



FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE
FALL 2019

What is a Family Discipleship Guide?

In addition to all the responsibilities of raising children, God has commanded parents to continue growing in their faith and to intentionally pass it on to the next generation.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 says:

⁴ *“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

⁶ *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*

⁷ *You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

⁸ *You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

In this passage, God gave the Israelites, and us, a model for family discipleship that uses the rhythm of life to pass faith on to our children. The Family Discipleship Guide is a resource from Fellowship Kids designed to help parents leverage everyday moments to spark Gospel-centered conversations with kids of any age.

How do I use the Family Discipleship Guide?

Each page of the guide is one week’s worth of discipleship content for the whole family. The weekly page follows the lesson taught on Sunday morning in Fellowship Kids and contains: Scripture passage for family reading, a devotional, additional discussion questions, and a family activity.

You may choose to spread the content out over the week or use the entire page for a special family devotional one night a week.

For each unit, the guide also provides a Scripture verse and Big Picture Question for the family to review and memorize. Some Scriptures throughout the guide are divided to make it easier for preschoolers or younger children to memorize. Those shorter versions will be highlighted in bold print for you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Unit 13: Elijah & Elisha

Week 1:	Elijah and the Widow	September 8.....	2
Week 2:	Elijah and Mount Carme	September 15.....	3
Week 3:	Elijah and Elisha	September 22	4
Week 4:	Elisha and the Army	September 29	5

Unit 14: The Northern Kingdom of Israel

Week 5:	Jonah, Prophet to Nineveh	October 6	7
Week 6:	Hosea, Prophet to Israel	October 13	8
Week 7:	Israel Taken Captive	October 20	9

Unit 15: The Southern Kingdom of Judah

Week 8:	Isaiah, Prophet to Judah	October 27	11
Week 9:	Hezekiah and Josiah	November 3	12
Week 10:	Jeremiah, Prophet to Judah	November 10.....	13
Week 11:	Habakkuk the Prophet	November 17	14
Week 12:	Judah Taken Captive	November 24.....	15
	Thanksgiving Family Activities	November 28.....	16
Week 13:	Ezekiel Gave Hope	December 1.....	17

Unit 13

ELIJAH & ELISHA

Key Passage

I am the Lord. That is my name,
and ***I will not give my glory to another***
or my praise to idols.

Isaiah 42:8

Big Picture Question

How many gods are there?

Answer:

There is one true God who alone
deserves worship.

Unit 13 Description

*Israel and Judah, governed
predominantly by evil kings, continued
to disobey God. God sent prophets like
Elijah and Elisha to reveal His power,
love, and faithfulness to His people.
God reminded them of His plan to send
a Rescuer, Jesus, to take away their sin.*

Week One

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW

GOD TOOK CARE OF THE WIDOW AND HER SON.

Family Devotional

Reading: 1 Kings 17:8-24

After King Solomon died, the tribes of Israel split into two kingdoms—the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam was the king of Israel, and Solomon's son Rehoboam was the king of Judah. These two kingdoms were frequently at war with each other and had mostly evil kings for decades. Ahab was the king of Israel when the prophet Elijah came to him.

The name Elijah means "My God is Yahweh." We don't know anything about Elijah's background or family, but God chose Elijah (and later the prophet Elisha) to warn the Israelites of their future destruction. For years, God sent prophets to warn His people about the consequences their sin would bring. He wanted them to turn back to Him, but they would not listen.

Because He was so angry with Israel God caused a drought, and it didn't rain for a long, long time. There was little or no food, and life was hard. During this drought God told Elijah to visit a widow. God promised that the widow would provide for him. She did not have much food, only a little oil and flour. Elijah promised her that she would not run out of flour or oil until it rained again, and God kept that promise! God provided food for the widow and her son. Elijah stayed with the widow for two years.

At one point the widow's son got really sick and died. With God's help Elijah raised the widow's son from the dead! Elijah asked God to bring the boy back to life, and God did. The woman believed that Elijah was a man of God and that his words from God were true.

