



GAME ON!

Family Devotions

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS

For each week we will upload three devotions that build upon and link to our Kids Alive message on Sunday. Three devotions means:

- Those who already do devotions can continue these the other half of the week;
- Those for whom devotions are possible at most every second night of the week can also be included.

The devotions will follow this format:

INTRO

A short introductory activity or discussion

RECAP

A recap of the previous devotion

READ

A short passage will be printed. This makes it less time-consuming and also excludes the need to find a bible.

EXPLORE

Some simple comprehension questions that direct our understanding of the passage

APPLY

Something we can learn from the passage and apply to our own lives

PRAY

Suggested prayer points that come from the passage

MEMORY VERSE

This is only suggested if time permits as it may be a slightly longer activity. You may design something to remember the verse or do some fun games or activities to aid in remembering the verses.

INTRO:

What sort of things would you expect a good person to do?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 2:22-24

²²When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took their son Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, ²³as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord", ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

EXPLORE:

Where did Joseph and Mary take Jesus? (*To Jerusalem to present him to the Lord*)

When did they take him there? (*When the time came for his purification rites*)

How many times does the word 'law' appear in these verses? (*Three times*)

APPLY:

Three times in three verses we are told Mary and Joseph did what God's law required. This shows us that they worked hard to please the Lord; they were what we would call 'good people'! Although we often think of ourselves as sinners, the bible tells us differently: since we've been saved from sin, we should no longer think of ourselves in this way! Instead we should see ourselves as people dedicated to good and holiness.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus fulfilled God's law for us. Pray that since we are free from trying to keep God's law we will spend our time enjoying our relationship with God and live to please him.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"My eyes have seen your salvation." **Luke 2:30**

Write the words of this week's verse onto separate bits of paper and hide them around a room of your house. Get the rest of your family to stand in the entryway of that room and use their eyes to see where the different pieces of paper are! Then gather them to put together the verse.

INTRO:

If you were to write a bucket list, what would you have on it? What is one thing you would like to achieve in your life?

RECAP:

Where did Joseph and Mary take the baby Jesus?

READ LUKE 2:25-32

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ²⁹"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

EXPLORE:

What was Simeon waiting for? (*The consolation or comfort of Israel*)

What had the Holy Spirit revealed to him? (*He wouldn't die before he had met the Messiah*)

How did Simeon feel when he met Jesus? (*He was happy to die, for he had seen the Lord's salvation*)

APPLY:

Simeon's response is extraordinary: having simply seen Jesus he is ready to die! This is because he recognised Jesus as the one who brings comfort through dealing with sin (Isaiah 40:1-2) and who reveals God's glory to the world. We are not waiting to meet the Lord; we already know these things about him. How ready are you to be 'dismissed in peace'? What would you like to do before you die, and how important is it really?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has revealed to us his glory and brought us comfort through Christ paying for our sins. Pray that this might be enough for us so that we might set our minds on things above, and not just on earthly things we would like to do.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"My eyes have seen your salvation." **Luke 2:30**

Draw the scene from today's passage as Simeon held the baby Jesus and looked up to heaven filled with joy. Write above it this week's verse to remind you that we should fix our eyes on the life to come too.

INTRO:

What have you been told lately that you found worrying?

RECAP:

What was Simeon ready for now he had seen Jesus?

READ LUKE 2:33-35

³³The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

EXPLORE:

How did Jesus' parents respond to Simeon's words? (*They marvelled at what he had said*)

What did Simeon then say Jesus would do to the people of Israel? (*Cause some to rise and others to fall, and reveal their hearts*)

What did Simeon say would happen to Mary? (*A sword would pierce her soul*)

APPLY:

After hearing such marvellous things about her child, Mary must have been rather worried to hear this! Even as a baby Jesus' death was always central to why he came. His ministry would divide people (as it still does today) and his death would cause his mother great pain. But what joy it brings us, who have been saved from our sin by it!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus' death brings us forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with our Father. Pray that those in our world who are still dividing over who Jesus is might be united in the understanding that he is God's Son.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"My eyes have seen your salvation." **Luke 2:30**

Mime this week's verse to show you have learnt it.

