

Lent Family Devotion Guide



Family Bible Studies Compiled from *The Bible Project*
<http://www.bibleproject.com>

Dear Good Samaritan Families,

We are so excited to go through this Lent journey together! Over the next seven weeks, we'd like to invite you to spend some time together in Scripture and discussing what you have read as a family. Our goal is to help your family see how God's faithfulness, love, grace, and redemption is woven throughout Scripture. These videos will give your family an overview of different topics, themes, and passages in Scripture.

We pray this devotion will be a blessing to your family as you focus your hearts and minds during this time.

In Him,
Tyler and Lauren

Devotion Guide Instructions

First- think through how you would like to break down your family devotion time. Each day consists of a 5-minute long video and two to three Scripture reading with some discussion questions. *(There is a message included before the video. You may listen to it if you would like, but we are focusing on watching the videos for these devotions.)*

- **Three days per week:** You can watch the video one day and discuss that, then do a Scripture passage and discussion questions for the next couple of days.
- **Two days per week:** You can watch the video and do one of the Scripture passages and questions one day and then do the other passage and questions another day.

Each week can have a different schedule too. This is designed to go with the flow of your family schedules, so please do not stress.

Second- parents should try to read through the questions before sitting down with their kids. These questions were written by the *Bible Project* team, so they may be a little more complex or advanced for some of the younger elementary aged kids. We want this time to be a good opportunity for you to sit down and discuss Scripture and the Gospel with your family.

Third- make sure you set aside time that won't be interrupted with distractions. Whether it's around the dinner table or sitting on the couch in the living room, we want families to be comfortable and able to focus.

Finally- if you think it would benefit your kids, there is an optional video at the beginning of this guide to help with understanding the Bible. It provides an overview of the story of the Bible and why it is important to the Christian faith. There are also questions to go along with this video, if you think it'll be helpful. We hope you enjoy your time together as you spend time in God's Word.

Optional Video: **Introduction to the Bible**

The overall story of the Bible is a series of crossroad decisions. All humanity, followed by the Israelites, redefine good and evil on their own terms. How does this story lead to Jesus and what does it mean for all humanity?

Video: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-story-of-the-bible/>

Week One: **The Character of God**

Summary

In this week's Bible Study, we're looking at the character of God as revealed to Moses in Exodus chapter 34. We see in this passage that though God is first and foremost a loving and merciful God, he will not ignore injustice or evil. We see in the story of the Bible that God is willing to put up with a lot of human failures.

But our choices matter, and God will maintain a balance between mercy and justice, which at times means handing us over to the consequences of our decisions. As followers of Jesus, we may be wondering what God is going to do in the world in response to this time of deep unrest and upheaval. But the better question may be to ask ourselves, what are we going to do to carry out God's will in the world?

Watch the video

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/week15-character-of-god/>

Scripture Reading: Exodus 33: 1 – 34:9

In this story the Israelites have just violated their covenant with God by making the golden calf idol. God is angry and ready to walk away from his commitment to Israel, but Moses pleads with God to fulfill his ancient promises to Abraham and forgive the people's sins. This is the context of Moses' request to see God's face, so he can know God's character in intimate detail. And God reveals his mercy but also his commitment to justice in response to human evil. This story, and the words in Exodus 34:6-7, explore the tension between

God's mercy and judgment. This is the dilemma that drives the biblical story forward. How is God going to bring about his plan to renew creation if he's committed to doing it through flawed and faithless humans?

1. **Read Exodus 34:6-7.** What do you think it would be like to live in a world that had compassion but no consequences for wrongdoing?
2. What do you think it would be like to live in a world that had consequences for wrongdoing but no compassion?
3. Why is it good to have both mercy and justice?

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 3:7-18

After Moses encountered God's glory, he came down from Mount Sinai with a glowing face. We're told that his transformation freaked the Israelites out, so he wore a veil to conceal himself. As we continue the story of the Bible, we learn that the new covenant comes with even greater glory because of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This greater glory liberates Jesus' followers to see and reflect his glowing character from the inside out, no veil needed. By his Spirit our hearts learn to mirror the mercy and justice we were created to image. His presence and character transforms us into new creatures who are empowered to represent and live out his new creation plan.

1. **Read 2 Corinthians 3:7-18.** What stands out to you in this passage?
2. In what ways has God shown you his mercy? What would it look like for you to mirror the mercy that God has shown you?
3. In what ways does God stand up for justice? What would it look like for you to stand up for justice this week?

Week Two: **Rescued for a Purpose**

Summary

Humanity rebels against God throughout the story of the Bible, but does God continue rescuing them just to get them out of trouble, or is there something larger going on? In this week's study, we'll explore this question and look at God's larger mission in the biblical story. Watch the video, open your Bible, and interact with the questions below.