God miraculously provided through Elijah to give food to the widow and life to the widow's son. Many years later, God miraculously provided through His own Son, Jesus. Jesus is greater than Elijah. In Jesus, God provides salvation and life to everyone who trusts in Him.

Family Activity

Find a recipe for bread. Take time to make it as a family. Let your kids help measure out the ingredients, knead the dough, and cut some slices. Make the bread a focal point at dinner that night, discuss the Bible story, and share ways that God has been faithful in providing for your family.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the widow not run out of oil and flour?
2. What are some ways God has provided for us?
3. Do you trust God to provide for your needs? Why or why not?
4. What ways do you need God to provide now?
5. How can we thank God for His provision?

KEY PASSAGE

I am the Lord. That is my name, and I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.
Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How many gods are there?

Answer:

There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

Week Two

ELIJAH AT MOUNT CARMEL

GOD SHOWED THAT HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD.

Family Devotional

Reading: 1 Kings 18:20-39

King Ahab was an evil king. In fact, “Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him” (1 Kings 16:33). God wanted His people to be faithful to Him, but King Ahab led them away from God. God chose Elijah to get Ahab’s attention. Elijah told Ahab that a drought was coming. God prevented rain in the land for three years. For Ahab, a man who worshiped Baal—the false Canaanite god of rain and fertility—the drought sent a strong message about the one true God. When God was ready to send rain on the earth, Elijah appeared to Ahab and instructed him to gather the Israelites and the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. Elijah challenged the people to choose: Follow God or follow Baal. They couldn’t do both. Elijah set up a challenge to prove who is the one true God. He faced off against the prophets of Baal. They prepared an altar and called on their deity to send fire from heaven. The prophets of Baal danced, cried, and called on Baal for hours, but Baal did not answer.

Elijah poured water all over his altar. He called to God, and God sent fire down from heaven. Everything was burned up! The Israelites could not deny that the God of Elijah is the one true God. Finally, God sent a great rain to end the drought. King Ahab’s wife, Jezebel, heard about what happened at Elijah’s challenge and was so angry that she wanted to kill him. Elijah fled into the wilderness, all the way to Mount Horeb. There, he met with God, and God revealed Himself to Elijah in a soft whisper. God gave Elijah a friend and successor in Elisha and assured him of 7,000 people in Israel who had not turned to Baal. The people who worshiped the false god Baal danced and cried out for hours to show that they loved Baal. But the one true God is not like the false gods. We do not have to work hard to show God we love Him. Instead, He showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and He hears us when we cry out to Him.

Family Activity

Find a suitable area to make a fire. The first time you go to make the fire, douse the wood with water before you try to light it. When it won’t light talk about how miraculous it was that God was able to light the altar on fire even though it was soaking wet. Make another fire (don’t soak the wood this time!), and spend some time roasting marshmallows and talking about ways God has shown up in miraculous ways in your lives.

Discussion Questions

1. How did God prove He was the one true God?
2. Do you believe the Lord is the one true God? Why?
3. What are some ways we can worship God as a family?
4. How can you show God’s love to others?

KEY PASSAGE

***I am the Lord.** That is my name, and I will **not give my glory to another** or my praise to idols.
Isaiah 42:8*

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How many gods are there?

Answer:

***There is one true God** who alone deserves worship.*

Week Three

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

GOD CHOSE ELISHA TO BE HIS PROPHET AFTER ELIJAH.

Family Devotional

Reading: 2 Kings 2:1, 7-14

When God spoke to Elijah on Mount Horeb He instructed Elijah to anoint a man named Elisha as his successor. Elijah found Elisha plowing a field. Elijah put his cloak over Elisha to show that Elisha would be a prophet like Elijah. Elisha followed Elijah and served him for many years.

When Elijah's ministry came to an end, and God took him to heaven in an unusual way. First, Elijah and Elisha traveled from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho and then to the Jordan River. Elijah met with other prophets and their families. Despite Elijah's insistence otherwise, Elisha did not leave Elijah's side.

