often.
5. As your family gathers around the lantern, take turns sharing one fruit God has made shine bright in each other's lives.

SOME EXAMPLES

- I see Joyfulness in you.
- I love your gentleness.
- I appreciate your patience in stressful moments
- God's love shines in you.



REMEMBER

Whenever you see your lantern glowing this week, let it remind you that the light of God's fruit never goes out when we stay connected to Him as our "tree" and source. **His love and His fruit shine through every season of life.**

His Kind Heart

SCRIPTURE Galatians 5:22-23

BLESSING "(Child's name), may you know the gentle heart of God. May His kindness shape your words, His patience steady your heart, and His Spirit grow beautiful fruit in your life. May everyone who meets you experience the light of His gentleness in Jesus. Amen."

LESSON SIX

KNOWING

"God knows me, and I can know Him."

A Wonderful Gift

GOD STATEMENT: God is the Covenant-Keeper

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 33-34, 1 Corinthians 8:3, & 1 Corinthians 13:12

GOD'S WORD

Read the above Scriptures together as a family.

Have you ever looked at your homework, chores, or to-do list and thought, "There's no way I can do all of this perfectly"?

That's a little like how the Israelites felt about the Ten Commandments. Even though there were only ten, they could never obey them perfectly. They offered sacrifice after sacrifice because they continually fell short. They didn't want fewer rules—they wanted to love God well, but they couldn't do it on their own.

In Exodus 33, Moses prays, "Teach me your ways so I may know you." He asks God to remain with His people, and God responds, "I am pleased with you, and I know you by name." Then, in Exodus 34, God gives the Ten Commandments and makes a covenant, which is a forever promise with Israel.

The commandments were not given as a punishment but as a gift. **God was revealing His heart so His people could know Him. Even more amazing,** He chose and loved them before they could ever obey Him perfectly.

That same truth is true for us today. We can never love God perfectly on our own, which is why we need Jesus.

Because of His finished work on the cross, we can come to God every day knowing we are already loved, fully forgiven, and fully known. We don't have to hide from Him but rather we get to know Him more deeply while resting in His faithful love.

DISCUSSION

1. How do you feel when you know you are loved - no matter what you do? (Bold, vibrant, playful, excited, etc.) When do you feel this way the most?
2. How do you feel when you don't think you are lovable? (small, powerless, embarrassed, invisible, etc.) Is that something you feel every day? When do those feelings show up the most?
3. Curiosity about our mistakes can shift our shame back into a place of beloved-ness as we try again. Are there places you can begin to shift your feelings of defeat to curiosity next time you make a mistake? (Homework, oversleeping, letting a friend down, etc.)

CREATE

Covenant Chain

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Strips of colored paper
- Tape or stapler
- Markers

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Write one promise of God on each strip of paper.

EXAMPLES

- God is always with me.
 - God forgives me.
 - God loves me.
 - God hears my prayers.
 - God gives wisdom.
 - God is faithful.
2. Loop the strips together into one long paper chain.
 3. Hang it somewhere in your home.



4. Every time someone in your family experiences one of God's promises during the week, point to that link and thank Him together.
5. Explain that every link reminds us that God's promises are connected to His unchanging character.

Remembering God's Promises

SCRIPTURES

- 2 Corinthians 1:20

God has made many promises to His children. He promises to never leave us, to forgive us, to give us wisdom, and to love us forever. Throughout the Bible, God's people often created reminders so they wouldn't forget God's faithfulness. Today your family will create your own reminder.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Colored cardstock or construction paper
- Markers
- String or ribbon
- Hole punch (optional)

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Cut the paper into bookmark-sized strips.
2. Have each family member write one promise of God that means a lot to them.

EXAMPLES

- I am always with you.
 - Nothing can separate us from God's love.
 - If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us.
3. Decorate the bookmarks.
 4. Place them inside your Bible or hang them somewhere you'll see them throughout the week.
 5. Every time you notice your bookmark, thank God that He always keeps His promises.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"JESUS, THANK YOU THAT EVERY PROMISE YOU MAKE IS TRUSTWORTHY. HELP US KNOW YOU MORE EACH DAY AND REMIND US THAT YOUR LOVE NEVER CHANGES. AMEN."

Known By Name

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 43:1

BLESSING "(Child's name), may you always know that you are fully known and fully loved by God. May His promises steady your heart and remind you that He never breaks His word. May you grow every day in knowing the God who knows you by name. Amen."

LESSON SEVEN

COURSE CORRECTION

"When I get off track, God offers me a path of healing"

His Perspective

GOD STATEMENT: God is Kind

SCRIPTURE: Jonah 3-4, Romans 2:4

GOD'S WORD

Read the above Scriptures together as a family.

Jonah needed an attitude adjustment.

Jonah (after running away and getting swallowed by a fish!) finally decided to obey God's plans and go to Ninevah and tell them about God. When the Ninevites repented and turned to God, Jonah became angry with God because he didn't think the Ninevites deserved God's love. Jonah threw a fit, sat down and pouted, and told God, "I knew you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity!"

