

Week 1 God has Revealed Himself

Introduction to Week 1 Object Lesson

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Many Parts, One Potato

Romans 12:4-5

Did you know the Bible calls everyone who is a Christian “The Body of Christ”? That means that all of us are supposed to work together to do the work of Jesus.

What You’ll Need:Mr. Potato Head Toy

Prepare to Share with your Family:

Have you ever played with a Mr. or Mrs. Potato Head? (Show the toy). Let’s see how silly we can make him look (start putting the parts of Mr. Potato Head in the wrong place). How does he look now? (Allow for laughter and let the kids make suggestions as to how to make him look goofy).

Share:

Well, that was a lot of fun, but I don’t think that a real body would work very well if it was put together this way. The Bible tells us in Romans 12:4-5 that there are many different parts of the body of Christ and each of us has an important job to do. Some of you may become pastors one day, others of you may pray for people and they will be healed. Some of you are great encouragers, while others of you may be prophets. God has also given each of you talents such as music, sports, art, etc. All of these gifts and talents can help you bring others to Christ. Now let’s look at Mr. Potato Head again. Is there any part he has that is not important or doesn’t help him in some way? No! He needs his ears to hear, his mouth to eat and talk. He even needs his hat to protect his face from getting sunburned and rained on.

It’s the same way with us, the Body of Christ. We might not all be pastors or we might not all have beautiful singing voices, but we all belong to Christ’s body and we each have important work to do.

Taken from <http://freebiblelessons.net/object-lessons/many-parts-one-potato>

Day 1

Think About It:

What if you had a body with four arms, but no legs; or a body with toes on your hands and no fingers? It would be hard to get things done, wouldn't it? God made our bodies, and He knew just where to put every piece! The same is true for the church, called the Body of Christ. God had a plan for our bodies, and He had a plan for His church, a plan that started in the Old Testament.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Think More About It:

In verse 13, we see that it doesn't matter who we are, if we are Gentiles or Jews, we all are baptized by the same Spirit. The same God that saved people in the Old Testament is the same God who saves us today! How exciting to know that God had this plan for us to be part of His church. He had us in mind just like He did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and so many more! The church is part of His plan. Just like Abraham, our father by faith, we are to be a blessing to the whole world.

Pray About It:

Begin asking God now to show you where He wants you to serve as part of His church.

Day 2 Are you Listening?

Think About It:

Do you have a best friend? How did that person become your friend? Why do they remain your friend? To make friends we must have communication: talking to each other, and more importantly, listening. What kind of friendships would you have if you did not listen? Our relationship with God is the same way. We must listen to Him; He's been talking to us for a long time! We can listen to God by reading His word.

Read Hebrews 1:1-4; Deuteronomy 28:1-2

Think More About It:

When you listen to your parents or teachers, you must pay attention. You want to make sure you can follow any instructions that are being given; you could not follow instructions that you didn't hear. What if they gave the instructions, but you weren't listening? The problem would be your listening. In Deuteronomy 28, God uses Moses to tell the people to hear and obey God's promises.

In Hebrews, we read that God has spoken in the past through prophets. We can read this in the Old Testament. When we read these accounts, we see that God always speaks for a purpose. His purpose is to help His people come to Him and follow Him in faith. Are you listening when He's speaking?

There are different ways we can respond to God when He speaks. We can say we are listening, and we can hear the words that He says. We can say we are listening, and we can understand what He said. The most important thing we can do when we say we are listening is to act on what we have heard. Jesus says we can show that we love Him by our obeying what He says. The only way that we can obey is to really listen to what He is saying, then surrender and obey.

Pray About It:

Jesus loves His people, the church, so much that He gave Himself up for them. Pray that you will hear God telling you ways to show your love for the church also. Pray that He will help you truly listen!

Day 3 Moses Wanted More**Think About It:**

Have you ever had a sleepover with a friend or someone in your family? When it was time to leave, were you ready to go, or did you want to stay with that friend even more? When we have a person who is a great friend, we just can't get enough of them sometimes! The more we get to know, the more we want to know! This is how our relationship with Jesus can be. The more we learn about Him, the stronger the desire will become to continue learning more!

Read Exodus 33:12-23

Think More About It:

Moses had a huge job that God had given him. The problem...He knew he couldn't do it alone! He asked that God go with him. He asked God to show him His glory. He wanted to do exactly what God told him to do, but He just couldn't get enough of God! He wanted to be in His presence. He was overwhelmed with the task ahead of Him and that led him to want to be even more in God's presence, to be surrounded with His power and glory. Moses knew that without God, he was powerless. Shouldn't we all feel like Moses felt? No matter what God has in store for our lives, we can't do it alone. We need Him!

Pray About It:

Moses was desperate! Pray that God shows you that you are desperate, too. You need Him no matter the task ahead of you.

Day 4 God Is

Think About It:

The Bible was written knowing that God is. The Bible doesn't try to prove that God exists. Do you believe that He does? As a church, the Body of Christ, this must be a fact on which we all agree.

Read Genesis 1:1, Hebrews 11:1, Romans 1:18-21, Psalm 19:1-3

Think More About It:

All around us, we can look and see evidence of God: the trees swaying in the wind, birds flying through the air, our family and friends who love us. Everywhere we go, we see different things that can show us that God is there. The Bible helps us better understand who God is. We can learn His character and how He shows His love for us. It directs us on how we can come to know Him personally.

For Christians, God has chosen to reveal himself to us, and we become part of His Body. He makes us part of His family, His church. We can begin to better understand that God is. We begin to see not only the evidence around us, but we will see evidence in our own lives. God works in our lives. We may not have proof that God exists, but we will have personal evidence!

Pray About It:

Pray that God will bring you into a personal relationship with Him, if you do not already have one. Pray that He will begin to show you personal evidence of who He is.

Parents, for more information on this topic, try the book *I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist* by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek.

Day 5 God Is Sovereign

Think About It:

When you were born, it was no surprise to God. He's not surprised by where you live or where you go to school. He has control of all time, and that means He knows when and where everything will happen!

Read 1 Samuel 2:6-8, Acts 17:24-26

Think More About It:

Hannah sings a song praising God for her baby in 1 Samuel. She says that God is in control of history, especially her history. About 1300 years later, in Acts, Paul said that God decided exactly when and where all people must live. He has a plan, and He will accomplish this plan in His way. He is in control of time for all of us.

Pray About It:

Pray and submit to Him. Pray that His will be done in your life.

Week 2 God Is...

Introduction to Week 2 Activity

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Names and Attributes of God

See verses beside each name of God

What You'll Need:

Following pages of the names of God

Prepare to Share with your Family:

Read over the names of God on the following pages. Decide upon a few names at a time to share with your children. A suggestion would be for parents to pick the names of God in which they know the children have seen God's presence as the first ones to present.

Share:

Tell your children that God has many characteristics which make Him God. We cannot always understand who He is, but we can always trust Him. Read the names of God you have chosen to share with your family. Ask and discuss how you have seen God presence in each of His names. Present additional names for God in the days/weeks to come.

Names of God

El-Shaddai – “Almighty God” This is the name that God used to describe Himself to Abraham when he promised to make Abraham and his family a mighty nation (Genesis 17:1-2).

El-Elyon – “Most High God” Long ago, a priest from the city that would later become Jerusalem blessed Abraham in the name of El-Elyon (Genesis 14:19-20) And Balaam (whose donkey once talked) blessed God's people by saying what “El-Elyon” told him to say (Numbers 24:15-16). David also called God “the Most High” (2 Samuel 22:14).

El-Olam – “Everlasting One” Abraham worshiped God calling him El-Olam (Genesis 21:33). And Moses wrote a prayer in which he called God El-Olam (Psalm 90:2).

El-Roi – “God Who Sees Me” When Sarah's servant Hagar ran away, God sent an angel to tell her to go back home. After that, Hagar called God “El-Roi,” because she knew God had seen her and was watching over her (Genesis 16:13).

Elohim – “Creator God” The Bible uses this name of God when it describes how God made people in His image (Genesis 1:26).

Yahweh-Yireh – “The Lord my Provider” When God provided a ram for Abraham and Isaac to sacrifice on the mountain, Abraham even names the place “The Lord will Provide” (Genesis 22:14).

Yahweh-Nissi – “The Lord my Banner” Long ago, armies carried their country’s flag or banner into battle with them. The banner also flew over their camp. Moses called God “Yahweh –Nissi” after God’s people had fought and won a battle over the enemy (Exodus 17:15). He was saying that God was with them in battle.

Yahweh-Mekaddesh – “The Lord Who Makes Holy” “Holy” means ‘set apart’ or “different.’ God is a different kind of being from all others. God told his people to have a special worship day set aside just for Him; The Sabbath. God said that would help them remember that he is Yahweh-Mekaddesh, the Lord who makes His people holy (Exodus 31:13).

Yahweh-Shalom – “The Lord Is Peace” God’s angel visited Gideon, and Gideon was afraid of the angel. But God said, “Do not be afraid. You will not die” (Judges 6:23, NLT). Then Gideon built an altar and worshiped God, calling Him “Yahweh-Shalom” (Judges 6:24).

Yahweh-Saboath - “The Lord of Hosts” This name means that God rules over all nations and over the whole universe. Jeremiah called God “Yahweh-Saboath” when God saved his life from men who were planning to kill him (Jeremiah 11:20)

Yahweh-Rohi - “The Lord my Shepherd” This is the name David used to describe God in Psalm 23, “The Lord is my Shepherd; I have everything I need” (Psalm 23:1, NLT).

Yahweh-Shammah – “The Lord is There” When the city of Jerusalem was built back again (after it had been torn down), Ezekiel called the city “Yahweh-Shammah.” meaning that this city is a place where God is (Ezekiel 48:35).

Adonai – “Lord” This word was used to address great people such as kings or masters. But when God’s people used the word, they were honoring God as the highest King and Master, their Lord (Genesis 18:27; Psalm 16:2; 38:22; 54:4; 68:19). Sometimes they used “Adonai” in place of the word “Yahweh”; in fact, God’s people came up with the name “Jehovah” by adding the vowel sounds of “Adonai” to the unspeakable name of God, “YHWH.”

Qanna – “Jealous” God is jealous in a good way. When we want to give our attention, our hearts, our lives to something that cannot fulfill us like He can, He is jealous, and He wants us back. He loves us too much to let us give our lives to things that can’t satisfy us. God told his people, “I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not share your affections with any other god!” (Exodus 20:5, NLT; see also Exodus 34:14).