A group of prophets watched as Elijah parted the Jordan River by striking the water with his mantle (cloak) so he could cross. In Elijah's final moments, Elisha requested, "Please, let me inherit two shares of your spirit" (2 Kings 2:9). Elisha wanted power to continue God's work and confirmation as Israel's next prophet.

A chariot of fire and horses of fire suddenly appeared and separated the men. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind surrounded by chariots of fire, and Elisha cried out after him. When Elijah was out of view, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and struck the water of the Jordan River. The water parted—a sign that Elisha had received power from God. Elisha would continue the work of Elijah as a prophet to Israel.

God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could carry out his mission as a prophet. Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the gospel with the world.

Family Activity

Sit down as a family and talk over the Bible story. Explain to your kids that Elisha needed God's spirit to help him to the work God called him to do. Take some time and write a short list of ways your family can share God's love this week; invite some neighbors to church, make a sick friend a meal, invite the new neighbors on the street to play, share the Gospel with a friend at school, etc. Pray together and ask God to help you live these things out with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Elisha want the same spirit as Elijah?
2. Why was it important that Elisha parted the water?
3. How can we have access to the power of God's spirit?
4. Whose faith has encouraged you? Why?
5. Can we obey God by our own power? Why or why not?

KEY PASSAGE

I am the Lord. That is my name, and I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.
Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How many gods are there?

Answer:

There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

Week Four

ELISHA AND THE ARMY

GOD PROTECTED HIS PEOPLE.

Family Devotional

Reading: 2 Kings 6:8-23

Aram was an enemy of Israel and waged war against the people. Each time the king of Aram made plans to attack Israel, God told Elisha what he was planning. Elijah alerted Israel's king so Israel could defeat their enemy's plans. When Aram's king discovered Elisha was to blame, he was determined to kill him and sent an army to surround the place where Elisha was hiding.

Elisha's servant saw the enemy army and was afraid, but Elisha could see something the servant couldn't see. Elisha asked God to open his servant's eyes, and he saw an army of the Lord outnumbering the Arameans covered the mountain, ready to protect Elisha.

Elisha prayed that the Arameans would be blinded, and God blinded them. Elisha led them to Samaria where the king of Israel was. The Israelites could have killed them, but Elisha told the king to feed the men and send them home. Those raiders did not come into Israel's land again.

God opened the eyes of Elisha's servant so he could see God's protection. God is always with us. Jesus came to earth as the visible image of our invisible God. God's protection from sin and death is given to everyone who trusts in Jesus.

Family Activity

Go to a park as a family. If you have a kite or pinwheel take it with you. Look at the trees, fly your kite, play with the pinwheel, or watch the grass and leaves blowing in the wind. Explain that, just like how we can't see the wind but we can see how it effects things around us, we can't see God, but He is always at work in the world around us.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Elisha know what the army of Aram was going to do?
2. Why was the Syrian king, King Aram, unable to capture Elisha?
3. Why do you think God sent an invisible army to protect Elisha?
4. Share about a time when God "opened your eyes" to something that is true about Him.
5. We can't see God; how do we know He is with us? (Refer to Galatians 2:20)

KEY PASSAGE

I am the Lord. That is my name, and I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.
Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How many gods are there?

Answer:

There is one true God who alone deserves worship.

Unit 14

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Key Passage

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but **is patient toward you**, not **wishing** that any should perish, but that **all should reach repentance**.*

2 Peter 3:9

Big Picture Question

Why should we obey God?

Answer:

We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.

Unit 14 Description

God used Hosea's life to show that He still loved Israel, though she was unfaithful. God called Jonah to a godless nation, showing that no one is beyond God's compassion. Ultimately, God judged Israel's sin and punished them by removing His presence. Jesus took our punishment for sin upon Himself. Jesus brings us into God's presence and keeps us there.

Week Five

JONAH, PROPHET TO NINEVEH

GOD SHOWED MERCY TO THE NINEVITES.

