

SUMMER 2018
FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP KIT

Parent
Guide

INTRODUCTION

When school winds down and summer vacation starts, many families are looking for structure. Our hope is that these Family Discipleship Kits might be a tool to help your family make the most of the next three months. Your kit includes:

Parent Overview Packet

This is what you are reading right now. This packet will guide you through 12 weeks of lessons (more about that below).

Summer Bucket List BINGO

A “BINGO” card that encourages you to make the most of your summer: Study God’s Word, memorize verses, eat popsicles, run through sprinklers, make memories! Try to get seven activities in a row!

Journal

To help guide parents and children respond to the lesson, prayer, and recording their memories. (1 per child)

Bible Bookmark

For kids to mark their Bible for Sunday School each week. (1 per child)

12 Mystery Package

Twelve little surprises to help you do a specific activity each week. (12 packages/per family)

These kits will guide your family through 12 weeks of lessons. Here’s a brief overview of what each lesson includes:

Monday: Read & Discuss

A short Bible reading assignment (usually about 15 verses) and discussion questions

Tuesday: Memory Verse

A new verse to memorize each week

Wednesday: Activity

A family activity or project that uses one of the “Mystery Packages” in the kit

Thursday: Journal

Each child will receive their own journal.

Friday or Saturday: Sunday Prep

A preview of what we will be learning in Sunday School. Use the enclosed bookmark to help your child mark the page they will be reading in their Bible on Sunday.

D6 Conversation Starter

Each lesson also includes a “D6 Conversation Starter” prompt that includes instructions on how to envelope conversations about God into one of your family life rhythms.

Below, you will find further information on each of those tools, and tips on how to use them with multiple ages. But first, we want to tell you a little bit about what we want (and don’t want) to accomplish with these Discipleship Kits.

Parents, You Have an Important Job

A child’s understanding of the world and of God (sometimes called a “worldview”) is always being formed, whether we are intentionally fostering that process or not. A constant barrage of information from school, friends, the internet, and television is already perpetually forming your child’s worldview. The important questions of life: “Who is God?” “What is He like?” “What is my place in the world?” are being answered all the time, and if children are not intentionally disciplined by their parents, they will become disciples of things far less important than Jesus.

Children are so busy these days with school and extracurricular activities, and church can feel like one more “thing” for a child to be involved in. But knowing God and His word is so much more important than one hour a week! Fight the temptation to limit the discipleship of your child to the teaching they receive at church. As important as church, Sunday School, VBS, and summer camp are, the majority of discipleship must come from you, the parents. Not only do you spend the most time with your child, but you know them the best, and they know you the best. God has given you a unique voice in your child’s life. This is your opportunity to make them disciples for Jesus.

The task before you is urgent. It is much easier to build a worldview than it is to change one. After the age of 12, adolescents and adults *can* add to and alter their worldview, but the ideas cemented during childhood have lasting effect. Now, while your children are young, is the time to engage their hearts and minds to know God.¹

Redeeming Daily Rhythms

Engaging your child’s heart for Jesus is important, but it’s a really big job and life is really busy. Perhaps all this sounds intimidating – maybe even impossible! Don’t be afraid. First off all, God has given you the grace for this task, and if you lean on him, he will give you the wisdom and ability to do it. Second, let’s be clear about what we’re talking about. God is not asking us to run a seminary in our living room. He’s not even asking you to teach a Sunday School class. He is just challenging us to redeem everyday moments with our children. Read how God challenged the Israelites to internalize his commands in Deuteronomy 6:

“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

Notice how God highlighted everyday moments that are already happening: sitting at home, walking on the road, going to bed at night, getting up in the morning. God is saying, “live your life...but be intentional.”

Your child’s Sunday School teacher gets to see them one hour a week, and that’s a special time. But you get to put them to bed every night, and that can be a special time too. It is the daily rhythms of family life that are soaked in opportunity for conversations about God.

Our goal as a Children’s Ministry is to come along beside parents in this project of building worldviews. We hope these Family Discipleship Kits are a tool to help you as you adopt Bible Study, prayer, and discussions about God into these daily rhythms.

Don’t Let These Kits Be a Burden

These Family Discipleship Kits are tools. But keep in mind that they are *just* tools. These kits are not meant to feel like a burden. The gospel is about grace, not rules. Jesus has already *done* the work of salvation, so we don’t have to *do* anything. So don’t view this kit as a homework assignment.

If you find some of the activities too intensive, feel free to skip them. If you want to do just half of the weeks, that’s fine. Want to do one section a day? Go for it! Want to do all the sections one afternoon? That’s ok too. You might want to do the reading after dinner one night, the activity on a lazy afternoon, and skip the journaling. It’s all up to you. You know your family and your schedule best.

Along these same lines, don’t punish yourself with guilt if you start out strong but fall off the wagon in the middle of July. Just like all battles of self-discipline, expect a few false starts – but embrace the opportunity to start again fresh each week.

If don’t end up using the Family Discipleship Kits at all, we invite you to reflect on what *would* be the best way to better incorporate God’s Word into your family life. How *could* you pursue something that sounds like Deuteronomy 6:6-9?