But God saw the people of Nineveh differently than Jonah did. **God knew they were lost without Him, and He loved them.** Because of His kindness and compassion, God gave them a chance to turn back to Him. God also cared for Jonah. Even while Jonah was angry, God provided him with shade and gently reminded him of how much He cared about the people in the city.

Romans 2:4 says, "God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance."

God's kindness is not just for us to receive – it's also something we are meant to share with others. Just like Jonah, God may ask us to show love and kindness to people we don't always understand or agree with.

DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever felt frustrated because things didn't go your way or you didn't understand God's plan?
2. How have you seen God's kindness in your life?
3. Why do you think God wants us to show kindness to others?
4. Who can you tell about God's love this week?

GAME TIME

Kindness Relay

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Large open space
- Relay Course Stations

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Create a relay course around your living room or backyard.
2. Designate a Course Master to ask kindness questions.
3. Invite the first player to begin at the first relay station.
4. Before moving to the next station, the player must answer a kindness question.

EXAMPLES

- Tell someone in this family what you appreciate.
- Name one way God has been kind to you.
- Describe one person you can encourage this week.
- Give someone in the family a high-five or hug.
5. The first person isn't necessarily the winner, but the family wins when everyone finishes encouraging one another.



Kindness Challenge

SCRIPTURES

- Romans 2:4

God's kindness changes hearts. When we experience His kindness, we naturally want to share it with others.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Sticky notes
- Pens

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Each family member writes three acts of kindness on separate sticky notes.

EXAMPLES

- Encourage someone.
 - Pray for a friend.
 - Help without being asked.
 - Write a thank-you note.
 - Share something you love.
2. Mix the notes together.
 3. Each person draws one and completes it before your next family devotional.
 4. At your next gathering, celebrate how God used simple acts of kindness to bless others.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"LORD, THANK YOU FOR BEING SO KIND TO US. FILL OUR HEARTS WITH YOUR COMPASSION SO THAT OTHERS CAN EXPERIENCE YOUR KINDNESS THROUGH US. AMEN.."

Pray for others

Meet a need

Be encouraging



Overflow

SCRIPTURE Ephesians 4:32

BLESSING "(Child's name), may the kindness of God overflow from your life. May your words bring hope and your heart remain soft toward those around you. May others see Jesus through the kindness you freely give. Amen."

LESSON EIGHT

COURSE CORRECTION

"When I get off track, God offers me a path of healing"

Following Christ

GOD'S WORD

GOD STATEMENT: God is Freedom

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 2:13-22

Read the above Scriptures together as a family.

Every day, we take direction from more sources than we probably realize: teachers, bosses, laws, governments. On my way to work this morning, I obeyed a traffic light. It told me when to stop and when to go, and I listened. The consequences of ignoring it could have been serious.

That's one reason we follow directions: to avoid getting hurt. Another reason is reward; follow your teacher's instructions consistently, and your grades will be stellar.

But Peter gives us an even better reason.

In 1 Peter 2, the Apostle urges the church to submit to human authority, even authorities that were making poor decisions. Listen anyway, Peter says. Why? Because obedience, counterintuitively, produces freedom.

Consider the simple habit of making your bed. Why bother, if you're just going to climb back in tonight? And yet experts suggest that people who make their bed in the morning report greater happiness, lower stress, and more energy for the things they love. Now think about the opposite: a room where nothing gets put away, where clutter piles up until you can barely

walk through it. You lose access to your own space. Movement becomes difficult. And ironically, cleaning it becomes harder the longer you wait. Disorder doesn't free us, it traps us!

The same is true spiritually. When we resist authority, we don't escape it. We get buried under the very thing we were trying to avoid. But when we choose obedience, especially when it's hard or inconvenient, we are making a declaration: **I trust Jesus with my life. And that declaration changes how we live.** We find ourselves more confident, more joyful, and perhaps surprisingly, with more time and space to do the things we love, because we've already done what we were supposed to do.

DISCUSSION

1. What is one thing you really don't like doing? How do you feel once you've done it, and does it get easier the next time?
2. What helps you follow through on things you'd rather avoid? How can leaning on Jesus make a difference?
3. What does a lifestyle of obedience communicate to the people around you?

CREATE

Freedom Footprints

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Paper
- Markers
- Scissors

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Trace each family member's feet. Inside each footprint write one step of obedience you want to take this week.

EXAMPLES

- Tell the truth.
 - Forgive someone.
 - Obey my parents quickly.
 - Spend time with God.
 - Encourage a friend.
2. Tape the footprints in a path down a hallway or across a room.
 3. Walk the path together while thanking God that every step of obedience leads to greater freedom.



Open Hands

SCRIPTURES

- John 8:36

Real freedom is found when we trust Jesus enough to obey Him.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Nothing

WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Everyone sits quietly with both hands closed into fists.
2. Ask: "How easy is it to receive a gift with closed hands?"
3. Now invite everyone to slowly open their hands.
4. Explain that obedience is like opening our hands to God. We let go of our own way so we can receive His very best.
5. Spend a few quiet moments asking God if there is an area where He is inviting each person to trust and obey Him more fully.
6. Pray together with open hands.