Family Devotional

Reading: Jonah 1:1-6, 1:17-3:5

Jonah was a prophet—and while he is best known as the man who was swallowed by a big fish when he tried to run away from God, his story continues beyond chapter 2 to reveal what Jonah knew all along: God is “a gracious and compassionate God” (John 4:2b).

The rulers of Nineveh were known to be evil and cruel. That was the very reason God called Jonah to go to them: “their evil has come up before me” (Jonah 1:2). But Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh, and instead decided to run from God. Jonah discovered that no one can flee from God’s presence. Through a storm and some time in the belly of a fish, God got Jonah’s attention, and Jonah went to Nineveh. For three days, Jonah walked around the city. His message to the Ninevites was brief: “In forty days Nineveh will be demolished!” (Jonah 3:4)

The people of Nineveh immediately repented, and God showed mercy to them. But instead of being happy for the Ninevites, “Jonah was greatly displeased and became furious” (Jonah 4:1). He didn’t think that they deserved God’s mercy and thought they should be destroyed. But God showed Jonah that He is the Judge of all the earth! God loves all people and showed mercy to the Ninevites.

The Ninevites may not have deserved God’s compassion, but neither did Jonah and neither do we! In this story, we can see that Jesus is a better Jonah! Just like God sent Jonah to bring his enemies to repentance, God sent Jesus to His enemies to call us to repentance. Jesus willingly obeyed. Jesus died on the cross to rescue us from sin. God shows His mercy in the gospel, forgiving those who trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior. God sends us out, like Jonah, to share the good news of salvation.

Family Activity

Take your family fishing or simulate fishing using sticks, string, magnets, and paper clips. See who can catch the biggest fish. If you catch any fish, release them back to the water to lead into a discussion on mercy. Ask kids to retell what they remember from the story of Jonah. Discuss how Jonah did not want God to show mercy to the people of Nineveh, but God’s mercy is greater than anything we can imagine. Talk as a family about ways God has shown mercy to you.

Discussion Questions

1. Why was Jonah mad when God decided not to destroy Nineveh?
2. What does knowing that God loves all people tell us about how we should treat others?
3. What is mercy? How has God shown us mercy?
4. How is Jesus better than Jonah?

KEY PASSAGE

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not **wishing** that any should perish, but that **all should reach repentance.***

2 Peter 3:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Why should we obey God?

Answer:

We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.

Week Six

HOSEA, PROPHET TO ISRAEL

GOD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS PEOPLE EVEN WHEN THEY ARE UNFAITHFUL.

Family Devotional

Reading: Hosea 11:1-6

Hosea was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel for at least forty years. God sent Hosea to tell Israel of God's hatred toward sin and of His coming judgment. God also sent Hosea to bring a message of love—a love that never gives up.

To get the message across to the Israelites, God used Hosea's own life to show Israel what a never-gives-up kind of love looks like. The entire book of Hosea beautifully mirrors the love that Hosea shows to his unfaithful wife to the way that God loves the unfaithful Israelites.

Hosea obeyed God's instructions to marry a woman named Gomer. Gomer was unfaithful to Hosea and ran away from him. Hosea loved Gomer as his wife, even though she wasn't faithful. Every time she ran away, Hosea would bring her back, even buy her back from slavery.

It would have been easier for Hosea to end his marriage covenant—to throw up his hands and say, "Enough! I'm done with you!" And it would have been easier for God to end His covenant with the Israelites when they were unfaithful to Him.

But God's love never gives up. We see His beautiful love in Hosea 11. God gave Hosea a love for his wife that compelled him to buy her back from the slave market after all she had done. In the same way, God sought after His unfaithful people even after all they had done. God paid a high price—the life of His Son, Jesus—to bring them back to Himself.

Family Activity

Talk about or show photographs from a wedding—yours, a family member's, or friend's. Talk about the ceremony, the vows, and the love expressed on that day. Talk with kids about how God's love for us is the greatest love of all and how His love lasts forever.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Hosea's love for Gomer teach the people of Israel about God's love for them? How does it teach us about God's love for us?
2. When is it difficult to love others? When is it easy?
3. What price did God pay to rescue us from sin and death?