Watch the Video

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/rescued-for-a-purpose/>

Video Discussion Question:

1. What image stood out to you in the video and why?

Scripture Reading: Exodus 19:1-6

God rescued Israel from slavery for a specific purpose. He wanted to transform them into a kingdom of priests who would represent his presence and character to all nations around them. God rescues us for the same purpose. As we rely on Jesus and live by his Spirit of wisdom, justice, and love, we become reflections of who he is to the world around us.

Feel free to reflect on all the questions or simply a few right now. You can also reflect throughout the week by focusing on one question per day.

1. As you review today's passage, pay attention to the details. What is something that stood out to you as you read?
2. Notice the figure of speech God uses in Exodus 19:4. This is the first time "eagles' wings" are mentioned in the Bible, but it won't be the last. Consider some of the ways later biblical authors hyperlink to this Exodus passage to describe God's rescuing love for his people. Compare today's passage with **Deuteronomy 32:10-12**, **Isaiah 40:29-31**, and **Revelation 12:13-14**. What do you notice?
3. God rescued Israel for a purpose. Study Exodus 19:4-6 and take note of the specific ways God describes the identity he wants his people to receive. According to this passage, what does God want his people to be? How are they to receive this identity?
4. Centuries later, the apostle Peter references these verses in Exodus. Read **1 Peter 2:4-9** and take note of the relationship between trust and obedience. What do you notice?

5. When God's people trust and obey God's wise, just, and loving commands, how do they impact the communities around them? What happens to these communities when God's people neglect to trust and obey him? Consider specific examples from the Bible as well as your own experiences.
6. Let's invite God's Spirit of wisdom to empower us to trust, obey, and reflect his character. Ask God how he wants to show his wisdom, justice, and love through you today. Listen for what he may bring to your mind.
7. Turn your reflections into a prayer. Admire God for his rescuing love and agree with his plan to show his love to many through you. Ask for his help to trust and obey him, admit where you have doubted and disobeyed, and thank him for a fresh start today.

Week Three: **Covenants**

Summary

The God of the Bible is committed to working out his good plans through covenant human partners. Humans continually mess up their end of the covenant, but God remains devoted to his decision to partner with humanity. In this week's Bible study, we are reflecting on God's surprising plan to make up for humanity's role in the covenant and how we can now live as renewed partners with him. To participate, listen to the recording, watch the video, and follow the Bible readings and discussion questions below.

Discussion Question BEFORE watching the video:

1. Before watching the video, how would you describe the biblical meaning of a covenant? Jot down your description.

Watch the Video:

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/covenants/>

Video Discussion Question:

1. After watching the video, how did your understanding of covenants expand or change?

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34 & Luke 22:14-23

God is able to do his work in the world independent of humans, but he doesn't. He is committed to working out his divine will through human covenant partnership, even when humans continually fail to uphold their end of the agreement. In Jesus, God becomes human to create a new humanity who is empowered to live in Jesus' new covenant as partners with God.

1. Reflect on the passages above. How does God describe his new covenant plan? Why and how will he make this new covenant? How is it different from the old covenant?
2. Consider God's relentless commitment to partner with humanity despite its violent and foolish history. What do you think this tells us about God's character?
3. Reflect on the sufferings of Jesus and how God himself was willing to absorb humanity's violence and foolishness to reverse the past and start anew. What questions, thoughts, or feelings come up for you as you reflect on this?

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

In Jesus' death and resurrection, we see that true covenant faithfulness looks like self-giving love. When we receive, trust, and imitate the love of Jesus, we begin to live as the humans God created us to be. We can once again glimpse the beauty God had in mind when he first created and partnered with humanity.

1. **Review 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.** According to this passage, what does it look like to partner with God in his new humanity?
2. Who is one person that is difficult to love in your life? How can you partner with God to forgive, love, and honor them this week?
3. Identify a challenge in your family, neighborhood, or workplace where self-giving love could make all the difference. Take a moment and ask God to give you wisdom about how you can be a faithful covenant partner with him in that scenario this week.

Week Four: **Hope**

Summary

In this week's Bible Study, we are reflecting on hope. Biblical hope is different from optimism, enduring even in the most difficult of circumstances. While optimism is based on the belief that things will work out for the best, biblical hope is based on God's unchanging character and promises. Watch the video and interact with the following discussion questions to learn more.

Watch the Video:

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/hope/>

Video Discussion Question:

1. How did the video help you better understand the meaning of biblical hope?

Scripture Reading: Psalm 62

In Psalm 62, David is surrounded by murderous enemies. Though he had little reason to cling to hope, David still was able to say, "My hope comes from God." David, like many other people in the Bible, faced difficult times with no evidence that things would get better, but they chose hope anyway.