Ancient One – Daniel called God “the Ancient One” or “the Ancient of Days” when he saw a vision of God sitting on His throne as judge (Daniel 7:9, 13, 22).

Rock – David called God “my Rock” (Psalm 19:14). Moses wrote a song that called God “the Rock” (Deuteronomy 32:18). And when Hannah was praising God after He had given her a baby (Samuel), she said, “There is no Rock like our God” (1 Samuel 2:2). This name of God means that He is dependable, strong, and everlasting.

Fortress – A fortress is a fort, a strong protection. David called God “my fortress” after God had saved David from Saul and all his other enemies (Psalm 18:2).

Shield – God told Abraham not to be afraid, because He was Abraham’s shield (Genesis 15:1). God protects us just as a shield protects a soldier.

Abba/Father – The Aramaic word “Abba” can mean “Daddy.” It shows a close loving relationship between father and child. Jesus used this word when He prayed to God (Mark 14:36), and the apostle Paul refers to God as Abba in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6. Jesus told His followers to pray to God, calling God “Father” (Luke 11: 1, 2). The Bible also calls God the “Father of Mercies” (2 Corinthians 1:3), the “Father of Lights” (James 1:17) and the “Father of Glory” (Ephesians 1:17).

Warrior – Moses and Miriam sang a song after God had rescued them from the armies of Egypt. They said, “The Lord is a warrior” (Exodus 15:3). Savior – David praised God by calling Him “Savior” (2 Samuel 22:47). God had saved David from many dangers.

Awesome One – Asaph called God “the Awesome One” in Psalm 76:11 (NLT). Some translations of the Bible call God “the One to be feared” (NIV) or “Him that ought to be feared” (KJV). When the Bible says that God is to be “feared,” it usually means that we are to stand in awe of God and respect His awesome greatness and power.

Light of Israel – Isaiah calls God the “Light of Israel” (Isaiah 10:17). Just as light allows us to see where we are going, so God guides us and shows us the way to love. The Bible tells us that in heaven there will be no sun and moon, because God’s glory will be the light (Revelation 21:23; 22:5).

Alpha and Omega – “The Beginning and the End” This is a name God gives Himself (Revelation 21:6). “Alpha” is the first letter of the Greek alphabet. “Omega” is the last. The beings in heaven praise God night and day saying, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is and is to come” (Revelation 4:8). God began all things, and He will end time as we know it. However, He gives us the gift of spending eternity with Him.

Day 1 God Is Creator

Before You Begin:

Give each person in your family a piece of paper and have paint (crayons, markers, etc.) available. Without talking about your plans, give everyone five minutes to paint a picture. When you have finished, discuss the following questions.

- Why did you paint a picture instead of leaving your paper blank?
- What did each of you paint?
- How did you decide on this?
- How did you choose the colors to use?
- Are you happy with your painting?

Think About It:

Have you ever thought about why there is something instead of nothing? God created our world, the earth and all that's in it, the sky and the heavens, and you! Have you ever wondered why? How did He choose what the earth would look like? How did He decide that people would have hair? While we have paper and paint, God began with nothing. He didn't need to select a color, He made one! God made something from nothing.

Read Genesis 1:1, Job 38: 4-39:30

Think More About It:

Throughout Job 38 and 39, God asked Job where he was when a lot of things happened. Some of these questions sound a little crazy! Job couldn't have been there when God told the oceans how far their waves should come, and he's probably not there when a mountain goat gives birth. There is someone who is in all of the places listed in these verses... God! God is THE Creator, and He doesn't need our advice just like He didn't need Job's.

Pray About It:

Colossians 1:16 tells us that *"Everything was created through Him and for Him."* Pray that God will help show you new ways to praise Him for all of the things He has created.

Day 2 God Is Holy

Think About It:

Have you ever heard the phrase, “a cut above the rest”? What do you think this means? We can use this phrase when we find something that is outstanding, that is a lot better than other things. Another word that can mean the same thing is holy. Something that is holy is high above the rest. It is separated into a class by itself. This is what God is! There is no one like Him.

Read Isaiah 63:9|12|1-5

Think More About It:

God is perfect and clean in every way. His holiness covers every area of who He is and what He does. Because of this, we can always depend on Him. Also, because God is holy, He cannot be around things that are unholy. God cannot tolerate sin. He sent Jesus as a way to take away our sins and make us holy just like He is!

Pray About It:

There are many areas of our lives where we need to be holy. It needs to spread throughout our whole lives, just like it does God. Pray and ask God to help you be holy in your words, in what you’re reading, in what you listen to, and in what you watch.

Day 3 God Is Love

Think About It:

Do you know anyone who loves you so much they want to be with you all the time? God loves us so much that He wants to be with us literally ALL the time! If He is with us and lives in our hearts, His love is with us all the time. We will be able to show His love to others just like He shows His love to us.

Read 1 John 4:7-21, Jeremiah 31:3, John 3:16

Think More About It:

God is love, but it’s not like the kind of love people talk about for Valentine’s Day. It’s so much better than that! God loves us so much that He looks for and does what is best for us, no matter what it costs Him, even if it costs His own life.

Pray About It:

Being able to show God's love to others is very important. We want to stand out in the world. But, the only way that we can show His love is if we have accepted it. If you have already accepted Christ as your savior, you have His love in you. Pray that He helps you share it with others you come in contact with each day. If you have not accepted Christ as your personal savior and the one who loves you the most, is now that time?

Day 4 God Is Righteous

Think About It:

Sometimes being right is the difference between life and death. The astronauts who were in the Apollo 13 spacecraft knew that first hand. They were supposed to land on the moon, but something in their ship went terribly wrong. In the blink of an eye, the dream for a lunar landing was gone and hope of even making it home alive was small. The fuel supply was low and the oxygen supply even lower. Success was dependent upon a small team of people on earth. They worked hard to come up with a plan that would use the little bit of fuel the ship had left to propel them toward earth, enter the atmosphere at just the right angle so they wouldn't burn up, and do it before the astronauts' air ran out. The team knew that if they were wrong, even just a little bit, the spacecraft would miss earth and float off into space. They had to be right... and they were! Apollo 13 made it back to earth safe and sound!

When we talk about God's Righteousness, we're talking about God being right ALL the time!

Read Isaiah 56:1-5, Romans 1:16-17

Think More About It:

God is right 100% of the time. Because He is right all of the time, we know everything He says is right, including His laws. We cannot change what God says to make us feel better if we are doing something wrong. We must have faith in God to show us true righteousness. God requires righteousness from us, but only He can help us achieve it!

Pray About It:

Tell God how you feel about the fact that He is right 100% of the time. Ask Him to help you with something you can't seem to do right.

<http://dg4kids.com/bible-time/day-one-god-is-always-right/>

Day 5 God Is Just

Think About It:

Justice can be a hard thing to understand. We talked earlier this week about loving everyone, but that means we must love people who are doing things that go against God's word. But does this mean we can't accept people who believe differently than us? It's a lot to think about! God is the only righteous one, which means He is the only one who can judge fairly. He is the only One who is just.

Read Romans 3:21-31

Think More About It:

God is serious about sin. Since He is truly just, then sin (any violation against God) must be dealt with. God is the righteous judge who will judge all sins. The bad news...we have all sinned, which means we must be judged. The good news...God has provided a way for our sins to be washed away! Verses 21-26 tell us about how Jesus is that way.

Pray About It:

Pray that God would show you how Jesus provides the way for your sins to be washed away, so you will no longer be separated from God.

Week 3 Man’s Predicament

Introduction to Week 3 Object Lesson

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

“The Juice Scam”

Romans 1:21-23, 28-32

Sin desires to hinder and destroy our relationships with Christ. We must battle sin every day and rely on God to help us make good, biblical decisions. Use this activity to educate a child on the seriousness of sin, how it negatively affects our lives, and how we can prepare against its destruction.

What You’ll Need:

Pitcher of water
Red food coloring
Drinking glass
Ice (optional)

Prepare to Share with your Family:

Prepare a pitcher of water and use red food coloring to give it the appearance of fruit juice and pour some into a glass. Add ice if desired.

Share:

Explain to your children that sin makes promises it can’t keep (such as having “fun,” gaining popularity, or getting something you want). Ask, “Who would like to try this glass of juice?” After the volunteer has taken a drink, have them describe the taste (e.g. “It just tastes like water”). Help the children understand that while this is a harmless example of sin’s deception, there is always damage involved with sin in real life. Ask the volunteer, “How do you feel about being deceived (angry, upset, embarrassed, etc.)? If there had been something harmful in the water, instead of red food coloring, what could have happened (death, sickness, etc.)?” Lastly, reiterate that this is how sin works – it appears to be something to desire yet leaves us feeling empty, cheated, and outsmarted!

Day 1 Man is Made in God's Image

Think About It:

Has anyone ever told you that you look just like your mom or dad? That you are the "spitting image" of someone in your family? A "chip off the block" from your parents? Kids can hear comments like this often. Even better than being made in the image of one of your parents, you were made in the image of God!

Read Genesis 1:26-31

Think More About It:

There is something special about God making man. We're not sure what God looks like, but we know that He made us in His image. We can see, hear, smell, touch, and speak just like God can. More than that, we have other characteristics of God: we have a spirit; we have a conscience, emotions, and the ability to worship God. The best part about being a human... to be able **to have a relationship with God who created us!**

Pray About It:

Pray that God will show you special ways that you are made in His image.

Day 2 Man is Fallen

Think About It:

Life is full of choices, and every choice makes other things happen. Some choices lead to good things and others lead to bad things. Have one of the children hold a book at arm's length in front of them. Then ask them to choose to release the book from their hands. After the book falls to the ground, talk about the choice that allowed the book to fall. Now repeat the demonstration but have a parent sit where the book would fall. (The child should not really drop the book onto the parent.) Explain that our choices can often hurt other people. Adam and Eve made a choice, a very bad choice. Their choice to disobey God first brought bad results into the good world that God made.

Read Genesis 3

Think More About It:

God made Adam and Eve in His image to be in a relationship with Him. They were made to be connected with Him, but as soon as they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they were separated from Him. They made a choice to listen to Satan instead of obey God. Because God cannot be near sin, Adam and Eve could no longer be in the presence of God. They disobeyed His Word, so they had to be punished. Their bad decision was the first time sin came into the world, but God still gives us good news. He promised that one day someone would come and crush Satan's power over people.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help you make good decisions.