KEY PASSAGE

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not **wishing** that any should perish, but that **all should reach repentance**.*

2 Peter 3:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Why should we obey God?

Answer:

We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.

Week Seven

ISRAEL TAKEN CAPTIVE

ISRAEL DID NOT LISTEN TO GOD'S WARNING.

Family Devotional

Reading: 2 Kings 17:7-14

Have you ever done something wrong or disobeyed because you thought it was the better option? Time and time again, the Israelites chose to disobey God. And even though God loved them like a father, the Israelites forgot about God.

Sin separated them from God. But man was created to know and love God, and God was working out a plan to bring His children back to Himself. God had been very patient with the Israelites. He had helped them in times of trouble and delayed their punishment because He is gracious and compassionate. (See 2 Kings 13:23.) But God knew His people would not love Him with all their hearts.

Finally, God had had enough. Evil King Hoshea ruled over Israel, and God allowed Israel's enemies to send the people into exile. The king of Assyria attacked Israel and laid siege to Samaria. Assyria captured Samaria and forced the people to leave the city and walk hundreds of miles to Assyria. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed and the people were scattered, just as God had said it would be. (See 1 Kings 14:15.)

Israel's exile was God's judgment on their sin, but God was not finished working among His people. God was still working out His plan to keep His covenant promises. When the Israelites disobeyed God again and again, God punished them by removing them from His presence. We disobey God, but Jesus took the punishment for our sin upon Himself. Jesus brings us into God's presence and keeps us there.

Family Activity

Play 'Simon says' as a family. However, when "Simon" says to do something, everyone should do the opposite. Make the motions easy for smaller kids but work to harder actions as the game progresses. Talk about how the Israelites faced consequences when they didn't listen to God. End the discussion by reminding kids that Jesus took our punishment and provided us a way to be brought back to God's presence!

Discussion Questions

1. How did Hosea's love for Gomer teach the people of Israel about God's love for them? How does it teach us about God's love for us?
2. When is it difficult to love others? When is it easy?
3. What price did God pay to rescue us from sin and death?

KEY PASSAGE

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not **wishing** that any should perish, but that **all should reach repentance**.*

2 Peter 3:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Why should we obey God?

Answer:

We should obey God because He made us, He loves us, and His plans are good.

Unit 15

THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF JUDAH

Key Passage

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear** from heaven and will **forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

Big Picture Question

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

*Before He created the world, **God planned to send Jesus**, the Messiah to save sinners.*

Unit 15 Description

God called Jeremiah to tell the people about a new covenant in which sin can be forgiven once and for all. Judah continued in sin and was removed from the land. God was right to punish His people for their sin, but He kept His promise to provide a king through David's family. Ultimately, God punished our sin through His Son, Jesus, and made Him our King forever.

Week Eight

ISAIAH, PROPHET TO JUDAH

ISAIAH TOLD ABOUT THE MESSIAH.

Family Devotional

Reading: Isaiah 53:3-6

One of the subjects we study in school is History. History lessons teach us all about what happened hundreds of years ago—new lands discovered by explorers, how people lived and worked, and even why wars were started and how they ended. But can you imagine going into class and hearing your teacher start telling you what was going to happen 700 years in the future? It would be hard to understand or even believe all of that lesson!

The prophet Isaiah was called by God to deliver a message to the people of Judah. God's message sent through Isaiah was about a Servant who would come to serve the people by suffering and dying for their sins. We know God's message through Isaiah was all about Jesus!

Jesus was the Suffering Servant who would fulfill all of Isaiah's prophecies. He was pierced because of our transgressions and crushed because of our iniquities. His punishment is what brought our peace. God planned all along that Jesus would die on the cross for our sin. Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote that this would happen! Jesus is the Servant who suffered so that those who trust in Him would be forgiven. When we trust in Jesus, our sins are wiped away and His righteousness is credited to us.