¹ The Gospel Coalition podcast’s recent episode, “Engaging Whole Hearts While Forming Young Minds” (a talk by Melanie Lacy) presents this excellently. Check out the *TGC Podcast* for more information.

READ

Each week, you will be given a Reading Assignment. The way we organized the kit, only one day “requires” you to read the Bible together. But your goal as a family should be to read God’s Word together every day. If you are new to all this, one day a week is a good place to start.

If you already have a habit of reading the Bible together, you will find these assignments very easy. They aren’t too long: the shortest is two verses, and the longest is two chapters. Feel free to repeat the readings more than one day or split the reading over a number of days. If Bible reading is brand new to your family, feel free to start with just a few verses at a time. Once you have started the habit, add more verses.

If you have very young children (4 and under), do not worry about them understanding about what is read. It is most important for these young ones to just see Mom or Dad with a Bible in their hands. You could read the passage aloud while they look at their own books right before bed. Or, you could give them their own New Testament to play with while you read your Bible after breakfast. You can even read the Bible to yourself while they are napping or watching TV, as a first step. Our main intent is habit creation.

For children who are 5 and older, try reading the a few verses after dinner or before bed. Don’t get frustrated if they act silly or bored. Right now, we are just trying to build the habit of Bible reading. Just make it through.

Try to connect Bible time with positive daily rhythms – like tickling or cuddling before bed, dessert after dinner, or just quality time with Mom and Dad. This is a happy thing we do – not a chore we hate!

As children mature, you can have higher expectations for their ability to listen, comprehend, and engage in the Discussion Questions. You might even challenge your older children to read the passage themselves, and then discuss it later together. If you personally struggle with a daily habit of Bible reading, challenge your older child to be your accountability partner. Your humility in asking for help is a beautiful illustration of the gospel in action: you’re showing your child, “We all need Jesus. Even adults.”

DISCUSS

Each lesson includes about five discussion questions to help spur conversation about the passage of scripture, but feel free to add or modify the questions as you desire. The atmosphere of discussion should not be like giving a pop quiz with negative feedback for children who supply wrong answers. This is a time to honestly engage with the scripture. Feel free to go back and read it again to think about answers, or to ask questions if you don’t understand.

Before you close discussion, ask your child if he or she has any questions, and foster an atmosphere that “during Bible time, any question is okay.” Sometimes a child will have something on his or her heart that they have been waiting an opportunity to ask. Now is the time to engage deeply on these questions, even if they have nothing to do with the lesson.

If you don’t know the answer to a question, don’t panic. It is not most important for your child to think *you* have all the answers – they just need to know that God does. Feel free to say “Hmm... that’s a good question! Let’s do some study and get back to you on that.” Then, do the study! Show them how to look commentaries or go together to ask a Pastor. This models that godly humility and a high view of God’s Word and gives your child the tools for studying the Bible on his or her own.

MEMORY VERSE

Each week has an individual memory verse. Make it a family project to learn each one! Here are some ideas for how you and your child can practice your Memory Verse:

- Write it in Sidewalk Chalk in the driveway. Say each word as you hop on to it like hopscotch!

- Write it on a piece of paper, and then cut the paper into pieces. You’ve made your own Memory Verse puzzle!
- Write it in the sand with a stick or feather (at the beach or in a sandbox)
- “Paint” it onto the sidewalk using a cup of water and a paint brush. On a hot day, the words will begin to evaporate away. Can you still remember the words?
- Write just the first letter of each word down to make a “secret code”. Are these one-letter clues enough to help you say the whole thing?
- Chant it while you jump rope

For Non-Readers:

- Make up motions to each word or phrase
- Play “Repeat after Me”: Mom says a phrase, then child repeats the phrase

ACTIVITY

Each kit includes twelve “Mystery Packages” (one per week). Each one incorporates with the activity of the week. The rest of the materials needed for the activity should be everyday objects that you already have lying around, or you can find inexpensively. Some activities do not require any extra supplies. For your reference, here’s a preview of the activities:

Week	Activity	Mystery Package	Additional Supplies Needed
1	Growing Grass Seeds	Grass Seeds	Paper or plastic cup, potting soil, water in a spray bottle
2	Playing with Play Doh	Modeling Clay (1 per child)	Optional: plastic knives and cookie cutters
3	Tree and Leaf Rubbings	Unwrapped Crayons (1 per child)	Paper
4	Examining Nature	Magnify Glass (1 per child)	(none)
5	Sidewalk Chalk Shadow Drawings	Stick of Sidewalk Chalk (1 per child)	(none)
6	Sink or Float?	Ping Pong Ball and Rock	Pool, Tub, or Bucket of water; other objects to see what sinks and what floats
7	Ice Cream in a Bag	Ice Cream Salt in a Zip-Lock, Smaller Zip-Lock	½ cup half-and-half, 1 tablespoon sugar, ¼ teaspoon vanilla, 3 cups of crushed ice, spoon
8	Feeding Birds	Wild Birdseed	Optional: Toilet paper tube, peanut butter
9	Watch the Weather	Outdoor Thermometer	(none)
10	Star Gazing	Constellation Map	(none)
11	Bubbles	Jar of Bubble Solution	(none)
12	Glow in the Dark Hide & Seek	Glow Sticks (1 per child)	(none)

JOURNAL

Your kit includes one journal per child. Each week of the journal encourages your child to write out a prayer and to practice their memory verse. There are also places for them to draw and record memories of the Summer.