Day 3 The Far Reach of Man's Fall

Think About It:

Have you ever thrown a rock into a lake or other body of water? Does the rock just hit and sink? No! It makes ripples in the water that stretch out around where it hits the water. Our decisions can be like these ripples; they cause reactions that we do not consider. This is true of the decision Adam and Eve made. It affected everyone who was born after they ate the fruit.

Read Romans 3:9-12, 1 Corinthians 15:22

Think More About It:

Because of the sin of Adam, all men are born into sin, except Jesus. People don't become sinners once they sin, we sin because we are born sinners. We are born being separated from God. We are connected to the enemy through Adam, but we can be connected to God through Jesus!

Pray About It:

Pray that God will show you how to become connected to Him through Jesus.

Day 4 Longing in Man's Heart

Think About It:

When your birthday or Christmas come, do you have a wish list for gifts, or do you say you already have everything you need? If we're all honest, we know we always want something. We always want more, something better

or newer. None of these feelings can be satisfied except through God. None of these feelings can be satisfied except through God.

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

Think More About It:

God has a plan for everything. He knows what and when everything is going to happen. Man wants to know these things, but we will not be able to understand these things until we enter heaven. We should be content in what we have here for now. What does contentment mean? Wanting what you already have. This can be much harder than it seems. So why pray? We pray so that we know God's heart and it becomes our heart. We better know what he wants for us. When we pray God's will, it will happen. Prayer puts us on the same page with Him and His will.

Pray About It:

Even though it is hard to not understand what God holds for your future, pray that He can bring you contentment.

Day 5 Our Righteousness is Like Filthy Rags

Think About It:

Imagine a donut...it looks delicious. It has yummy frosting and sprinkles on top. Inside, there is a red filling. You bite into the donut looking forward to a wonderful treat. But, you realize the red filling is disgusting cough syrup. Yuck! Sometimes actions we do look good from the outside; people would be very impressed. The problem is that our motives are not always good. God sees our motives; He sees us from the inside and knows that nothing good is in us, not our flesh, our personality, or emotions.

Read Isaiah 64:6-9

Think More About It:

Sin has made us dirty; there is no righteousness in us. This is true for ALL men (except Jesus). Christians and non-Christians can do "good" things. We can all donate money and volunteer our time doing good things. For any of these things to be acceptable to God, we must first come to Him His way.

Verse 8 confesses that God is our potter and we are the clay. He is our Father. We talked earlier this week about being made in God's image. We lost this image because of sin, and we can only gain it back and become sons and daughters of God through Jesus.

Pray About It:

Pray and confess that God is our creator. Thank Him for making us in His image. Pray that He can do good things through you because nothing we do without Him comes from the right motives.

Week 4 The Saving Work of God

Introduction to Week 4 Object Lesson

This week has 7 devotions plus an introductions activity. Complete the introduction activity as part of any of the devotions this week. This topic of God saving us is that important!

Winning By Default

John 3:16-18

Becoming a Christian can be described as entering the kingdom of light, coming out of the kingdom of darkness. Some people think God is watching for people to do wrong so He can condemn them. Condemn means to make them pay the penalty. But it's really just the opposite.

Prepare to Share with your Family:

Ask your family members to think about teams in soccer, football, basketball, baseball or another sport. Ask: What would happen if you were on a sports team and the whole team was at the field or gym ready to play, but the other team never showed up? Who wins? Sometimes we say that the team who showed up won "by default." That means the winning team didn't really play the game, but they won because the other team didn't show up.

Share:

Divide your family members into pairs and ask them to arm wrestle or thumb wrestle. Each person can decide to wrestle or declare "not to show up." This decision may be made if a smaller person feels they cannot beat the bigger person or they feel they may get hurt, etc. There could be multiple reasons a person or team would not show up for a game. If a family member decides "not to show up," that person will lose by default. The other person waiting to wrestle them, will win by default.

God sent Jesus to save us all because we were condemned already by our own sins when we were born. In other words, the world was already condemned in the world of darkness, but God sent Jesus to bring us into the kingdom of light. However, people have to choose to come into the kingdom of light by believing in Jesus. If they don't, they stay in the kingdom of darkness by default.

Taken from Salvation by Karyn Henley

Day 1 It is the Will of God to Save

Think About It:

Did you choose what to wear today? Did you choose what to eat? What to watch on TV? Who to talk to? We make lots of choices each day. God allows us to make the choice to follow Him. He reaches out to all of us through His love and wants all of us to be saved, but He will not make that decision for us.

Read 2 Peter 3:1-9

Think More About It:

These verses remind us that Jesus is coming again. He will establish His eternal kingdom that all who have chosen to follow Him will be a part of. People around us will make fun of us and question God's plan and timing. We need to remember that God sees time differently than we do. He wants for all people to be saved. He has connected people to Himself so that they will bring others to Him.

Pray About It:

How can God use you to connect others to Him? Pray that God will use you to bring others to Him within His plan and timing.

Day 2 God Made it Possible for Us to Become His Children

Think About It:

Do you have a nickname? Some people have several nicknames. There are many different ways that the Bible refers to Jesus. In today's verses, He is called the Light, He is the Son of God, the Word, Jesus Christ. Even though He may be called different things, He is the One who made a way for us to become children of God.

Read John 1:6-18

Think More About It:

Jesus became a man and lived on earth. Why did He do this? Jesus came so that people could be connected to God as His children. Before He was born, John the Baptist came to get things ready. He told people that Jesus was coming. When Jesus did come, His own people didn't accept Him. But, the people who did receive Him became children of God. They weren't born like babies are born; they were born of God. What a wonderful family to be a part of!

Pray About It:

Thank God for sending Jesus to earth. Thank Him for making a way for us to become His children.

Day 3 God Sent Jesus to be Your Substitute

Think About It:

Think about your favorite possession. Imagine that your family needed money, so you sold that possession to a pawn shop. But you loved that possession so much; you worked very hard to earn the money to buy it back. At last you were finally able to buy it back! We would say that you redeemed your favorite possession. This is what we call redemption.

Taken from Salvation by Karyn Henley

Read Isaiah 53:4-10, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Think More About It:

Jesus came to take care of our sins. He took on our sins as if they were His own, and He took the punishment for them. Knowing that God cannot be near sin, Jesus separated Himself from God so that we could be with Him. His suffering brought us forgiveness.

We can never make ourselves acceptable to God. Jesus is the only one who is suitable to God because He is the only one without sin. God knew this. So, He made a way for us to become acceptable. He knew the need, and then He met the need. God thinks of everything! He made the way for everyone, but it's up to us to accept it. He will not force us to receive His gift, but God desires for us all to know His love.

Pray About It:

Have you accepted God's gift? He took your sins so that you can be in the presence of God forever!

Day 4 How Salvation Happens

Think About It:

Do you ever find it hard to accept a gift? Or when someone gives you something, you feel like you need to give them something in return? You need to repay favors by doing something nice for whoever helped you? Why is it hard to accept something with no "payment"? God gave us a gift that requires nothing in return!

Read Ephesians 2:1-9

Think About It More:

Have you accepted God's gift of salvation? Even people who have accepted this gift find it difficult to believe there's nothing we need to do to earn it. We want to somehow pay for it by doing good things. Verses 8-9 tell us *"⁸ I mean that you have been saved by grace because you believe. You did not save yourselves. It was a gift from God. ⁹ You cannot brag that you are saved by the work you have done."*

This isn't just any gift. It's a gift from God that man could never have on his own.

Pray About It:

Thank God for His free gift for us. Praise God for the gift that only He could give.

Day 5 This is Eternal Life

Think About It:

Parents, show your children a ring. Is there a beginning to this ring? Is there an end to the ring? Think about time. Was there a beginning of time? When was it? (At the creation of the earth.) Will there be an end of time? (Time ends for a person when the person dies. But time for the earth will also end. However, eternity never ends.) Our lives with God will be eternal!

Read John 17:1-5

Think More About It:

These verses give us the Lord's Prayer, the prayer of Jesus which is different than the model prayer in Matthew 6. This prayer is about the glory of God. How many times is the word "glory" used? Glory is the shining forth of God and His greatness causing applause, celebration, and rejoicing. All of our applause should be saved for God! We will have eternity to celebrate the glory of God.

Eternal life is knowing God personally, not just knowing who He is or knowing about Him. Lots of people believe in Jesus, but having eternal life is more. It is not something we can earn, it is a gift from God that we can have if we admit we are sinners, repent, and believe in Jesus Christ alone.

Pray About It:

Do you know Jesus personally? If not, now can be the time! All you need to do is admit to God that you are a sinner and repent, believe in Jesus Christ, and confess your faith in Him as Savior and Lord. Thank God for the gift of eternal life, a gift that only He can give!

Day 6 Baptism

Think About It:

"I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," Pastors say when they put a person under the water. As the person comes out of the water, the pastor wipes away the water from the person's eyes and helps them out of the water. What just took place in the person's life? By being baptized, a person is showing the church and their family that they have become a Christian.

Read Matthew 3:13-17

Think More About It:

The first church members wanted to remember what Jesus had done for them. They followed two of Jesus' examples to remember His death, burial, and resurrection: baptism and the Lord's Supper, which will talk about later. Baptism – obeying Christ by being put under water. This act is a symbol to show that the 'old you' has been washed away and the 'new you' is alive in Christ Jesus. You have become a Christian.

Baptism is a picture of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. The first church baptized people who had become Christians. Our church baptizes people who become Christians also. Being baptized does not make you a Christian. It shows others that you have already become a Christian, and you are following Jesus' command to be baptized.

Pray About It:

If you have not been baptized, ask God to help you in discovering why not. Ask Him to show you the next step in your life toward becoming a Christian or being baptized.

Day 7 The Lord's Supper

Think About It:

Do you remember a special trip your family has taken? Was it a trip to visit a family member? Was it to visit the beach or mountains or to a new place you had never visited before? What was your favorite part of the trip? What did you keep from your trip to help you remember it?