Family Activity

Have family members take turns serving the rest of the family during dinner time. The chosen servant should prepare the table, serve the food, take drink orders and refill cups when needed, and clean up for the family after the meal. Discuss the sacrifices the chosen family member had to make in order to serve the family. Take time to talk about the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus to serve us and save us from sin.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the message God wanted Isaiah to deliver to the people of Judah?
2. Why was this message so important for the people to hear? Why is it important for us?
3. Who is the Servant God sent to die to save people from sin? How do we know?
4. When we see all that Jesus has done, how do you think we should respond?

KEY PASSAGE

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

Before He created the world, God planned to send Jesus, the Messiah to save sinners.

Week Nine

HEZEKIAH AND JOSIAH

HEZEKIAH AND JOSIAH LED THE PEOPLE BACK TO GOD.

Family Devotional

Reading: 2 Chronicles 34:1-2; 29-33

After God's people split into two kingdoms—the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah—each nation was ruled by a series of kings. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was ruled by mostly bad kings who worshiped idols and did not respect or obey God. But God did give the people a handful of good kings, like Hezekiah and his great-grandson Josiah.

Josiah became king when he was only 8 years old, but immediately he began to seek God. He tore down the altars and idols of false gods, and he started repairing the Lord's temple. As the workers were repairing the Temple, they discovered the Book of the Law—the promises and commandments God had given to Moses. These words had been forgotten and lost, but Josiah had them read in the public courtyard for everyone to hear. As he heard God's Word, Josiah realized how he had sinned and disobeyed God. Josiah made a covenant—or promise—to follow God and obey His commands. Those who heard the law vowed to do the same.

Josiah loved God and wanted to follow His commands. He wanted God's people to love God and obey the law too. When Jesus came to earth, He fulfilled the law by obeying it perfectly. Even though we can never be perfect, Jesus showed us what it looks like to be perfectly obedient.

Family Activity

Read Exodus 20:1-17 and review the commandments God gave to Moses and the Israelites. Summarize the commandments for the family and discuss how each rule is good for our relationship with God and with others. Talk about why we can rejoice in God's law because it shows us where we fall and how Jesus is the perfect Savior we need!

Discussion Questions

1. What made Hezekiah and Josiah good kings?
2. Why was Josiah upset when he heard the Book of the Law read?
3. How does God's Law help us to see our sin? And how does it point us to Jesus?
4. Who is the only one who has perfectly kept God's law?
5. Look up the definition of the word righteousness. Discuss how Jesus is our righteousness.

KEY PASSAGE

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

Before He created the world, God planned to send Jesus, the Messiah to save sinners.

Week Ten

JEREMIAH, PROPHET TO JUDAH

JEREMIAH TOLD ABOUT A NEW AND BETTER COVENANT.

Family Devotional

Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Have you ever seen one of those TV shows where people buy an old, run-down house and make it look totally new again? It's always fascinating to see how they can take something that everyone believed was ruined and make it into something beautiful and special. But that is nothing compared to the work God does to bring dead hearts back to life!

The prophet Jeremiah warned the people of Judah about the consequences that would come because they were disobedient and had broken the covenant with God. But with those words of bad news, Jeremiah also shared a message of good news. He told the people about a day when God would forgive sin and change people's hearts. Jesus made these words come true!

God forgives our sin through His Son, Jesus. He changes us and gives us power through His Spirit to obey His commands. Jesus did not come to get rid of the law. Through His sinless life, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the old covenant. When we trust in Jesus, we are credited with His righteousness and our changed hearts enable us to want to follow in Christ's footsteps and obey God as well.

Family Activity

Plan a trip to a flea market or second hand store. Work as a family to select an item that you think you can "flip" into something new and better. It could be a new coat of paint on a lamp or a complete repurpose of an old coffee table. Over the next few weeks, work on the renovation project and discuss how Jesus gives the ultimate restoration and renovation by giving us new hearts when we believe in Him!

Discussion Questions

1. Read Exodus 19:5-6. What did the old covenant require of the people?
2. What was different about the new covenant Jeremiah told the people about?
3. What did Jesus do to make this new covenant come true?
4. How does knowing God's ability to completely change people's hearts help us to think differently about people?