Feel free to use the journals as best fits your child! It’s important to pray to Jesus, so we encourage kids to try writing their prayers down. But if writing stops them from praying, it’s not worth it!

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

“D6” reminds of the verses above – Deuteronomy 6:6-9. The D6 Conversation Starters are ideas for parents to weave the Biblical truths from the weekly Bible reading into a different part of life: whether it be a trip to the grocery store, bath time, snack time, a car trip, or doing laundry.

These aren’t something you have to “check off” on your To Do list. Instead, they are seeds to plant in your head as you seek to make God a regular topic of discussion in your family.

SUNDAY PREP

Each kit includes a bookmark for each child. Use this bookmark to help each of your school-age children (K-6) mark the page in their Bible that we will be studying in the next Sunday in Sunday School.

SUMMER BUCKET LIST BINGO

Post this BINGO chart on the refrigerator for motivation and as a reminder. How you use the Bucket List BINGO is up to you, and you make the rules. Play just for fun or set up an incentive for your family to work towards. For example, maybe when you memorize all 12 memory verses, you can all go out for ice cream! You can challenge each child try to complete a BINGO individually or check off the boxes as a family. It’s all up to you. No prizes will be given out from the church for completing a “BINGO”, and it isn’t a contest – so no pressure from us.

June 3-9

Week 1: God is our Creator

INTRODUCTION

Our theme for the month of June is that God is Transcendent. This means that God is exalted far above our universe. In other words, *he's different than us*. Our lives are short; God is eternal. We are completely dependent on food, water, and oxygen, but God is self-sufficient. Our power is limited, God's power is infinite.

One of the primary ways to understand God's transcendence is to understand that he is our creator. While everything else in existence (people, angels, trees, frogs, telephone poles) was *created*, God is the *creator*. The difference between *created* and *creator* cannot be overstated: God is exalted far above the universe he created!

This week we will be focusing on the truth that God is our creator.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Genesis 1

- How did God create the heavens and the earth? (He spoke them into being)
- Who created God? (No one, he is self-existent. He has no beginning and no end)
- Who is in charge of all creation?
- What are some ways that God is different from us?
- What are your favorite parts of God's creation?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Growing Grass Seeds

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #1: Grass Seeds*
- Paper or plastic cup
- Potting soil
- Water in a spray bottle

Instructions:

1. Fill the cup about three-quarters full of potting soil.
2. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of grass seeds on the surface of the soil.
3. Cover the seeds with a thin layer of potting soil
4. Spray the soil with water until it feels moist.
5. Place the cup on a sunny windowsill.
6. Spray the soil whenever it feels dry
7. Watch your grass grow! Germination should take 7-14 days.

*Children should be supervised at all times while handling the seeds, and should wash their hands afterwards

Discussion

- What kinds of things did we need to make this grass grow?

- When God created the heavens and the earth, he created everything from nothing. How come we aren't able to do that?
- What kinds of things do we need to grow ourselves?
- Does God need those things? Why or why not? (No, God is self-sufficient. He doesn't need anything.)

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is on Adoration, which is praising God for who he is. So some examples might be: "God, you are our creator!", "You are exalted far above our universe!", "You are transcendent!"

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 3:16 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when "Solomon Asks for Wisdom" on Sunday, June 10.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

When at the grocery or home improvement store, take a detour through the garden center. Point out how diverse all the plants are, and how God created each one. We are limited in our creativity, but God is not because he is transcendent.

June 10-16

Week 2: Jesus is our Maker and Sustainer

INTRODUCTION

As we continue of our theme of God's transcendence, it is important to connect Jesus to the act of creation. Our reading this week points out that is the person of Jesus who made us, and actively holds us all together (even now!)

The concept of the trinity is incomprehensible to our limited minds, but it is nonetheless true. Our God is one – and he has three persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Understanding God's transcendence helps us process theological tensions like the Trinity because we understand that God, being the uncreated creator, is very different than we are.

We aren't going to understand everything about him 100%. But because he has revealed himself to us through his Word, we can know and believe these things about him to be 100% true.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Colossians 1:15-20

- Who are these verses talking about? (Jesus!)
- What kinds of things did Jesus create, according to these verses?
- *Why* were these things created, according to these verses?
- What do you think it means that "in him all things hold together"?
- How can Jesus be God *and* be born as a baby? (It's a glorious mystery, but we know it's true!)

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

"He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:17)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Playing With Play Doh

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #2: Modeling Clay
- Optional: Plastic knives, cookie cutters, plastic toys

Instructions:

1. Play with the modeling clay!
2. Challenge your child to make various animals.
3. Encourage your child to make something and then have you guess what they made.
4. Try using plastic toys to make play doh fossils.

