

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 6

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. 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 35-36 Mark 6	Genesis 37 Mark 7	Genesis 38 Mark 8	Genesis 39 Mark 9	Genesis 40 Mark 10	Genesis 41 Mark 11	Genesis 42 Mark 12

Where We Are In The Story (Old Testament): This week’s readings focus on the life of Jacob and Joseph. Genesis 35 records the loss of family members, but despite death and man’s sin, God’s promises continue. Genesis 36 provides a genealogy of Esau’s line. This chapter emphasizes that Esau *is* Edom (Gen. 36:8, 9, 19, 43), which is important because Esau’s descendants developed into a powerful people group, the Edomites, who would later oppose Israel when they returned to the Promised Land after the Exodus. Genesis 36 also demonstrates how God keeps His promise to bless Abraham as the father of *many* nations (Gen. 12:1; 15; 17).

Family fights and famine in Genesis 37-42 provide opportunities for God to demonstrate His faithfulness, protection, and provision. The story of Joseph is instructional in how it emphasizes obedience to God’s directions, the contrast between the righteous and the wicked, the sovereignty of God in the midst of suffering, and the ultimate blessing of the righteous. Despite persecution from family, slavery, false accusations, and imprisonment, Joseph continues to profess faith in God and acts righteously.

Genesis 38 focuses on Jacob’s son, Judah, and Judah’s statement to Tamar (his daughter-in-law *and* his one-night stand) about her being “more righteous” is often a source of confusion to readers (Gen. 38:26). Why is Tamar “more righteous” in this story, especially when she has committed incest? Genesis 38 is *not* stating that incest is acceptable to God, for *Judah* makes the assertion about Tamar’s righteousness, not God. To understand this chapter, one must grasp the practice of a *levirate marriage*. This practice requires the brother of a deceased man to marry the man’s widow and to produce a child who can carry on the deceased man’s name. This practice enables both the family name to continue and the widow to receive care, especially in such societies where women must rely on men to provide for them. Tamar was more righteous than Judah in that she sought justice when Judah did not fulfill his legal responsibilities to her. While Tamar goes to desperate lengths to obtain what was her right according to the law in her day, Scripture does not condone deception and illicit sex. This bizarre story provides the history of Judah’s origin, which is important because the Messiah would later come from the tribe of Judah (Matt. 1:3).

Where We Are In The Story (New Testament): As the shortest and the earliest of the four Gospels, The Gospel of Mark focuses on Jesus’ identity, and Mark 1:1 introduces Him as human (“Jesus”), the Messiah (“Christ”), *and* the Son of God. Although Mark emphasizes Jesus’ identity, he consistently records Jesus *silencing* those who state Who He is. By focusing on this question of Jesus’ identity, Mark demonstrates Who Jesus is and how He fulfills the promises of the prophets. Mark 6:1-8:26 focus on Jesus’ public ministry, particularly His power and challenges to His authority. This sixteen chapter Gospel includes twenty accounts of miracles that Jesus performed, which underscores that Jesus is the Son of God. Half of these miracles occur in Mark 6-12.

Mark 8 presents a shift in this Gospel, for in Mark 8:31, Jesus begins teaching His followers about His purpose, death, and resurrection. Peter’s confession in Mark 8:29 reaffirms this Gospel’s theme – Jesus’ identity as the Christ, the Promised Messiah. More than any other Gospel, Mark also presents Jesus as the Suffering Servant prophesied in Isaiah 53, and Mark 10:45 points to this in its reference to the Son of Man giving His life as a “ransom for many.” In contrast to the selflessness and sacrifice of Jesus, the disciples argue over who among them is the greatest (Mk. 9:33-37) and request positions of power (Mk. 10:35-45), and the religious leaders attempt to bait and trap Jesus with their questions (Mk. 11:27-33; 12:13-34).

Read: Mark 7:14-23

Questions:

- How does God want you to live?
- What does it mean to be pure? What does it mean to be defiled?
- What do you spend your time thinking about? What fills your mind?
- How do your thoughts affect your actions?
- How does God want to change you?

Bottom Line: Pure hearts and minds result in Christ-honoring actions.

SING

Honoring Christ with our hearts and minds is not possible in our own strength. Instead, we set our gaze on God alone and trust the Holy Spirit to transform us. The lyrics of “Psalm 62” by Aaron Keyes and Stuart Townend help us to vocalize this desire. So, as we continue in worship, let’s cry out to God to purify and deliver us from evil!