KEY PASSAGE

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

Before He created the world, God planned to send Jesus, the Messiah to save sinners.

Week Eleven

HABAKKUK THE PROPHET

HABAKKUK LEARNED TO TRUST IN GOD.

Family Devotional

Reading: Habakkuk 2:2-3

How much time do you spend waiting? Think about it. Waiting for dinner, waiting for a traffic light to turn green, waiting at the doctor's office, waiting at the drive-thru, waiting for a birthday, waiting on someone else. We all spend a lot of time waiting. At times it can drive us crazy, but we choose to wait because we believe something, or someone will come eventually.

The prophet Habakkuk lived in a time when evil seemed to be winning over God's plans. The prophet asked God why He continued to let so many bad things happen. God answered Him with a promise. God told Habakkuk about a day coming in the future when the evil would be punished, and the people of God would be delivered.

Even though evil seemed to be everywhere, by faith Habakkuk trusted God's promise that God would deliver His people. Even today, we see bad things happening all around us, but we can live by faith and trust that Jesus will return to make all things right. Until then, we can trust that God is sovereign over the future!

Family Activity

Make a point to pray throughout this week during the times you are forced to wait. Whether you're waiting alone in the carpool line or waiting in line at the grocery store, pause and thank God for the day when Jesus will return and make all things right!

Discussion Questions

1. When was a time you had to wait? Was it easy or hard?
2. When you see bad things in the news or when bad things happen around us, how does it make you feel? What questions would you want to ask God about those events?
3. Why can we continue to trust God even in the midst of bad things?
4. How does it feel to think about and know that Jesus will return one day and will make all wrongs right?

KEY PASSAGE

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

Before He created the world, God planned to send Jesus, the Messiah to save sinners.

Week Twelve

JUDAH TAKEN CAPTIVE

JUDAH DID NOT LISTEN TO GOD'S WARNING.

Family Devotional

Reading: Jeremiah 25:1-14; 30:1-3

If you had a job and worked hard, would you expect them to give you your paycheck? Of course, you would because it would only be fair for them to do what they said they would do. But what about when your parents have to punish you because you broke the rules that they asked you to follow. Would you still think that is fair? You might not like the punishment, but it is 100% fair because, like a paycheck from your boss, it is about getting exactly what you deserve.

After years of disobeying God and choosing their own way, the people of Judah were punished by God. God allowed an enemy army to conquer the people and take them captive to Babylon. It was 100% fair and right for God to punish the people for not listening to his warnings and continuously disobeying his commands. The people had received a punishment they deserved.

But even in the midst of that punishment, God protected the family line of David so he would keep His promise to provide a king through David's family. That promise was made complete in Jesus who took the punishment we deserved for sin so that we could have new life in Him!

Family Activity

Play a game of Simon Says as a family. Take turns letting each family member be Simon. Make the action of the game increasingly difficult so that every family member but one has been eliminated from the game. The last family member becomes Simon and the games begins again. After a few rounds, talk about the game's consequences for not properly following Simon's commands.

Discuss how God must punish sin as an act of his fairness and justice. Be sure to emphasize how God punished sin by sending Jesus to the Cross so that we could have forgiveness and new life through Him!

Discussion Questions

1. How is God fair and loving to punish sin?
2. What are some of the consequences or punishments we might face for disobedience? Are those consequences fair?
3. How did Jesus take the punishment we deserved? How does it feel to know He loves you that much?
4. How does Jesus' sacrificial death help us to respond to God with more obedient hearts?

KEY PASSAGE

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

Before He created the world, God planned to send Jesus, the Messiah to save sinners.

Thanksgiving

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Thanksgiving week is a wonderful time to be with family and friends. It's also great reminder to give 'Thanks' for the many blessings God has granted. As you prepare to celebrate this week, the following activities will help your family to practice gratitude.