PRAY

Close your time together by praying:

"JESUS, THANK YOU THAT YOUR WAYS ALWAYS LEAD TO LIFE AND FREEDOM. HELP US TO TRUST YOU ENOUGH TO OBEY, EVEN WHEN IT ISN'T EASY OR WHEN WE DON'T UNDERSTAND. TEACH US TO SURRENDER OUR PLANS WITH OPEN HANDS AND JOYFUL HEARTS. AS WE FOLLOW YOU EACH DAY, MAKE US MORE LIKE YOU AND LEAD US INTO THE FREEDOM ONLY YOU CAN GIVE. AMEN."



Set Free

SCRIPTURE John 8:31-32

BLESSING "(Child's name), may you walk in the freedom that comes from trusting Jesus. May your heart be quick to obey and your life reflect the joy that comes from following Him. May every step you take lead you closer to the One who has set you free. Amen."

10 ENVIRONMENTS

The order of the 10 Environments listed coincides with the monthly distribution of this resource.

1

STORYTELLING

"God has a big story, and I can be a part of it!"

The power of The Big God Story impacts our lives by giving us an accurate and awe-inspiring perspective into how God has been moving throughout history. It is the story of redemption, salvation and hope and tells how we have been grafted into it by grace. It further compels us to see how God is using every person's life and is creating a unique story that deserves to be told for God's glory.

2

IDENTITY

"I belong to God, and He loves me!"

This environment highlights who we are in Christ. According to Ephesians 1, we have been chosen, adopted, redeemed, sealed, and given an inheritance in Christ, all of which we did nothing to earn. This conviction allows children to stand firm against the destructive counter-identities the world will offer.

5

OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE

"God transforms me when I step out in faith."

As children and students are challenged to step out of their comfort zone from an early age, they learn to experience a dependence on the Holy Spirit to equip and strengthen them beyond their natural abilities and desires. We believe this environment will cultivate a generation that, instead of seeking comfort, seeks a radical life of faith in Christ.

8

LOVE AND RESPECT

"God fills me with His love so I can give it away."

Without love, our faith becomes futile. This environment recognizes that children need an environment of love and respect in order to be free to both receive and give God's grace. Innate to this environment is the value that children are respected because they embody the image of God. We must speak to them, not at them, and we must commit to an environment where love and acceptance are never withheld due to one's behavior.

3

FAITH COMMUNITY

"God's family cares for each other and worships God together."

God designed us to live in community and to experience Him in ways that can only happen in proximity to one another. The faith community serves to create an environment to equip and disciple parents, to celebrate God's faithfulness, and to bring a richness of worship through tradition and rituals, which offer children an identity. Our love for each other reflects the love we have received from God.

6

RESPONSIBILITY

"God has entrusted me with the things and people He created around me."

This environment captures the ability to take ownership for one's life, gifts, and resources before God. A child must be challenged to take responsibility for his or her brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as for those who are spiritually lost. Our hope is that the Holy Spirit will use this environment to allow each child to understand that God has entrusted His world to us.

9

KNOWING

"God knows me, and I can know Him."

Nothing could be more important than knowing and being known by God. We live in a world that denies absolute truth, and yet God's Word offers just that. As we create an environment that upholds and displays God's truth, we give children a foundation based on knowing God, knowing His Word, and a relationship with Him through Christ. God is holy, mighty, and awesome, and yet He has chosen to make Himself known to us!

4

SERVING

"Asks the question, 'What needs to be done?'"

This posture of the heart asks the question, "What needs to be done?" It allows the Holy Spirit to cultivate a sensitivity to others and focuses on a cause bigger than one individual life. It helps fulfill the mandate that as Christ-followers, we are to view our lives as living sacrifices that we generously give away!

7

COURSE CORRECTION

"When I get off track, God offers me a path of healing."

This environment flows out of Hebrews 12:11-13 and is the direct opposite of punishment. Instead, biblical discipline for a child encompasses a season of pain, the building up in love, and a vision of a corrected path for the individual with the purpose of healing at its core.

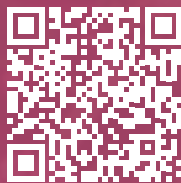
10

MODELING

"I see Christ in others, and they can see Him in me."

Biblical content needs a practical living expression in order for it to be spiritually impacting. This environment serves as a hands-on example of what it means for children to put their faith into action. Modeling puts flesh on faith and reminds us that others are watching to see if we live what we believe.

So do not fear,
for I am with you;
do not be dismayed,
for I am
your God.
I will *strengthen you*
and help you;
I will *uphold you*
with my righteous
right hand.



Isaiah 41:10

Don't let
anyone look
down on you
because you
are
young,
but set an
example for
the believers
in speech, in
conduct, in
love, in faith
and in purity.
I Timothy 4:12