Read Luke 22:17-19

Think More About It:

Lord's Supper – a special meal to help Christians remember Jesus' death. Before Jesus was crucified and died on the cross, He ate His last meal with His disciples. During the dinner, Jesus took bread and showed it to the men. He told them the bread was like His body that would be broken. Jesus also took a cup and showed it to the disciples. He said the juice in the cup was like His blood, and it would be poured out for them. Jesus wanted to tell his disciples what would happen to Him and how He wanted them to remember Him. Today, churches still use the bread and the cup to remember Jesus during a special meal. The meal is different from other meals. Only two things are served at this meal: one taste of juice and one bite of bread. The reason churches have this meal is to remember Jesus' death.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the church. An ordinance is a church event which Jesus commanded His followers to do. These are events that help us remember what Jesus did for us.

Pray About It:

Thank God that baptism and the Lord's Supper can help you remember important things about Jesus.

Taken from I'm A Christian Now; Lifeway Publisher

Week 5 What Happened to Me (My Identity)

Introduction to Week 5 Video Clip

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Who Am I?

What You'll Need:

TV with Roku or Smart TV or Smart Tablet or Smart Phone with availability to connect to the internet

View and discuss this short video:

Who Am I, Lord?

<http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=WDYLYLNX>

Who does God say you are?

Day 1 I am Not Condemned

Think About It:

Has your mom ever baked cookies at your house? They make the whole place smell delicious! The problem is, the cookies were made for someone else. She tells you not to touch them. That's where sin enters in. You know you shouldn't touch those cookies, but there are so many of them, she would never be able to tell if you only had one. The evil sin in you can convince you to eat one of those cookies, no matter how much you tell yourself that you shouldn't.

Read Romans 7:13-8:1

Think About It More:

In these verses, Paul talks about the struggle we can have as Christians. We know the right thing to do, but the sinful part of us makes it very hard to do the right thing, no matter how much we want to. The truth is, we can't be "good" no matter how hard we try. Even when we do good things, there are many times that our reasons for doing them are selfish. So, what hope do we have?

Our only hope is seen in Romans 8:1, "So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty." No matter how many mistakes we make, there is no condemnation for God's children. (Condemnation is when something is judged to be very wrong and a punishment is given.) We may face consequences for our actions, but God will never disown His children.

Pray About It:

Has God shown you when you made a mistake? Pray this prayer to Him: Dear God, I was going the wrong way. Thank you through the Holy Spirit for your conviction (showing me that I was wrong). Now I am on the right track!

Day 2 I am Dead to Sin, Alive to God

Think About It:

Parents, if possible, get a heavy-duty chain to show children. You can also make paper chains using paper strips and tape or a stapler.

A real chain is strong. What are some ways people use chains (to contain a pet, to lock doors, etc.). Slaves and prisoners are bound by chains. The Bible tells us we can be slaves to sins. What do you think this means? How can we no longer let our sins control us?

Read Romans 6

Think About It More:

Jesus frees us from the chains of sins. Does this give us a free pass to do whatever we want because He has forgiven us of our sins once and for all? No! We have been set free from the power of sin. This means it doesn't control us anymore; it is not our master. We are now living for God. Who will you obey?

Pray About It:

Ask God to make a way for you to find and attend a Sunday School class regularly, every week if possible. Pray for your Sunday School teacher to hear from God and present just what you and the other classmates need from Him.

Act on It:

Church is a great place to join others who are no longer slaves to sin. Get connected to a group of other Christians who are living for God. Think of the great work you could do at your school and in your community together to share the love of Christ.

Day 3 I am a Possession of God

Think About It:

Are you a football fan? How about baseball? Basketball? When you have a favorite team to cheer for, it's almost impossible to root for anyone else.

If you pull for the Falcons to win on Sundays, then you probably don't have a Tampa Bay jersey in your closet. If you love it when the Braves win, you probably don't watch many Phillies games. If you know the starters for the Hawks, then you probably don't care much about the Cavaliers. Just like these we only cheer for one sport team, we can't be connected to Jesus and connected to sin.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Think About It More:

God created our bodies, Jesus redeemed our bodies, and the Holy Spirit lives in our bodies. How could we do things that don't honor God with our bodies? We are connected to Jesus, not to sin. Nothing in this world is our master as God's children. Since we are His children, we need to remember that we belong to Him and should use our bodies to honor Him.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help you in situations that may not be pleasing to God. Pray for Him to show you the ways to use your body to honor Him.

Day 4 I am Accepted

Think About It:

Have you ever felt unaccepted by kids around you? Maybe someone made fun of you. Or you had a friend who told you they didn't like you anymore. These things can be very hurtful. Some people will do anything to fit in. With God, we are always accepted!

Read Ephesians 1:1-6

Think About It More:

Verse 4 tells us that He has chosen us.

Verse 5 says that He has adopted us.

Verse 6 states that He has accepted us.

These verses should make us feel better when the people around us don't accept us. We can know that God loves us and accepts us. It's hard to imagine that the God who made everything in the world for all time knows me better than I know myself.

Pray About It:

The next time you are struggling and not feeling a part of things, pray that God will remind you of these verses.

Day 5 I am God's Poetry

Think About It:

Butterflies...are they always beautiful creatures that have colorful wings? No, they start out as caterpillars. From caterpillars they change into a chrysalis (or cocoon), and then they emerge as butterflies. Just like butterflies become new creatures, we do also when we come to know Christ as our personal savior.

Read Ephesians 2:9-10, 2 Corinthians 5:17

Think About It More:

Not only does God accept us, He makes us a special, new creation. God makes us new so that we can do the job that He has for us to complete, and more than that, He chose the job just for us! We need to connect to His will so we don't miss what's best for His glory.

The word "workmanship" that is used in Ephesians 2:10 is the word that we use for poem or poetry. I am His masterpiece, His poetry! What a wonderful and beautiful picture of how God makes us new.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will connect you to His plan and His purpose. Pray that He will use you to be the best for what He has in store for you.

Week 6 What We are About (Our Mission)

Introduction to Week 6 Video Clip

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Who Am I?

What You'll Need:

TV with Roku or Smart TV or Smart Tablet or Smart Phone with availability to connect to the internet

View and discuss this short video:

Dot and Bouncy – The Great Commission
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VdL_F6KKXQ

Kids can share in the Great Commission also!

Day 1 Personalized Great Commission in the Old Testament

Think About It:

How do you feel when you're waiting for something exciting to happen? For your birthday? For Christmas? It can be hard to wait when you know good things are coming. Today we're going to read about Abraham who was waiting for an exciting promise that God had made to Him to come true.

Read Genesis 12:1-3

Think About It More:

God had made a plan for His chosen people before He made the world. He knew that He would use Abraham to fulfill this plan. Through Abraham's family, Jesus would be born. Abraham was the first missionary. God used Him to bless the people of the world, both then and now, and that includes us! We need to continue connecting others with the same blessings.

Pray About It:

Thank God for having a plan, for using Abraham to see this plan through, and for the blessings you have received from this plan.

Day 2 I Must be About My Father's Business

Think About It:

Do you have chores you are responsible for completing? When you do them or other jobs you have, do you try to avoid the work, or do you do your best without wasting time? Jesus knew that He had a job to do even when He was young.

Read Luke 2:41-52

Think About It More:

Jesus knew He was in the world to complete God's plan. He was aware of what He needed to do. Jesus, even as a kid, was the only way for us to have eternal life. He knew this, and that's why He told His parents that He *"must be where my Father's work is."*

It is important for us to know that Jesus is God who came to do His will. Why? Believing Jesus is God is the only way to be saved from our sins and have eternal salvation. (John 3:16, 36; 1 John 5:1-5) If Jesus were not God, He would have been born just like every other human, with sin. He would not be able to be a perfect sacrifice and unable to cleanse us from all our sins.

Pray About It:

Jesus knew His mission; pray that He will show you the mission He has for you.

Day 3 The Great Commission for All Believers and the Church

Think About It:

Who were the first disciples? Do you know how they were called to be disciples? (Jesus called them to follow Him or someone else told them about Jesus and they followed Him.) Did you know that a disciple is anyone who is following Jesus? Are there any people you can think of now who you would call disciples of Jesus? Why? It is important to remember that a person is not a disciple just because they read their Bible, go to church, or do good things. A disciple of Jesus is someone who has repented from their sins and believes that Jesus died on the cross to pay for their sins.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

Think About It More:

These verses are the last thing that Jesus told His disciples before He went back to Heaven. Since that time, it's been very important for Jesus' disciples, including us, to follow these instructions. Being a Christian means being a missionary wherever you go. We are to tell people about Jesus, but that's not all. We are to make disciples, teaching people so that they can teach people.

Pray About It and Act on It:

To illustrate what happens in the life of someone when they become a disciple and to enforce the concept of repentance & faith working together to make someone a disciple, try the following illustration. Have 2 kids stand up a few meters apart with their backs to each other. Have a 3rd kid stand between them. Introduce one of the kids as "the world." Explain that before becoming a disciple of Jesus everyone is following the world. Tell the kid who is representing "the world" to do something for the kid in the middle to copy. Have the rest of the group tell you who the kid in the middle is following. Then, introduce the other kid as "God" and have that kid do something different for the kid in the middle to follow. Ask if the kid in the middle can follow "the world" and "God" at the same time. No, because they are complete opposites and if you're following one your back is to the other one. Read Romans 3:10-12 and talk about how everyone is following the world and no one is seeking after God, how they've all turned their backs and gone astray. Explain that in order to follow God you have to turn your back on the world; it's one or the other- there's no middle ground! That's what the word repent means – turning away from your sin and the world and turning to Jesus.

Taken from <http://ministry-to-children.com/making-disciples-teaching-activity-for-the-great-commission/>

Day 4 The Greatest Commandment

Think About It:

Are there rules listed in your classroom? What are some of these rules? What do you think the most important rule is in class? Could it be to respect everyone in class, both teacher and students? Sometimes one rule can cover all the rules needed. Like "show respect" includes don't talk while others are talking, raise your hand to talk, don't hurt other students, etc.

Read Matthew 22: 34-40

Think About It More:

The Pharisees were trying to trick Jesus by asking Him what the greatest command was. He knew the perfect, right answer, to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind. The second is to love your neighbors as yourself. We can be motivated to follow these commands by our love for God and our love for others.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help us show our love to our neighbors (anyone who has a need).