Discussion

- You used play doh to make a horse shape. What did God use when he created horses? (Nothing – he created everything out of nothing).
- You made a really cool snake. Can you make the snake come alive? Why or why not?
- How did God make all the animals come alive?

- Imagine if you made thousands of animals, and they all came alive by magic. Would you be able to keep track of them all, and make sure they all had enough to eat and drink?
- God has all of creation to take care of, and he doesn't just worry about their food and water. He gives every single heart beat to every single person, animal, fish, and bug in the whole universe. Can you imagine that?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Confession, which is when we acknowledge that we need God. Some examples might be, "God, you hold everything together", "You give me every heartbeat", "I can't do anything without your help".

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 6 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when "Solomon Builds the Temple" on Sunday, June 17.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

During bath time, remind your child that God has made them exactly the way he wanted to, and that he is actively keeping their heart beating and their lungs breathing. It's hard for us to imagine that God has the capacity to think about all of us at the same time, but we need to remember that God is transcendent – he is very different from we are.

June 17-23

Week 3: God Speaks to Job

INTRODUCTION

One of the practical applications of understanding God's transcendence is processing grief and loss in our own lives. How can a good God let bad things happen? The book of Job wrestles with that question. Job was a righteous man who was subjected to great loss for reasons he didn't get to understand (but we get to: Job 1-2).

Job's friends try to reason with him and tell him that the bad things happening in his life are due to his own sin, but Job defends himself and says he hasn't sinned. He doesn't deserve the hardships. So, he cries out to God: "Why did you let this happen?"

After a long book of discussion and speculation on God's intentions, God answers Job. His response isn't an explanation, as we might expect. He doesn't explain the story of Satan wishing to test Job. Instead, he counters Job questions with his own: "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?...Have you ever given orders to the morning, or shown the dawn its place?...Do you send the lightning bolts on their way? Do they report to you, 'Here we are'?"

These questions are meant to orient Job to reality: God is transcendent. He is bigger, more powerful, higher than we think. When faced with the unexplainable, we should trust God that his ways are higher than our ways.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Job 38:1-11; 40:1-14; 42:1-6

- The questions that God is asking Job don't really have an answer. They are meant to teach Job something. What is God trying to teach Job?
- What do you think it was like to hear God "speak out of a storm"?
- Have you ever had an experience where you got a taste of God's transcendence or power?
- Can we ever think too highly of God?
- What should you do if you find yourself angry at God about something he has let happen in your life?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD." (Isaiah 55:8)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Tree & Leaf Rubbings

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #3: Crayons
- Paper
- Tree with interesting bark

Instructions:

1. Place the paper against a tree and use the side of your crayon to make a rubbing of the bark texture (you might need two people, so that one person can hold the paper while the other does the rubbing)
2. You can also make rubbings of leaves. Put the leaves down first on a table and put the paper on top. Use the crayon to rub over top the paper and pick up the grooves of the leaves.

Discussion

- God's creation is so cool. Why do you think he gave us so many beautiful plants and animals to enjoy?
- Do different trees have various kinds of bark? How about leaf shapes?
- Why do you think God created things to be diverse (different)?
- Do you think God created us all alike? Or all different? Why?
- How are we similar to God? How are we different from God?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Supplication, which is when we ask God for what we want and need. Some examples might be, "God, help me understand you better", "Help me trust you when I don't understand", "Please heal grandma's body because I know you are able to do so".

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 10 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when "The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon" on Sunday, June 24.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

The next time your family gets to witness a big thunderstorm, remind them of this story in Job. God's power can be terrifying but sanctifying if we respond as Job did: "My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you."

June 24-30

Week 4: Jesus Shows His Glory

INTRODUCTION

The incarnation (that is, that God became a man in the person of Jesus) only becomes more amazing as we grow in our knowledge of God's transcendence. How can the creator of the universe, who railed questions at Job through the storm *be born as a baby?*

"The Transfiguration" is a story recorded in all four gospels. In it, Jesus reveals his glory and majesty to three of his disciples and is seen talking to Moses and Elijah. The first reaction to Jesus's glory from the disciples is utter terror. Peter (not one to keep his mouth shut) babbles something about building shrines for the three of them, but he is misunderstanding what is happening. Moses and Elijah are not there to be worshipped.

Peter, James, and John have grown up learning (from their parents and priests) about God and his law. They knew that Moses and Elijah were the authoritative voices on God's behalf. In the event of the Transfiguration, God clarifies to the disciples that while Moses and Elijah *used* to be the ones to listen to, they should now turn their attention to Jesus: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to *him!*"

Jesus is image of the invisible God. While Moses and Elijah spoke for God, Jesus is God himself.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Mark 9:2-10

- What do you think it was like for Peter, James, and John to see Jesus transfigure before them?
- Moses and Elijah were great men that the disciples had heard about their whole lives. What do you think it was like for them to see the great heroes of the faith?
- Why did God want Peter, James, and John to see this?
- Do you think the disciples thought differently about Jesus after this happened? Why or why not?
- Every time people encounter God's glory, they are terrified. But we so often think about God's Word as boring. Why is that?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Examining Nature

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #4: Magnify Glass
- Curiosity & the Great Outdoors!