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, grab your Bible and open to Mark 7:20-21. You will need two clear glasses and two buckets for this object lesson. Decorate one bucket with stickers, etc. Make it look appealing to a preschooler. Fill the decorated bucket with dirty water and fill the undecorated bucket with clean water. Cover each with something opaque, like a dish towel or aluminum foil so you can’t see into the containers.
- Explain to your preschoolers that everything in the Bible is true. Read Mark 7:20-21 to your preschooler.
- Ask your child: Which bucket would you like to drink out of? (Allow him or her to choose.) Why did you choose this particular bucket? (Hopefully, they chose the decorated bucket because of its appearance.)
- Now pour the water from the decorated bucket into a clear glass. Would you want to drink this now? (No!) Pour the water from the plain bucket into a second clear glass and mention that this water is clean and good. Though the outside of the other bucket looked good, the inside was bad. People can be the same way.
- There were men in the Bible called Pharisees who had made up rules that were bad because they believed these rules were the same as the Word of God. Remember everything in the Bible is true; it is the only Word of God. We learn and obey it. But these men had added rules to the Word of God, and when people did not follow these rules or traditions like the Pharisees did, they looked down on them and saw them as “unclean.” The Pharisees may have looked good on the outside because they always obeyed these rules (just like the decorated bucket), but on the inside their hearts were like the dirty water; they were full of sin.
- Discuss what really makes us clean before God. Explain that some people think going to church, being nice, and doing good things are all you have to do to remove the sin in your life. Those things are good, but they are seen on the outside and do not change the state of our hearts. We also need to be clean on the inside. But how?

- We become “clean” on the inside by believing in Jesus. God’s special plan was to come down to earth as a human, born as a baby just like you and I. This baby would grow up and die for us. God made a way for us to know Him, to have our sins forgiven, and to live forever in heaven. When we believe and trust in Jesus Christ, He gives us clean, new hearts.
- End your family time with prayer.

Children

- Gather these items: coffee mug, dirt, water. Moisten the inside of the mug, then take some dirt and rub it on the inside, but do not get any dirt on the outside. Have some clean water in a small pitcher next to the mug.
- Invite your children to sit around you for family worship time. Have your Bible and above items ready.
- Invite a child to read Mark 7:14-23. Ask what they think this passage is telling us.
- Let them know that God isn't worried about how we look on the outside, or what we eat that might make us “unclean.” He's concerned with what's in our hearts and is looking for sins like stealing, jealousy, lying, and pride. If God finds any of these in our hearts, then He knows that our hearts aren't right.
- Sometimes our hearts are like this mug. It looks clean on the outside, but look how dirty it is on the inside.
- Next, pour clean water into the mug. Ask if they would want to drink out of the mug. What would need to happen before you drank out of it? We would need to wash it with soap and water before we can drink out of it.
- Do you think we can do the same with our hearts? Can we swallow some of this soap and so it can get down into our hearts and wash them clean? Of course not! Only God can cleanse our hearts.
- When we know that we have heart problems, we can pray the prayer from Psalm 51:10, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."*
- Do you have some things in your heart that shouldn't be there? If there are, then pray with me and let's ask God to make our hearts pure and clean.
- Close in prayer, allowing each child to spend some time in confession and repentance. Thank God for forgiving us of our sins through what Jesus did on the cross.

Students

- As a family, ask the following question: What makes a good Christian?
- In our culture being a “Good Christian” is often defined by the activities we choose to avoid (Ex. smoking, drinking, drugs, cussing, gossiping, etc.). Jesus and His disciples were often criticized by activities or rituals they did or did not do. In these passages, however, Jesus points out it's not what is external, meaning our actions, that determine whether we are clean or dirty, rather it is what is internal.
- Many people blame their sinful behaviors on their surroundings or the circumstances in which they find themselves. In the last week what has caused you to sin? Have you blamed your sinful behaviors on a circumstance?
- Neither life situations nor other people have the power to make us sin. We are responsible for whether or not we act or react to those things and people in a sinful way, so we can't blame situations or people for our sins. They don't cause us to do anything; they simply bring out what is already in our hearts.
- Read Jeremiah 17:9. What do we learn about our hearts from this passage? A dark heart produces dark deeds, and without a new heart we are doomed to remain defiled and broken.
- Read Ezekiel 36:25-27. How do the truths in this passage effect our situation? How do we cleanse our hearts?
- Spend some time in prayer as a family confessing and repenting of any sins you may be harboring in your hearts. Psalm 51:10 is a great verse from Scripture to begin or incorporate into your prayer, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."* Then rejoice in the forgiveness of our Savior and yield to God's Lordship over these areas of your lives.