Day 5 We are Christ’s Ambassadors Reconciling the World to God

Think About It:

When you have a good friend, don’t you want to show him or her all of your toys or books or introduce him to your other friends? Isn’t it nice to be able to show your friends new, interesting things? That’s what we should be doing with what we know about Jesus. We want all of our friends to know about Him so they can have eternal life.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Think About It More:

Jesus came and brought God and man back together again when He died on the cross. We were separated by sin. He reconciled us. That means He completely changed the relationship between man and God. Now, it’s our turn to tell others about what He did for us. We are to be on mission with Him.

Pray About It:

Thank God for sending Jesus to reconcile us, so we have a relationship with Him again. Pray and see where God is at work and join Him.

Week 7 The Five Purposes of Our Church

Introduction to Week 7 Object Lesson

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

The Gift Box

The way we live shows who or what we worship. As God's children, our lives are worship. We do all things, large or small, to honor or glorify Him.

Romans 12:1-2

What You'll Need:

Index cards or paper
Pencils or markers
Tape & Scissors
Small box
Wrapping paper

Prepare to Share with your Family:

Set the index cards in small stacks on the table along with pencils or markers. Ask each family member to write or draw an object or scene that shows something about their lives. (For example, they can draw a soccer ball or write "soccer" if soccer is part of 'who they are.' You can give them suggestions: your favorite food, music lessons, your room, your hobby, friends, school, etc.) When each member of the family has done a few cards, ask each person to place their cards in their box and wrap it up.

Share:

Each person just wrapped a gift for God! What does it mean to give your life to God? How can we give our lives to God? What part of our lives belong to God? (All of it.) How can cleaning our bedrooms be worship? How can doing homework be worship? What are some of the cards you placed in your box? Talk specifically about your families' cards. For example, how can music lessons be worship?

When we have given our lives to God, we do everything with a respectful loving attitude toward Him. We live in God's presence every moment. So everything we do should honor Him. We work and play with God in mind, knowing His spirit lives in us.

Taken from Worship by Karyn Henley

Day 1 We Exist to Celebrate God's Presence: Worship

Think About It:

When you get something new (a toy, new coloring book, video game), you want to spend all of your time using it. You love that new toy! Sometimes we want to spend so much time with it and think about it so much, it could be said that we worship it. What does it mean to worship? Worship is when you love something with all of your heart. For us, we are called to worship God, not a toy, coloring book, or video game.

Read Romans 12:1

Think About It More:

Worship is a way we can connect to God while we are still here on earth. Worship is a way we can fellowship with God. We can show God our love through worship and praise.

Who do we worship? We worship God and Him alone.

What is worship? Singing, dancing, praise, prayer, reading the Bible, and telling amazing things that are true about God

When do we worship? All the time!

Where do we worship? Everywhere. Worship isn't something we go to, it's something we do.

Why do we worship? Because God is worthy to be worshiped and we need to worship. God made us to praise!

How do we worship? We can worship with our whole self-our body, soul, spirit, feet, hands, voice...

People like to cheer for a winning team. Worship is cheering for the ultimate winning team...God's team! He has already claimed victory over sin. We can start worshipping Him here on earth, and we will continue in Heaven for eternity!

Pray About It:

Through our prayers, we can worship God. Confess to Him how great He is in your life.

Day 2 We Exist to Encourage God's Family

Think About It:

Which is more fun, playing with friends or playing alone? Sitting at dinner by yourself or sitting with family? Going to the zoo with a group or going alone? While having quiet time alone can be nice at times, most people enjoy being with others. God has given us the church to fellowship with one another.

Read Hebrews 10:19-25

Think About It More:

God made us to live in relationships. We have our relationship to Him as well as our relationship with other believers. There are so many good things that come from being in this relationship with others.

- We all have a bond that comes from being baptized. We are identified with Jesus and with each other in life and death.
- We have a responsibility to help other believers live the way Jesus wants us to live. (James 5:19-20)
- We can encourage each other.
- We can take care of each other with our resources. (Acts 2:44-45)
- We all depend on each other. (Romans 12:4-5)
- We are one body. (John 17:21)

Pray About It:

Thank God for the church that you are a part of. Thank Him for giving us each other and bringing us all together.

Day 3 We Exist to Educate God's People

Think About It:

Have you ever been around a new baby? They are super cute, but they can't do anything for themselves. They can't feed themselves, they can't walk, and they can't talk. Someone must do everything for them. What if babies never grew up? What if Christians never grew up in their faith? They wouldn't know how to do important things that God calls us to do like read our Bibles, fellowship with other Christians at church, make disciples of those around us. Just like babies need to grow up, we need to grow up in our relationship with God.

Read Ephesians 4:11-15

Think About It More:

God gives us the church to help us grow and mature. God has a plan for His children to grow up:

- He gave us all gifts. Our gifts are different so they work together for His plan.
- He has equipped us to do the work He calls us to do.
- He calls us to be missionaries everywhere we go.
- We need to help the church and do what we can to support the members.
- We are to be united with other believers.
- If we do these things, we will have the fullness of Christ.

Pray About It:

Thank God for His plan to help us grow through the support of our church.

Day 4 We Exist to Demonstrate God's Love

Think About It:

Think about your church. What are some ways that people serve in your church? Is everything done within the church building, or do people serve in others places? It can be hard to know if you are serving in the ways God has planned for you.

Read Mark 10:35-45

Think About It More:

The purpose of God's church is service. He has saved us so that we can serve. Each one of us has been given gifts to help us serve, and He has called us to use these gifts to serve. The greatest people in God's Kingdom are those who serve. Ministry, or service, is something that every believer is called to do. God's plans are different for all of us, and we are called to serve in different ways. Who can we serve? We can serve God, fellow believers, people who are lost, and those that don't go to church.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will put you in the right place to serve.

Day 5 We Exist to Communicate God's Word

Think About It:

What is evangelism? Evangelism is spreading the truth of Christ through preaching or by telling people personally. Most of us aren't called to be preachers. There are lots more people who aren't preachers than those who are. That means, it's our job to tell people personally about Jesus and what He did for us to have eternal life.

Read Romans 10:1-17

Think About It More:

Everyone who is a Christian is on mission with God to reach and connect people to Him. These verses were written about the Jews who had rejected Jesus, but God had a solution to that. Believers, both Jew and non-Jew, should want to get the Word out. Faith in Jesus can only come when someone hears the Word of God, so it is our job to make sure we are telling them.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will open doors for you to tell others about Him. When those doors are open, pray that He gives you the words that He wants you to use.

Week 8 Our Essential Beliefs

Introduction to Week 8 Object Lesson & Video Clip

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Three in One

Matthew 28:19

Learning about apples is the perfect opportunity to teach children about the Trinity. An apple is still just one apple, even-though it is made up of different parts; God is one God composed of different parts.

What You'll Need

An apple

Knife

Cutting surface (plate, cutting board, etc.)

Prepare to Share with your Family:

If possible, read the children's book, A Picture of God, 3 in 1, to prepare for this lesson.

Or look at the video clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltw2J6k7E-M>
It compares the three parts of an apple to the three-in-one concept of God.

Share:

First, talk about the peel of the apple:

The peel is like God the Father, because He protects us.

Next, cut the apple in half. Examine the flesh of the apple, or what's inside:

The flesh is like God the Son, because Jesus is God made flesh.

Finally, cut the core with the seeds out of the apple:

The seeds are like the Holy Spirit because He helps us grow.

Here's how an apple is like the Trinity: The peel, the flesh, and the core are three parts to one apple. We have three parts to one God as well: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

A Picture of God 3 in 1 by Joanne Marxhausen

Day 1 God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit

Think About It:

Have you ever looked at clovers outside before? A clover is one plant, but it is a trinity of leaves...there are three of them. When we talk about God, He is also a trinity. There is God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. The trinity is a hard thing to understand; in fact, it's really impossible for a human mind to understand it completely.

Read Ephesians 4:4-6

Think About It More:

God is our creator. He made everything: us, the earth, the stars, the planets, and even time. He has always existed and will exist forever. He exists as three different people: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God the Father- He is all-powerful, knows everything, loves everyone, and is very wise. He rules over the universe and controls time and how things happen on earth.

God the Son, Jesus- He is equal with the Father. He came to earth as a baby and lived a life without sinning. He became a sacrifice for us on the cross. After 3 days, He arose which shows His power over death. He went back up to Heaven, and some day He will return to earth where everyone will worship Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

God the Holy Spirit- He guides men to the truth. The Holy Spirit helps man know when he has done something wrong, He comforts us when we are sad, and even gives us our spiritual gifts.

Pray About It:

Praise God for the trinity. Thank Him for making himself all we need Him to be, even though we can't really understand it.

Day 2 The Bible is God's Word

Think About It:

How do you learn new things? One way we can learn is by reading and studying about a topic. If we want to know about baseball, we can read books about baseball and study it. We can talk to people who know a lot about baseball. Then, we can put into action what we have learned.

Read 2 Timothy 3:13-17

Think About It More:

God gives us the Bible so that we can learn more about Him. We can learn what is right and not right, how to correct things we are doing wrong, and how to keep doing the things that are right. It's not enough to just read about what is right, we need to apply it to our lives. We need to obey it and let it control our lives to become men and women of God. The Word of God equips us to serve God and do the work that He has for us to do.

What Our Church Says About It:

The Bible is God's Word to us. It was written by men but inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is the number one place for us to look for Christian beliefs and how to live. Because it was inspired by God, we know that it is the truth and it has no error.

Pray About It:

Pray that God helps you set aside time daily to read and study His Word.

Day 3 Human Beings and Salvation

Think About It:

When God originally made humans, they were created in His image. His original plan was for us to live in a perfect relationship with Him. Then, man ruined this plan and brought sin into the world. Now Jesus is the only solution to the separation of God and man.

Read Romans 6:12-23

Think About It More:

Sin is in all people who are born of man. It is in us when we are born. The only person that is not true of is Jesus because He was born of the Holy Spirit not man. Now, we are either under the power of sin or under the power of God through Jesus Christ. The power of sin and its hold on us is removed with our salvation.

What Our Church Says About It:

Human beings are made in the image of God and we are the best part of all of God's creation. Sin is in all of us, and it separates us from God and causes many problems in life.

Salvation is God's free gift for everyone, but we have to accept it. We can never do enough good things to make up for the sin that separates us from God. Jesus is the only way anyone can be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from being the ruler of our lives and let Jesus have control, we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment a person receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Pray About It:

Pray and thank God for bringing salvation to human beings.