Instructions:

1. Find some things to examine closely with the magnify glass. Some ideas:
 - a. a handful of sand
 - b. the veins of a leaf
 - c. the grain of wood

d. an ant hill

Discussion:

- Look closely at this sand. How many grains of sand do you think you are holding? Can you believe that God knows about each one?
- Think about how much knowledge it would take to invent a tree. How do the leaves, branches, trunk, and bark know to work together? And the earth is full of trees. Isn't God amazing to grow each one?
- Watch the ants crawl in and out of their ant hills. Think about how many ants there are in the world. Do you think God is able to know about every single one?
- You are more important than sand, trees, and ants. God knows everything about you. He knows how many hairs there are on your head! (Matthew 10:30)
- If we oversaw even a tiny bit of creation, it would fall apart. Even things that are very important to us in our lives right now are hard for us to pay 100% attention to. God is so much more powerful than we are. We will fail, but God never fails. He is always there. He is always holding things together.

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Thanksgiving, which is when we thank Jesus for being the mediator between us and God. Some examples might be, "Jesus, thank you for helping us understand who God is", "Thank you for dying on the cross for our sins", "Thank you for restoring our relationship with God".

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 17 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when "Elijah and the Widow at Zarephath" on Sunday, July 1.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

If your child has a hero (sports figure, celebrity, etc.) ask them about how they would feel if they ever got to meet their hero. Explain that this might be how the disciples felt to see Moses and Elijah. They had heard about them all their lives, and now they got to see them! When Moses and Elijah gave their authority to Jesus, it elevated Jesus in their minds.

Ask your child: "Is your hero elevating Jesus in your life like Moses and Elijah did? Why or why not?"

July 1-7

Week 5: God Parts the Red Sea

INTRODUCTION

Our theme for the month of July is “God is Omnipotent,” which means that God is all-powerful. There are countless examples of God’s power in the Bible, but this week we turn our attention to the story of God parting the Red Sea.

God had already displayed his power by sending the 10 plagues to judge Egypt and force Pharaoh to let God’s people, the Israelites, free from their slavery. Pharaoh finally relents, and Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt. God wants to demonstrate his power and glory further to Egypt though, so he again hardens Pharaoh’s heart (verses 3-4).

It is hard to understand how God would want to harden Pharaoh’s heart, but he gives his reasons in the text: “I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” We learned last month that God’s ways are not our ways. We must trust God’s character, and that he is right to bring glory to himself through whatever means he chooses.

It is also important to acknowledge that God is omnipotent over our hearts. Any clarity or understanding of the truth we do have comes from God’s grace.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Exodus 14

- What do you think it was like to see “a wall of water” on the right and left?
- How do you think the Israelites felt when Pharaoh’s armies began to pursue them?
- How do you think they felt when they saw Moses (God) part the Red Sea?
- Why do you think God chose to deliver the Israelites in this way?
- Do you think the Israelites remembered this event, years after it happened? What do you think they remembered about it? What do you think the Egyptians remembered about it?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“Your right hand, LORD, was majestic in power.” (Exodus 15:6a)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Sidewalk Chalk Shadow Drawings

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #5: Sidewalk Chalk

Instructions:

1. If it is sunny, have the child stand while you trace their shadow with the chalk (this will work best in the early morning or late afternoon, when shadows are long!)
2. Other ideas:
 - Think of the most powerful things you can think of. Write out (or draw) a list of them with the sidewalk chalk. (Examples: big animals like elephants, hurricanes, volcanoes, jet airplanes)
 - Draw two long lines to represent the two walls of water. Take turns walking, jumping, skipping, or hopping through the “Red Sea”.
 - Use your chalk to write your memory verse out on the sidewalk. Hop or step on each word as you say it.

Discussion

- Shadows are created from standing in the way of the sun, even though the sun is 93 million miles away! Even from that long distance we can feel it's heat. What's more powerful, God or the sun?
- Look at this list of powerful things. Is God more powerful than they are? How so?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Adoration, which is when we praise God for his power. Some examples might be, "God you are omnipotent!", "There is nothing you can't do", "You are stronger than everything else in the world".

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 18:16 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when "Elijah on Mount Carmel" on Sunday, July 8.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

Next time your family is at the beach, remind them of this story. Think together about how hard it would be to push the water back so that a person could walk through on dry ground. Remind them that God is all-powerful. There is nothing he can't do.

July 8-14

Week 6: Jesus Walks on Water

INTRODUCTION

One important demonstration of God's omnipotence is in Jesus's miracles. Jesus, taking on the nature of man, humbled himself and gave up independent use of his divine attributes. When Jesus was a baby, he still had to learn to talk and walk like any other baby. He had given up his omnipotence.

But in his public ministry, Jesus demonstrates that he is God by doing miracles: he turns water to wine, he gives sight to the blind, and even raises up people from the dead. This week's lesson focuses on the time that Jesus walked on water. Walking on water is scientifically impossible, but God overrides the laws of physics to demonstrate his power.