The ABC's of gratitude

Begin by reading Luke 17:11-19 with the family. Discuss the story of the 10 Lepers and why only 1 returned to give thanks to Jesus when all of them had received such a miraculous gift of being healed. How easy is it to remember to give thanks for all the ways God has loved and blessed your family? Discuss some of the reasons why you might forget to actually pause and give thanks.

Explain to kids that you want to create something to remind you to give thanks for all God has done. As a family, make an acrostic of gratitude using all 26 letters of the alphabet. You will use each letter of the alphabet to think of something or someone for which they are grateful. For example, students may use the letter "P" to say that they are grateful for "Parents." Be creative and display the page or poster in the house as a reminder this week.

Giving thanks in all circumstances

Begin by reading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Discuss some situations in which it is easy to give thanks and some that make thankfulness more difficult—like failing a test or fighting with a friend. Explain to kids that God doesn't expect us to be thankful for bad things, but He does want us to know that we can be thankful even while those things are happening because He is always good.

Read Romans 8:28. Remind your family that, in all things, God is in control. No matter what we're feeling or going through, God is good, and His will is perfect. He never promises to keep us away from pain, but He does promise to be with us in the middle of it. That is a reason that for us to be thankful.

End by leading your family in a time of "popcorn prayers." Invite them to stand and say a short prayer using the phrase, "God, I thank you for..." You can go in random order or move around the table. Help kids think of something if they struggle but encourage them to say whatever God brings to mind. This is a great prayer method to teach them to be comfortable talking with God.

If you're thankful and you know it

Get the whole family involved and have a little fun singing the song, "If You're Happy and You Know It." Only this time, change the word 'happy' to 'thankful.' Take turns coming up with fun motions or actions to add to the song and sing as a family.

Read 1 John 4:11. Explain that one of the ways we can give thanks to God is by loving others the way He has loved us. And one of the ways we can love others is by saying 'Thank You' for the ways they have served or helped your family. Take some time to write thank you cards for someone like a teacher, coach, police officer, fireman or mailman. Make sure kids have the opportunity to deliver the note this week and give thanks to that person as an act of gratitude and worship.

Week Thirteen

EZEKIEL GAVE HOPE

GOD PLANNED TO BRING HIS PEOPLE HOME.

Family Devotional

Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Have you ever been to a museum where that have a skeleton of a dinosaur? It's incredible to see the size of the bones and how the creature might have looked when it was alive. The museum usually puts the dinosaur in an exhibit that shows where it might have lived and what it might have eaten. But no matter how hard they try, they can never bring that set of bones back to life. It's just not going to happen!

Ezekiel was a prophet who spoke God's message to the people who were exiled. Although this was a hard job for Ezekiel, God gave him a vision. In this vision, God showed Ezekiel a valley of dry bones. The bones represented the people of Israel. Ezekiel prophesied that God would put muscles, tendons, and skin on the bones. He would put breath in them so they would come to life.

Ezekiel encouraged the exiles. Apart from God, they were dead. But God was offering them life. He would restore their future. We too are dead in our sin. Apart from Jesus, we are like the dry bones Ezekiel saw. God showed Ezekiel His power to make dead people alive. We see God's power at the cross. Jesus died to save sinners. God raised Jesus from the dead, and He gives us eternal life.

Family Activity

Use playdough or modeling clay to create people or animals. Ask each family member to describe the creature they made and any details they'd like the family to know about them. After everyone has shared, discuss how these are just playdough creations and don't really have any life. Explain how the Bible calls our hearts dead in sin—lifeless and without hope—but that Jesus' death and resurrection bring new life to all who believe in Him. It is literally God breathing new life into dead hearts to make them come alive!

Discussion Questions

1. How were the people like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision?
2. What did God promise He would do for those dry bones?
How has God fulfilled that promise for us?
3. How does God make dead hearts alive? (See Ephesians 2:4-5)
4. Where do we find our only hope?
5. How can we praise Jesus for being our only hope?

KEY PASSAGE

*If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and **turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer:

Before He created the world, God planned to send Jesus, the Messiah to save sinners.