Day 4 Eternal Security

Think About It:

Have you ever heard the term "finish what you started"? This is something that humans may have a problem with, but God does it every time! He never leaves something unfinished.

Read Romans 8:32-39, John 10:27-29

Think About It More:

Salvation is the work of God, and it's something only He can do through His grace. We receive this gift through faith in Him. He saves us, and it will be impossible to be separated from His love. When Jesus died on the cross, all of our sins were in the future. They hadn't even happened yet, and He still was a sacrifice for them. Nothing we do can undo what He did.

What Our Church Believes About It:

God gives us eternal life through Jesus, so anyone who is truly a believer in Him can be sure that they have salvation for eternity. If you have really been saved, you can never lose your salvation. Salvation is there because of God's grace, not because of anything we can do.

How can I know I am really saved? *"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast."* (**Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV**) Your assurance of salvation is not by your works, because you can't earn your salvation. Your assurance of salvation is not by your feelings, because feelings come and go. It is the promise of God's Word. If God says it, that settles it, because God cannot lie. You can trust the promise of God's Word. You can rest in it.

Pray About It:

Thank God for dying on the cross for our sins. Thank Him for making that something that will last forever.

Day 5 What We Practice

Think About It:

Do you know that others are watching you? People around you are watching how you live, the decisions you make, how you treat people, and everything you do. We must be aware of this and make sure we are living the way that God wants us to. We must “practice what we preach.”

Read Ephesians 5:15-21

Think About It More:

All of us have a job to live in a way that brings glory to God. We need to share the Good News with people that God brings into our lives with our words and actions.

What Our Church Believes About It:

Bible as our soul authority. (2 Timothy 3:16) The Bible is our manual for living because it’s completely reliable and tells only the truth. When we have to make a decision, our first thought should be “What does the Bible say?” Daily, we should be reading, studying and memorizing the Bible. The Bible is the foundation for what we believe.

Autonomy of each local church. (Colossians 1:18) Christ is the head of the church, not a person or a group. It is important to associate with other groups of Christians, but each church is independent.

Priesthood of every believer. (Revelation 1:6, 1 Peter 2:9) The Bible teaches us that no matter what our job, all Christians are really in service. This is true for everyone, even kids! Everyone has a place where God wants them to be serving. All Christians have direct access to God through prayer and Bible reading.

Tithing. (Leviticus 27:30) The Bible calls us to give 10% of what we make.

Immersion. (Colossians 2:12) People are baptized by going under water. This is the way that Jesus was baptized, and the way the Bible commands.

Spirit-led living. (John 15:5) The only way that anyone can live the Christian life is with God’s power within us. We try to depend on God’s spirit to help us do what is right for everything.

Telling others about Christ. (1 Peter 3:15) It is the job of all Christians to tell everyone around us the Good News of Jesus and to invite them to church.

Pray About It:

Pray that God helps you to make the right decisions and be a good example to others around you.

Week 9 We Are About Connecting

Introduction to Week 9 Object Lesson

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

A Cross of Connected Hands

Once we become Christians, it is God's plan for us to be connected to His church and other believers. We need to remain connected to Jesus and grow in Him.

Luke 14:23

What You'll Need:

Family Members & others in your home

Prepare to Share:

Study this picture in order for your family members to make a cross. Try making a cross shape with only two family members and with all family members. Talk about how working together is more enjoyable and allows for more options. Challenge your children to be creative!



Share:

When we stay connected to the Body of Christ, we can accomplish much. Staying connected to Jesus offers comfort, support, help and joy.

Day 1 A Little History

Think About It:

Who are your parents? Your grandparents? Great-grandparents? Where are they from? Are there any important facts you know about your ancestors? It's important to know where you came from. Each of us has a different history and it has helped make you who you are.

Read Job 8:8-10

Think About It More:

History and heritage are important to use personally, but it's also important to see where our church came from.

What Our Church Believes About It:

Harp's Crossing started with a group of people from First Baptist Church in Fayetteville. They are called our mother church. The church began in 1981 and met in someone's home. At its first meeting, there were only 12 people who made a promise to be part of Harp's, and then at the first Sunday School time, there were only 43 people. A small chapel was rented to meet in, and our first pastor was called the next year, 1982. Harp's Crossing grew fast, and in 1984 moved to the place where we currently meet, although the building was much smaller. It was added to much more recently. The church adopted an unreached people group in 1995 to visit and to pray for. This is a short list of things that have happened to get our church to the point where it is now.

Pray About It:

Thank God for using Harp's Crossing to reach people in Fayette and surrounding counties and all around the world.

Day 2 Meet People Where They Are

Think About It:

Do you like to work alone or with a group on tasks? When we work with a group, we can share ideas. The task can be broken into parts, so it is completed quicker. Also, you can encourage one another when working in a group. God made us to work together as a group of believers to accomplish the task He has given us.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Think About It More:

Having a church is not one of the ultimate goals that we have as Christians, but when people become Christians, people come together to form churches. The Bible gives us a task, and it applies to all believers. This means we can join together and work on the given task. This is where church forms. As a church, then people can be connected to God, His Word, other believers, mission and ministry.

The task that we have been given is to share the truth about Jesus Christ with people. We need to go to people where they are to tell them this Good News. It is important to remember that we, as humans, cannot change anyone. We don't have the power to transform people. Only God has this power, and it is through His word, Spirit and discipleship that people can be changed.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will use you in His church to connect people to Him.

Day 3 The Fellowship of Connecting

Think About It:

God's plan for the church is that Christians would support each other, encourage one another, help, and push each other to love and do good deeds. How do you see that happening in our church?

Read Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 John 1:1-10

Think About It More:

When we see the word "fellowship," it means to share or be partners. It also means that we should talk to each other. As Christians, we do a lot of connecting because of this.

- We are to connect people to God through worship and salvation.
- We are to connect people to the body of Christ (church) through fellowship.
- We are to connect people to growing in faith through discipleship.
- We are to connect people to serving through ministry.
- We are to connect people to outreach.

The more people are connected to God through the Bible, church, and the work He has for us, the safer they are!

Pray About It:

Pray that God will connect you to Him through His church and keep you there even when you get older.

Day 4 Connected and Connecting

Think About It:

Have you seen the carabiners that are around the church? Carabiners connect things together. These serve as a reminder that we are to be connected to God and His church AND to be connecting others.

Read Luke 14:23

Think About It More:

God has connected us to Himself through salvation. It's important for us to be connected to God's church, mission, ministry, and discipleship, but we are also to be connecting others.

Pray About It:

It is important to make sure that you are connected. Talk about these questions with your family or pray about them.

- Am I connected to God through salvation through Jesus Christ?
- Am I connected to a body of believers by being a church member?
- Am I connected to God's Word so that I am growing and becoming a better disciple?
- Am I connected to a ministry in my church where God is using me?
- Am I actively involved in connecting others?

Day 5 Connecting: Making It Personal

Think About It:

Who do you go to when things aren't going your way? You may be hurt or sad. Do you go to friends, to your parents, brothers or sisters? These people can be a great comfort to us. There is someone who can provide for us even more...it's Jesus!

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Think About It More:

When we have troubles, we can always go to Jesus. He will always be there to comfort and provide for us. Even though these times may be hard, we can use them to connect others to Christ. When others hear of how Jesus was there to help us during bad times, they may reach out to Him in their times of troubles.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help you be strong when you are hurt or sad so that you can use your experiences to connect others to Him.

Week 10 The Body Organized for the Task

Introduction to Week 10 Object Lesson

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Keeping God First

Matthew 22:37

Kids have a lot to distract them from God. Video games, school, and home life are just a few of those common distractions. Actually, in some cases, kids have even more distractions than adults. God's gives us instruction about staying focused and keeping God first.

Jesus replied: *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'* **Matthew 22:37**

What You'll Need:

Three to four tennis balls or other bouncing balls which can be written on
Permanent marker

Prepare to Share with your Family:

Write "God" on one tennis ball with the permanent markers. Write other words that represent distractions on the other tennis balls. You can put more than one word on each tennis ball except the "God" ball. You should share this activity somewhere you can bounce the tennis balls easily, either off the floor or off a table.

Share:

Bounce the "God" tennis ball and ask someone to read the verse, Matthew 22:37. Say, "That verse says love God with all your heart and soul and mind. That takes some concentration, doesn't it? I guess it's pretty easy to keep focused on God, at least for a little while but what happens when other distractions show up? (Stop bouncing.) Let me explain what a distraction is—it is anything that takes your mind off God. For example, if I only play Mario Kart all day long and never talk to God or think about him, then I am distracted. Too distracted! (Start bouncing two balls, one God ball and one other one.) Let's say that I'm playing Mario Kart all day with my new friend. All I can think about is my new friend—and Mario Kart! (Add another ball and try to bounce all three.) Wow, that's hard to do! I hope that I can do this. (Try and fail a few times.) I guess that proves it. We have to stay focused on God. That doesn't mean you can't have fun. You can! But don't forget to love on God. He loves you!"

Taken from <http://ministry-to-children.com/keeping-god-first-object-lesson/>

Day 1 All Things Done Decently and in Order

Think About It:

What happens when a big group of your friends and other kids your age get together? Is it a calm organized time? Usually when a group of people get together it can be loud and a little crazy unless there are some guidelines in place or someone is in charge.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 26-40

Think About It More:

These verses talk about how important it is for the church to be organized. Without organization, a church could not function the way God wants it to. There are many parts to a church just like our bodies, and they must have a system in place to function. Teamwork is necessary for our church to be what God wants it to be.

Pray About It:

Pray that God helps you work with others in your church to keep your church functioning the way He wants it to.

Day 2 The Body is Many Members

Think About It:

Your body is made of so many different parts. Each part has an important job that only it can do. If one of your body parts stopped working, your body would know that something is wrong. The body of Christ has many parts that must work together also.

Read Romans 12:4-8

Think About It More:

Think about the church as a human body, after all, we do call it the Body of Christ. There are so many things that make your body work, just like in the church. There are many members that do not have the same gifts. These members must all work together to function as one body. With these many gifts, there are many ministries throughout the church. We must discover our gift and develop it. God gave us these gifts to use.

Pray About It:

Pray that you will discover the gift God has given you. Pray that He shows you how you can be used in the Body of Christ with the gifts you have.