God doesn't always use miracles to do his will. Sometimes his plans lie in everyday decisions and circumstances that we don't even notice. The key is to remember that all things are possible with God, and that we can always trust him to make things work together for his glory and our good.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Matthew 14:22-36

- What was the disciples' reaction when they saw Jesus coming out on the water to them?
- What would your reaction be?
- What do you think it was like for Peter to walk out on the water to Jesus?
- Why was Peter able to walk out on the water? Was it because he was powerful like Jesus? (No, it was Jesus's power that allowed Peter to walk on the water)
- Why did Peter begin to sink? Did Jesus become less powerful?
- What ways do we doubt Jesus's power?
- What should we do when we are afraid about something?
- How did the disciples think differently about Jesus after he got into the boat?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

"With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Sink or Float?

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #6: Ping Pong Ball & Rock
- A pool, tub, or bucket of water
- Other objects around the house that you can test
- Journals (included in kit)

Instructions:

1. Your goal is to see what kinds of objects sink when placed in water, and which items float.
2. Before you begin, circle your "Hypothesis" (guess) for each item in your journal.
3. One by one, place the items in the water. Record whether they sink or float by circling the appropriate word in the "Evidence" column in your journal.

4. Look for other items around the house. Do you think they will sink or float?

Discussion

- Why do you think some objects sink, while others float?
- Why did God create his world to follow predictable laws, like gravity and math?
- If a person is in water, do they sink or float?
- When Jesus walked on the water, was he floating? (Not really, he was overriding the laws of science!)
- Can we override the laws of science?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Have them fill out the chart with the items in their “Sink or Float?” activity
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Confession, which is when we tell God how much we rely upon his power. Some examples might be, “God, you are strong, and I am weak”, “I need you to fight my battles”, “I can’t do anything without your help”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 19 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when “The Lord Appears to Elijah” on Sunday, July 15.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

Next time your child is fearful or worried about something, remind them of this story. Peter became fearful because his focus shifted from Jesus to all the other scary things around him. He was silly to fear. Jesus was able to catch him and keep him safe. We don’t need to doubt God or his ability to save us. He is omnipotent.

July 15-21

Week 7: God Feeds His People Manna

INTRODUCTION

When we pick up this story of the Israelites in Exodus 16, it has been a short two months since God had just displayed his power parting the Red Sea (as we studied two weeks ago). And before that, God had sent the ten plagues to rescue his people from their slavery. You would think that the Israelites would be well acquainted with God's power. And yet, two months later, we find the Israelites grumbling and longing for their days back in Egypt!

What prompted this outbreak of whining? An discontented stomach. All of a sudden their hungry bellies were making them think fondly about their lives as slaves. If you have been a Christian for long, this might sound familiar! Our minds should remember all the ways God has provided our needs in the past, but our sinful natures make us think we are lacking. How many times has God demonstrated his love, power, and faithfulness in our lives – only to have us respond with grumbling instead of gratitude? But just as he does for the Israelites, God persists in his faithfulness.

God again demonstrates his power to the Israelites and causes bread to rain down from heaven. His only stipulation is that they trust him enough to only gather as much as they need, and to rest in their gathering on the Sabbath. Even these simple instructions prove to be difficult (for the Israelites and for us!)

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Exodus 16

- Why were the Israelites complaining?
- Did they have a good reason to complain? Why or why not?
- What do you think the Manna tasted like?
- What would happen if they kept too much of the manna?
- How long did manna last? (Tricky question – depends on what the manna was collected for)

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” (Job 42:2)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Ice Cream in a Bag

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #7: Smaller Zip-Lock; Larger Zip-Lock with Rock Salt
- ½ cup half-and-half
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- 3 cups of crushed ice

Instructions:

1. Put the half-and-half, sugar, and vanilla in the smaller Zip-Lock bag and seal bag. (Make sure it is tightly closed!)
2. Put ice in the larger, gallon-sized Zip-Lock with the salt.
3. Add the sealed, filled small Zip-Lock to the larger bag.
4. Seal the large bag.

5. Squeeze and shake the bag until the ice cream is thickened, about 10-15 minutes.
6. Remove small bag, unseal, eat with spoon.

Discussion

- Why do you think God gave us foods that taste good (like sugar and vanilla)?
- Why do you think God made the Manna taste good?
- Did you get tired shaking the bag? Does God ever get tired?
- Is there anything too difficult for God?
- Is there any situation that you can face that God cannot help?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Thanksgiving, which is when we thank God for taking care of us and providing for us. Some examples might be, “God, thank you for giving me what I need”, “Thank you for protecting me”, “Thanking for always being there for me”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 1 Kings 21 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about “Naboth’s Vineyard” on Sunday, July 22.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

If you don’t have this custom already, take a moment before mealtimes to pray together as a family. Thank God for providing the food and for taking care of you throughout the day.

July 22-28

Week 8: Jesus Feeds the 5,000

INTRODUCTION

In our lesson this week, we see Jesus do another miracle. Five thousand families need something to eat, so Jesus provides enough bread and fish for all of them to eat until they are full (and have leftovers!) Jesus could have fed the people in any manner of ways. He could have rained down Manna like he did for the Israelites. But for some reason, he chose to use a small boy's lunch of five loaves and fish.