1. What problem was David up against, and how did he respond? What problems are you facing today? How will you respond?
2. Notice how David repeated the word "only." What do you think the significance of that is? What other things do people tend to put their hope in besides God (see 62:9-10)?
3. **Review verse 11-12.** What do you think would change in your life if you believed this without any doubts? How do the truths in verses 11-12 help you put your hope in God?
4. **Review verse 8.** Take some time now to pour out your heart before God. Tell him everything that's weighing you down and trust him with every detail. He hears you.

Week Five: **The Gospel of the Kingdom**

Summary

In this week's Bible Study, we explore the origin of Palm Sunday and the message it carries for us today.

Palm Sunday is a day when we commemorate Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem that kick-starts the series of events leading to his death and resurrection. Jesus' unjust trial and execution seemed like a tragedy to his friends and family, yet for Jesus, his death was an expression of God's love as he entered into our suffering so that he could overcome it. In the story of Jesus, we are invited to see that even the most unwelcome and tragic events cannot thwart God's plan to restore our world.

Watch the Video:

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/week3-gospel-of-the-kingdom/>

Scripture Reading: Luke 19:28-48

The people expected Jesus to bring peace and rule as king in a way that they could understand. Jesus grieved over this because he knew they would suffer and he longed for them to see him as the true King through his suffering. Like Jesus, it's okay to grieve over shattered expectations and suffering.

1. Take a moment and express any grief you're feeling over suffering or shattered expectations.
2. Jesus is the King despite the way the world looks right now. What questions does that bring up for you? What truths can you rely on at this time?

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 52: 7- 53:12

This passage proclaims that God himself is coming to rescue his people. This is good news, but it will happen in a surprising way. God's appointed one, the Messiah, will enter into the suffering and death of our world. There's a lot of suffering and pain going on in our world right now, but God enters into our suffering. He experiences it personally and is present with us and all those who suffer.

1. Write down or speak out loud where you see suffering and pain in the world and your community right now.

2. Now pray or speak out loud these same instances again, taking in the truth that God is present in those situations and suffers with us.

Scripture Reading: John 12:12-33

Jesus' suffering was the way God's power and love was shown to the world. The cross shows us that God's ultimate response to human death and suffering was love, to die alongside us and for us, and to overcome death with his resurrection life. This is Jesus' upside-down Kingdom.

1. What is Jesus doing for others in this passage?
2. Jesus calls his followers to do what he does. In what ways specifically can you suffer alongside others or serve and love others?

Week Six: **Good Friday**

Summary

In this week's Bible Study, we remember Good Friday and reflect on the significance of this day at a time of great hardship.

Good Friday marks a time for followers of Jesus to reflect on his sacrificial death. For over two thousand years, Christians have annually retold the story of Jesus' final Passover meal with his friends, his arrest and execution, and his resurrection from the dead. It's a story bursting with good news about the love of God that can give us courage in times of uncertainty and hope in the face of death.

Watch the Video:

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/good-friday/>

Scripture Reading: Luke 22

Jesus courageously entered into suffering and death, trusting that God's purpose would be fulfilled through his self-giving love. The deep faith of Jesus, as well as the failure of his closest friends, offers us a mirror for self-reflection as we face our own time of testing and crisis.

1. How is this time of hardship revealing the things you believe and value, both positive and negative?
2. What would it look like to trust God's self-giving love in this time of crisis?

Scripture Reading: Luke 23

1. Jesus is executed by religious and political leaders who treat him as a pawn in the power games of their institutions. What do you notice about Jesus' words and actions during this intense scene?
2. Jesus treats every person he meets with respect, offering kindness and comfort to others even as he is being executed. Where are the places around you where you sense injustice and selfishness? How can you extend mercy to those places, whether in your own heart, thoughts, or actions?

Week Seven: **Easter Sunday**

Summary

In this week's Bible Study, we reflect on the celebration of Easter and the new life it promises for followers of Jesus.

Today, followers of Jesus all over the world are celebrating Easter. While many of us are used to going to church on Resurrection Sunday with masses of other believers, we may find ourselves instead confined at home this year. This should not deter us from celebrating the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Two thousand years ago, Jesus claimed victory over sin and death by rising from the dead. He is our everlasting hope. Even in the midst of trials and trouble, Jesus teaches us to hold on tightly to his victory and celebrate together. As you go into Easter Sunday, know that there are millions of followers of Jesus celebrating his resurrected life today in unison.

Watch the Video:

<https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/easter-sunday/>

Scripture Reading: Luke 24

For Jesus' family and friends, the empty tomb and the risen Jesus himself were a shocking surprise. Despite Jesus preparing them for his death and resurrection, they simply couldn't imagine how Jesus' death fit into God's purpose. Luke's resurrection account shows how the only way to embrace the risen Jesus is to let go of our normal ways of viewing the world. Only then can we open ourselves to the surprising power of God's love for our world.

1. What do you think people expected Jesus to do or be like? How did he surprise them?
2. What are some of the assumptions you hold about life, God, or your future that could be keeping you from seeing what Jesus might be up to in your life?