Day 3 The Head and the Heart of the Church

Think About It:

We have talked about the Great Commission and the great commandment that Jesus spoke before He went back to Heaven. These are two of the most important Biblical truths to the church. Do you remember what these two things are? These verses will help remind you.

Read Colossians 1:18, Matthew 22:37-40, Matthew 28:19-20

Think About It More:

Jesus is the head of the church. Throughout the book of Colossians, the power of Christ is talked about. He is the source of the church, His Body, and He is the leader. He has been the leader of the church since the beginning of the church. Jesus still supplies the church with life through His Spirit. He gives us the gifts we have been talking about and then puts us in the body where we are needed. No human could ever have this job. The Great Commission and the Great Commandment are the heart of the church. These verses give us instructions for how we are to live and serve.

Pray About It:

Submit yourself to Christ as the head of the church, and ask Him to show you where you are to serve in His Body.

Day 4 Shepherding the Flock

Think About It:

God puts a pastor in churches. These people feed, lead, and care for the members of the body. Who is pastor at your church? What are some ways that your pastor feeds, leads, and cares for people?

Read 1 Peter 5:1-4

Think About It More:

God gave to the church some special offices, and one of these is the pastor. Pastors teach, guide, instruct, preach, and pattern the Word of God. The number one job of the ministers at our church is to equip the members for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). Our ministers support the people in church to discover their gifts and place for ministry.

Pray About It:

Thank God for the ministers at your church. Continue to pray for them on a daily basis.

Day 5 Ministries

Think About It:

Think about the people in your family. Talk about the different things that each of you are good at doing. Are they the same or different? Just like in your family, God has given the church body different gifts and abilities that He wants us to use to serve Him.

Read Exodus 35:30-36:2

Think About It More:

These verses talk about the different abilities of people in the Old Testament. These people, Bezalel and Oholiab, were given abilities to make and design things that would be used in the tabernacle (their church). People today also have gifts and abilities that they can use at church.

Pray About It:

Pray that God would show you where He wants you to use your gifts and abilities to serve Him at church.

Week 11 Organized for the Task

Introduction to Week 11 Video Clip

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Dominoes

Kids can be a part of reaching the whole world with the gospel. Use this object lesson on this video to demonstrate how one person can make an impact.

What You'll Need:

TV with Roku or Smart TV or Smart Tablet or Smart Phone with availability to connect to the internet

View and discuss this short video:

Dominions Object Lesson

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CFX5f_t6AE

Day 1 Sunday School

Think About It:

It's always good to have others around you to help out. Others may be able to do things that you're not; they may have good ideas to use, or they may be there to encourage you. You also contribute to groups you are involved in. Our Sunday School classes work like this. It's important to be a part of a class. Sunday School is how we can work together in small groups to carry out the mission and purpose God gives us.

Read Exodus 18:13-27

Think More About It:

What Our Church Believes About It:

- Sunday School at Harp's Crossing is the main tool for completing the church's mission of "Loving Jesus and leading others to love Him, too."

- Sunday School fulfills all 5 of the purposes of our church.
 1. Worship
 2. Fellowship
 3. Ministry
 4. Outreach
 5. Discipleship
- Sunday School at Harp's Crossing is by age. You will always be with people who are close to the same age that you are, from when you are little until when you are an adult. When you're with people your age, you have things in common with them that may not be there with different ages.
- Sunday School is a great place to bring new people in and to meet them where they are.
- Sunday School is for everyone, no matter what age or how long they've been Christians.

Pray About It:

Pray that you are part of a Sunday School that is growing and bringing others to a relationship with Christ.

Day 2 Organized for Ministry

Think About It:

Jesus cares about everyone. That means that as believers, we should also. As a church we should reach out to everyone, no matter how old they are, where they are from, or what they look like. It is important that all people come into a relationship with Jesus. He came to save all people—men, women, young, old.

Read Mark 10:13-16

Think More About It:

We see in these verses how important children are to Jesus. He became indignant when telling the disciples to let the children come to Him. That means He was upset that the children were being kept from Him. This shows us how important children are to Jesus and His ministry.

What Our Church Believes About It:

Because we want to minister to all people, there are lots of areas that people can be involved at Harp's Crossing:

- Preschool and Children's Ministry
- Student Ministry
- Men's Ministry

Women's Ministry
Music Ministry
What is your place? Where do you participate? Where are you serving?
Where are you leading?

Pray About It:

Pray that you find the best place that God has for you to be a part of and the ministry best suited where you can be serving.

Day 3 Organized for the Task Includes Business

Think About It:

There are things that are spiritual that we must do, and there are things that are not spiritual that we must do. Things that are not spiritual, like paying taxes, we must do because we are citizens of the United States. There are both spiritual things and non-spiritual things that must be done to fulfill the mission of the church.

Read Ephesians 2:19-22

Think More About It:

Jews and Gentiles are now on the same team. Everyone within the body of Christ has to work together to carry out the work of the church.

What Our Church Believes About It:

There are tasks within our church that many people help accomplish. There are lots of committees and teams of which people are a part. These committees deal with things like the budget, making sure everything going on within the church is legal, people who work at the church, the church building, and even the vans. There are teams of people that work on the lights and sound, that welcome people, make sure the building is secure, and even a team that decorates. There are tasks for everyone to do! It takes all of the people in a church to do what's best. God puts together people who have the right training, abilities, and expertise to know what needs to be done.

Pray About It:

Thank God for putting the right people together in our church. Pray for wisdom for the teams and committees in our church.

Day 4 Cooperating Together

Think About It:

Do you like to play with Legos? How much fun would it be if you only had one Lego? There's not a lot to do with only one, is there? Imagine if you were the only person working in church. Would you get a lot done? Just like Legos, a lot more fun can be had and work can be done when people all work together.

Read Romans 16

Think About It More:

No one person alone can fulfill the instructions that Jesus gave us to tell the whole world about Him and how to have eternal life. It takes the whole body of Christ to work together. In these verses, Paul was talking about several different people in different places working together. Our church has people in different places throughout the world that are telling people about Christ; they are missionaries. We are all people working together. Our gifts, abilities, and ministries are complementary.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help you work with others in church to do the task that He has given us.

Day 5 Cooperating Together to Reach the World

Think About It:

The people in our church fit together like a puzzle, but there are more groups involved than just the people in our church. God has arranged other organizations that we are a part of to help spread the Good News. These organizations help complete the puzzle that our church is a part of.

Read Acts 1:4-8, Psalm 67

Think More About It:

It is the responsibility of our church to spread the gospel to the whole world. As a child, you can begin to learn about mission opportunities by being a part of our mission organization for kids. This includes Mission Friends for 3 year olds – Kindergarten and Girls in Action and Royal Ambassadors for 1st – 6th graders

What Our Church Believes About Reaching the World:

Here are several of the organizations of which we are a part.

- Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program- We give part of the money that our church receives toward missions and ministries.
- International Mission Board- They partner with churches to help missionary teams throughout the world.
- North American Mission Board- Southern Baptist churches help with church planting, finding and training missionaries and helping churches impact their communities in North America.
- Georgia Baptist Mission Board- More than 3,500 churches in Georgia make disciples who share Christ with the lost.
- Southside Baptist Network- A local association of churches who are on mission together to help churches impact their communities.

Pray About It:

Thank God for giving us these organizations to be a part of to help spread the truth throughout the world. Please show me how I can be involved.

Week 12 My Place in Ministry

Introduction to Week 12 Family Activity

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Acts of Service Jar

1 Peter 4:10

The best way to teach your child to be service-oriented is for you to be actively seeking out ways to serve. Our children learn primarily by example and they will repeat what they see in us.

What You'll Need:

Small jar, one you can see through is best
Enough marbles, stones, beads, etc. to fill the jar

Preparing to Share with your Family:

Serving is intentional. Often it requires planning, especially with little kids. Serving others doesn't just mean going on an overseas mission trip or serving dinner in a soup kitchen. Not everyone is called to fix up a widow's home with your church group or pack boxes to feed starving children. Serving is also in the everyday. It's holding open a door for that lady with a stroller. It's making dinner for your friend who just had a baby. It's spending time with a lonely friend even when your schedule is packed. It's the giving of whatever you have in the moment to benefit someone else.

Share:

Create a service jar for your family. The concept is simple: your family members can fill the jar by doing acts of service for others. Once the jar is filled, your family can celebrate by doing something for yourselves (going out for frozen yogurt, or having a movie night with popcorn). To fill the jar, anyone in the family can share something they did for another and then place a marble inside. Use a point system: one marble for service to your family members; two marbles for service to anyone else. Serving others outside of your family requires more intentionality, so it gets more value in the service jar.

Talk about why it is important to serve others. This meaning is deeply rooted in Scripture. We serve others in love (Galatians 5:13) because Jesus was the ultimate servant, laying down His life as a ransom so that we could experience freedom from sin and eternal life (Mark 10:43b-45).

Ask your children to think of ways to serve. Brainstorm together a list of service projects around your home, for your family, in your church and in the community. Some ideas are listed below.

Taken from www.nonconsumed.com

Ideas for Young Children

- Make homeless blessing bags
- Color a picture to give to community helpers
- Make a thank you card for the church custodian
- Clean out their bookcase and donate books they have “outgrown” in good condition to the church or local library
- Help box canned goods for the local food bank
- Deliver flowers to the residents of a nursing home
- Dust (knick-knack free surfaces) for a busy or sick relative
- Pick up litter at a local park
- Make a silly video (with some help) to give to an elderly relative
- Help do the dishes

Ideas for Older Children

- Walk the neighborhood with a wagon to collect canned goods for a local food bank
- Collect coats and blankets to give to a local shelter
- Design and laminate bookmarks to leave in the local library
- Write a play with friends or siblings to perform at a nursing home
- Clean the yard of an elderly neighbor
- Push stray carts to the designated areas in a supercenter parking lot
- Sew teddy bears to donate to a local children’s hospital
- Write a letter to mail to military serving overseas
- Read books aloud to younger children at the local library
- Volunteer a few hours at a local pet shelter
- Collect personal items and baby necessities for a local women’s shelter
- Gather items to have a silent auction benefiting a local hospital
- Bake cookies to hand out at a local soup kitchen
- Hand out homeless blessing bags to an area shelter (with supervision)
- Go caroling at a local hospital or retirement community
- Volunteer at a local food bank to help put together food baskets
- Donate time to babysit for a couple that needs a date night
- Help a younger sibling clean their room
- Make ornaments for the Christmas tree at a nursing home

Taken from <http://www.meetpenny.com/2011/11/teaching-children-to-serve-others-30-project-ideas/>

Day 1 Settle, Serve, and Carry On

Think About It:

What do you do when something goes wrong in your life? Do you pout and try to run away from the problem, or do you face it head on? With God, we can always be sure that He has us in these situations for a reason.