Why does God work this way? Why does he choose a shepherd boy to defeat a giant? Why does he choose the weak to lead the strong? One reason, perhaps, is that it is in weakness that God's power can be on full display.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: John 6:1-15

- What did Jesus ask Philip to do? What was Philip's response?
- Do you think Jesus would have been able to feed these people another way, if Philip had responded differently?
- Andrew is the one who brings the boy to Jesus. Do you think Andrew had faith that Jesus could do something with the small lunch?
- Why do you think the Bible tells us that the lunch belonged to a small boy?
- Did Jesus provide enough food for people to have a little or a lot?
- Does Jesus still provide us our food?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (1 Corinthians 12:9)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Feeding Birds

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #8: Birdseed
- Optional: toilet paper tube, peanut butter, string.

Instructions:

1. You could set the bird seed outside in a birdfeeder, or plate.
2. Alternatively, you could spread peanut butter on a toilet paper tube, and then roll the tube in the birdseed, so that it sticks to the peanut butter. Lace the string through the tube and hang from a tree.
3. Watch your birdseed and see if you can see birds coming to visit for a snack!

Discussion

- Are birds weak or strong?
- Do you think birds worry about where their next meal will come from? Why or why not?
- Who takes care of birds?
- Are you weak or strong?
- Do you worry about things happening in your life?
- Who takes care of you?

- Is God strong enough to take care of you and provide for your needs?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is Supplication, which is when we ask God for our daily bread. Some examples might be, “God, please give me the food I need so that I can grow up healthy and strong”, “Please give me a good day”, “Give Dad a good day at work”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 2 Kings 2 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about when “Elijah was taken up into Heaven” on Sunday, July 28.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

When waiting in line at the grocery store, take a moment to remind your child that God is good to provide your family with the food it needs. Explain how God has given people in your family jobs so that they could earn the money needed to pay for the food, and how it is good to give some of your money away so that other people who cannot work can still have money for food. Sharing what God has given us is one way God uses us to take care of other people.

July 29 – August 4

Week 9: The Wind and Waves Obey Jesus

INTRODUCTION

We have been learning this month about how God is Omnipotent, which means that he is all-powerful. He can do anything, and nothing is impossible for him. Another attribute of God that is closely related to his omnipotence, is this: God is Sovereign. When we speak of God's sovereignty we are saying that God rules over all of his creation. He not only *can* do anything -- has the authority to do all things.

This week's lesson is about how Jesus commanded the wind and waves to obey him, and they did. All of nature is under his authority – and every drop of rain, every snowflake, every grain of sand – everything bows before Jesus as king. Are our lives living in submission to his authority?

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Mark 4:35-41

- How do you think the disciples felt like when the waves were breaking over the boat?
- How many times did Jesus have to ask the wind and waves before they calmed down?
- Why did the wind and waves obey Jesus?
- Do the wind and waves obey anyone besides Jesus?
- How can we obey Jesus?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.” (Jeremiah 32:17)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Watch the Weather

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #9: Outdoor Thermometer
- Journals (included in kit)

Instructions:

1. Record the weather for the whole week in your journal.
2. Use the Outdoor Thermometer to record the temperature.
3. If it is sunny, out draw a big sun. If it's cloudy, draw the shape of clouds in the appropriate box.
4. Make sure to record if it's raining!

Discussion

- Who is in control of the weather?
- Can anyone else besides God control the weather?
- Why does God send rain?
- Why does the weather obey God?
- What else should obey God?

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is to ask God to help us obey Him better. Some examples might be, “God, please obey your commands”, “Help me to obey mom all the way, right away, and with a happy heart”, “Help me to always obey Dad when he asks me to do something”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 2 Kings 4 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about “Elisha and the Widow’s Oil” on Sunday, August 5.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

If you catch your child obeying right away, take a moment to tell them how pleased you are with him and tell him that when children obey their parents, they are obeying Jesus. Remind him of this story and how all of heaven and earth should obey Jesus.

August 5 - 11

Week 10: God Promises to Stay with Joshua

INTRODUCTION

Our theme for the month of August is “God is Omnipresent.” This means that God is everywhere. This is hard for our finite minds to imagine. How can a *person* be *everywhere*? The Bible describes God’s omnipresence as God being close to us. He is always with us, and there is no where we can hide from him. His eyes are always on us – watching us closely.

This can be both reassuring and uncomfortable. It is uncomfortable to know that God is always watching us – even when we sin. But it is also reassuring to know that we are never alone. This week’s story is about a promise God made to Joshua after he succeeded Moses’s role in leading the Israelites. Joshua is encouraged to be courageous because he is not alone – God is with him.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Deuteronomy 31:1-8

- How do you think Joshua felt about leading the Israelites in taking the Promised Land if he *didn’t* know God was going to be with him?
- Why does it help us be courageous when we know that God will never leave us?
- Why does it help us be encouraged when we know that God will never leave us?
- Do you think God is with you now? How do you know?
- What should you do when you feel afraid, discouraged, or lonely?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Deuteronomy 31:6)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Star Gazing

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #10: Constellation Map & Star Gazing Guide

Instructions:

1. Go outside during a clear night. If possible, get out of town a little bit so there is as little “light pollution” as possible.
2. Lay down on your back and look up at the stars. Can you find some of the constellations?