Read Jeremiah 29:4-11

Think About It More:

When bad things happen, it can make us look forward to Heaven. But, God has us here for a purpose. He makes no mistakes. How can we handle these situations? We must accept what is going on and trust in God who loves us. We can't give in to hopes that aren't true, those that don't come from God. If we do, we would miss out on what God has planned for us. We must seek the Lord, pray, and ask Him to fulfill His promises for us. We must do more than simply exist; we must shine the light of God and live having a Godly influence on the world.

Pray About It:

When we go through bad times, pray that God will comfort you and bring these verses in Jeremiah to your mind.

Day 2 Keep Serving

Think About It:

There are many times in the Bible where people went through difficult times. When we are going through tough times, we can read these accounts and see the encouraging words that were given in their situations like the following verses in 1 Peter.

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

Think About It More:

These verses give us several things that we can do when we are going through these hard times. First, we need to remember that the time when Jesus is going to return is always closer than it was the day before. Second, we need to keep our minds clear and be in prayer. Third, we must show love to each other and try to get along instead of arguing. Finally, through these times, it is important that we continue to use the gifts that God has given us. We should never stop serving! Everything we do, even in hard times, should bring glory to God.

Pray About It:

Thank God for the gifts and abilities He has given you. Pray that even during hard times, you continue to use these gifts.

Day 3 Time Together

Think About It:

Did you know the words “love”, “one”, and “another” appear together in 21 verses in the New Testament? That tells us that it’s important. When we love each other as Christians, the rest of the world will be able to see a difference in us.

Read Acts 2:42-47, John 13:35

Think About It More:

The church that the verses in Acts talk about is a new church. The people there ate, studied, fellowshiped, and prayed together every day. They showed their love for one another by spending time together. They were not as concerned with making a plan of how to reach the lost. They were focused on creating an environment of love. By showing love to one another, they were reaching the lost through their actions. The better the time is that we spend together, the better the time will be when we go out and try to reach others.

Pray About It:

Ask God to help you enjoy going to church and not just go because someone makes you go.

Act On It:

Will you make a commitment to gather with other believers and participate with each other so we will be the most effective we can be? We must all be together to create a place of love.

Day 4 Glorify God in All Things

Think About It:

No matter what we do, we need to remember that others may be watching what we’re doing. People who are not believers could be keeping an eye on your behavior and the choices you make. Your actions should ensure you are not leading people away from Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1

Think About It More:

Paul tells us in verse 31 to do all that we do for the glory of God. This can be hard. These verses also tell us to imitate Jesus if we're not sure on how to do this. Here are some verses on Jesus' actions.

- He came to save sinners-Evangelism (1 Timothy 1:15)
- He came to create fellowship with believers- Fellowship (Matthew 26: 17-30)
- He came to teach us God's way to live- Discipleship (Luke 11:1)
- He came to lead us to worship God- Worship (John 4: 23-24)
- He came to serve others- Ministry (Matthew 20:28)

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help you learn these verses to help you live like Jesus and be a good example.

Day 5 Finding Your Place in Ministry

Think About It:

Every Christian received a gift from the Holy Spirit at the time you were saved. This gift is just for you and your ministry in and through the church. If you are an active part of a church, you should know your gift, and we will begin learning about those gifts soon.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:1

Think About It More:

In churches, including Harp's Crossing, only a few church members do most of the ministry work that is done. We need to work on that! If you are a believer, there are some things that should be true of you in your church. You should be a member of your church. You should always be maturing as a believer. This means that you are studying God's Word and growing in it. You should be finding your place in ministry. Most importantly, you should be on mission with God.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will show you your place in ministry and that you will begin to serve Him there.

Week 13 Church Membership and Me

Introduction to Week 13 Activity

This activity can be done during the days of this week when devotions are not available or as a part of the Day 1 devotion for this week.

Friendship Collage - Unity with God and others

John 17:20-26

God loves you immensely! Jesus prayed for us to be one with God. When we trust in the security of God's love, and reach out to others, even those who are not like us, we see something wonderful. God loves all of us even though we are all different and He desires for us to live in unity.

What You'll Need

Large sheet of paper

Glue

Scissors

Variety of pictures of people (photos, magazines, catalogs, etc.)

Prepare to Share with your Family:

We are all different but can know that everyone is the same on the inside, just as God created each one. When we learn to accept others as they are, and find beauty in diversity, we are going to get along better with others.

Share:

Make a collage using pictures of people from varied cultures and of varied ages. As your child looks for pictures of people to put on the collage, use this time to explain diversity. God made us all different, but to Him, we are all the same. Eyes, noses, skin color, even clothes make people unique. Your family and friends also come in different ages. Talk to your child about being friendly to everyone, whether young or old, no matter the color of their skin or how they dress. Explain how all people have friends regardless of what age they are or how they look. Give examples of various friends using people your child knows. It may be a natural time to discuss the various countries your friends or persons in your community come from. Explain that even though we look different on the outside, we are all the same to God. He loves us equally.

Day 1 Why Membership?

Think About It:

We have looked at these verses before, but this time, we're going to look at them a little more closely.

Read Romans 12:3-5, 1 Corinthians 12:18

Think About It More:

Romans 12:5 tells us that the church is the body of Christ. We are all in a very special relationship with each other working together to make the body function. There is a bond within a local body of believers (the church). We need to develop that bond by working closely together. In 1 Corinthians, we see that God placed us in the body of Christ. We often say that we decided to follow Christ, but really we came to a point of confession of Jesus as our Lord and Savior. To confess means to agree with what God said. He has placed us in the church just where He wants us to be. When we join a church, we are agreeing with Him that it's where He wants us to be.

Pray About It:

If you have confessed that Jesus is your Savior, you also need to confess, or agree with God, about your part in His church.

Day 2 I Will Be a Unifying Member

Think About It:

We usually call the model prayer in Matthew 6 the Lord's Prayer, but it is not truly the Lord's Prayer. It is the model prayer, an example of how we should pray. The prayer that Jesus prays in the following verses is the Lord's Prayer.

Read John 17:20-26

Think About It More:

Jesus prays "*That they may be one as we are,*" several times in these verses. The unity within a body of believers is an important thing.

What Our Church Believes About It

I will protect the unity of my church

- By acting in love towards other members
- By refusing to gossip
- By following the leaders

Pray About It:

Pray that God will help us to get along as a church and work together to carry out His mission for us.

Day 3 I Will Be a Responsible and Accountable Member

Think About It:

One thing we all need is accountability. Accountability is a willingness to accept responsibility for one another's actions. We need to be accountable to others as well as hold others accountable.

Read Colossians 3:12-17

Think About It More:

How should we, as believers, act towards one another? We should put on "tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, bearing with one another, forgiving one another, and put on love." Peace should be what rules our hearts.

When we are church members, it's not about my life, my wants, or my needs. It's about the need to seek to benefit others through God's blessings. We are responsible to care for other members and care about their health. We are accountable to each other for our lives, ministry, and behavior.

More practically, we need to be at church. I need to check on others if they are not there, and they need to check on me if I'm not. We need to be accountable to serve in church as well as to give.

Pray About It:

Pray that God will show you how important it is to be accountable and to live responsibly.

Day 4 I Will Develop the Mind of Christ

Think About It:

God has placed us in a world of miracles! The body of Christ is a miracle. Salvation itself is a miracle. Because of this, the fact that we are part of the body of Christ is a miracle. For us, to function properly as a member of the body of Christ, we must develop the mindset of Christ.

Read Philippians 2:5-11

Think About It More:

A huge miracle is given in these verses. *“Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”* What a miracle! Of course, we cannot have this mindset alone, we need the Holy Spirit. We can follow the guide of Christ and seek to have the Holy Spirit work in us.

Have you ever prayed to have the Holy Spirit help you on a test? Did you study for the test before hand? If you didn’t study, the Holy Spirit has nothing to work with. We must develop the gift of the Spirit in us.

In these verses, Paul also wants us to understand more about Jesus, so we can try to grow His mindset.

- Jesus left His heavenly position and who He was behind.
- Jesus took on the form of a bondservant (a slave).
- Jesus was no longer in the form of God but in the form of man.
- Jesus humbled Himself.
- Jesus was obedient to the point of death on the cross.

Pray About It:

Pray that the Holy Spirit grows the mindset of Christ in you.

Day 5 I Will Be a Functioning Member

Think About It:

What would you say if you got a call on Saturday night that you would be leading music the next morning for church? What if the call said you were preaching? Doing sign language to one of the songs the choir would be singing? Teaching kindergarten? There are so many different places to serve at church. It is important to know where God has placed you.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-17, Romans 12:4

Think About It More:

There are many parts to the body of Christ. With many parts, there are many functions. Each of us needs to know our place which He put us here for according to our gift. Just like the verses ask, what would happen if we were all the eye, where would hearing be? What if all of us were leading music? Who would deliver the message? We need to remember that all members do not have the same function (Romans 12:4), but it is important for us all to cooperate.

Pray About It:

Pray that God would show you your place in His ministry according to the gift He gave you. Ask Him if you are a functioning member. If not, pray that He shows you how to become one.

Now that we have sought to connect to God through His church we will move on to another topic. The second topic is called "I Am Connecting to God Through Spiritual Habits." In this time of preaching and devotional focus we will look at spiritual habits to be put into place in order for Jesus followers to always be growing. Chad Poe, a recent speaker at the student Ski Bible event, talked about being full of the light of Jesus. He used the illustration of those little stars that we put on the ceilings of kid's rooms. They absorb the light when it is on and when the lights are turned off they continue to shine with the light they absorbed. After a little while they cease to shine. What a great picture. As Jesus followers we have no light of our own but as we abide with Jesus regularly we absorb His light. His light is in us and that is the light that shines. We need spiritual habits so that we will always be absorbing His light and His light will continue to shine through us.

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