Discussion

- Wow, the universe is so big. Those stars are so big, but they are so far away they look tiny to us. Do you think God knows what that star looks like up close?
- Did you know God knows all the stars? The book of Isaiah says he calls them by name.
- Even though the universe is so big, God is even bigger. Can you imagine that?
- We are just a tiny, tiny piece of God’s creation. But God knows you by name too.
- Do you ever feel lonely in this life? Don’t forget, God is always with you.

THURSDAY: **JOURNAL**

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is to praise God for his omnipresence. Some examples might be, “God, you are everywhere!”, “There is nowhere I can go, where you cannot find me.”, “I am never alone, because you are always with me”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 2 Kings 4:8 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about “The Shunammite’s Son who was Restored to Life” on Sunday, August 12.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

When driving in the car on the way to drop your child off somewhere, take a moment to remind her that even though you can’t be with her everywhere, God can. Encourage her that she can be strong, courageous, and encouraged, because God will never leave her nor forsake her.

August 12-18

Week 11: Jesus Promises to Never Leave Us

INTRODUCTION

Jesus has a body, so his body is not omnipresent; but Jesus is God, and his spirit is everywhere. It is one of the mysteries of the incarnation – how can an infinite God become a finite human being? Our minds can't comprehend it! But here is what we know for sure: Jesus promised that he would be with us always. And ever since his spirit came to the believers at Pentecost, we have full access to the Holy Spirit. Jesus is with us now, because his spirit indwells our hearts!

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:1-13

- What is the difference between your spirit and your body? (Your body is the physical flesh and blood, and your spirit is the “real you” – your soul. If you lose a limb, you are the same person you always were, because your spirit is different from your body)
- Jesus's spirit is everywhere. Is our spirit everywhere? (No, we are finite human beings. Jesus is infinite).
- How do you think Jesus's disciples felt when he left them to go to heaven? (Maybe sad because his body was leaving – but not too sad, because he promised his Spirit would return and be with them always).
- Can Jesus hear you when you pray just in your mind? Why or why not?
- Does Jesus help you tell others about Him?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“...surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20b)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Bubbles

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #11: Jar of Bubble Solution

Instructions:

1. Blow bubbles!

Discussion

- How long do these bubbles last before they pop? A short time, or a long time?
- Which is longer, the life of a bubble? Or the life of a bird?
- Which is longer, your life? Or God's life?
- How long did Jesus promise to be with us?
- The Bible says that even though our lives are short, God's love for us is everlasting. (Psalm 103) How does that make you feel?

THURSDAY: JOURNAL

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.

- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is to confess to God our utter dependence on his presence. Some examples might be, “God, I need to always be with me”, “I can’t live one day without your presence”, “If you were not with me, I would be hopeless”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 2 Kings 5 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about a man named Naaman who was healed from leprosy on Sunday, August 19.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

When your child feels lonely or left out of a friend group, remind him that Jesus is always with him, and that he is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

August 19-25

Week 12: Jonah Tries to Hide from God

INTRODUCTION

Jonah was a prophet, and he should have known better, but when God asked him to do something he didn't want to, he tried to run from God. When you understand that God is omnipresent, this seems ridiculous! How can you run from the God who is always beside you? Jonah learns his lesson in a pretty memorable way.

MONDAY: READ AND DISCUSS

Read: Jonah 1

- When Jonah fell asleep in the bottom of the boat, do you think he thought he had gotten away with fleeing God?
- When do you think it sunk in for him – that you can't run from God?
- Do we ever try to run or hide from God? How so?
- God sent a storm to shake Jonah up. How does God make his presence known to us?
- What should we do when we realize we have been trying to hide from God?

TUESDAY: MEMORY VERSE

“Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” declares the LORD. ” (Jeremiah 23:24)

WEDNESDAY: ACTIVITY

Glow in the Dark Hide & Seek

Materials Needed:

- Mystery Package #12: Glow Sticks

Instructions:

1. Play hide and seek in a dark house with as few lights as possible
2. Use your Glow Stick bracelets for light

Discussion

- Hide and seek is fun because it's difficult to find one another. But God never needs to look for us. He always knows right where to find us.
- How does it make you feel to know that God always knows where you are?
- Are there sometimes you wish God wouldn't see you?
- Are there sometimes you are glad that God can see you?

THURSDAY: JOURNAL

- Encourage children to record an updated version what their plant looks like by drawing a picture of it in their journal.
- Help them fill out the Prayer Journal section. Our focus this week is to ask God to help us be aware of his presence, and to let it help us say “no” to sin. Some examples might be, “God, help me to remember you are always watching me”, “Please make sure that my sin finds me out”, “I want to live a life that pleases you”.

FRIDAY OR SATURDAY: **SUNDAY PREP**

Help your child bookmark 2 Kings 22 in his or her Bible. We will be learning about King Josiah on Sunday, August 26.

D6 CONVERSATION STARTER

When it's phone or computer time, remind your child that Jesus is close to him, and is always watching. Help him understand that nothing he does is hidden from God.