INTRO:

What do you normally spend your time doing when there's not much else happening?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 2:36-37

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

EXPLORE:

How was Anna described? (*As a prophet*)

How old was she? (*Eighty-four*)

What did she spend her time doing? (*Worshipping in the temple by fasting and praying*)

APPLY:

As an older woman Anna could have spent her time doing many things. Instead she chose to spend her time worshipping the Lord in the temple and calling on him to save his people! This is time very well spent. How much time do you spend with the Lord doing the same thing each day? What might you do to make this a bigger priority?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for the godly example of others who inspire you to seek him more. Pray for your family to so love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength that they delight to spend time with him each day.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

She spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Luke 2:38

Draw a picture of Anna praying in the temple. Decorate the temple to show how golden and impressive it was. Then add this week's verse to the picture so that you can start to learn it.

INTRO:

What are you looking forward to during the month of January?

RECAP:

What did Anna spend her time doing?

READ LUKE 2:36-38

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

EXPLORE:

Who did Anna meet in the temple? (*Mary & Joseph with their baby Jesus*)

What did this prompt her to do? (*Give thanks to God*)

Who did she speak to about Jesus? (*All who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem*)

APPLY:

Once again Jesus is recognised by the elderly as being central to God's plan. While Simeon saw that Jesus would comfort God's people by paying for their sins Anna prophesied that Jesus would redeem or buy back God's people. Both felt great joy at these things!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus has redeemed us, not with silver or gold but by his infinitely more precious blood (1 Peter 1:18-19). Pray that we will be filled with joy that Jesus came to give his life for us so that we might be welcomed back into God's family.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

She spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Luke 2:38

Write the words or phrases of this week's verse onto different pieces of paper so that your family members can buy them off you for a fun price (e.g. "one foot massage"). Once the whole verse is redeemed work together to commit it to memory!

INTRO:

How much did you grow in the last year? In what ways do you think you grew?

RECAP:

Who did Anna talk to about Jesus?

READ LUKE 2:39-40

³⁹When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

EXPLORE:

When did Joseph and Mary return to Galilee? *(When they had done everything required by God's law)*

Where did Jesus grow up? *(Nazareth)*

How did he grow? *(By becoming strong or healthy, and in wisdom)*

APPLY:

Jesus' physical and spiritual development are mentioned briefly here. As a child he grew both in his body and in his mind. The reference to him being filled with wisdom shows us that he understood more about God's will for him as he developed, something we will see in the next passage. How have you grown spiritually in the past year? What might you do to ensure you continue to grow spiritually in the year ahead?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he gives us grace so that we might grow to understand his will for us. Pray that we might grow spiritually in the year ahead as his Spirit works through his word and people to help us become more like Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

She spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Luke 2:38

Speak this week's verse to each member of your family!

INTRO:

How do you honestly feel about school?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 2:41-45

⁴¹Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. ⁴²When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. ⁴³After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. ⁴⁴Thinking he was in their company, they travelled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

EXPLORE:

What did Jesus' parents do every year? (*Went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover*)

How old was Jesus when he joined them at the Passover? (*Twelve years old*)

What did Jesus do after the festival? (*Stayed behind in Jerusalem*)

APPLY:

While at first it might seem that Jesus' parents didn't care for him well since they left him behind and didn't even notice, this passage actually shows the opposite. Jesus' parents took God's law seriously, and so they faithfully went to Jerusalem for the Passover every year (Exodus 23:15-17, Deuteronomy 16:1). They also took Jesus along "according to the custom". This means that when Jesus was twelve, the age that Jewish boys became men by starting a trade and showing they had learnt the Scriptures, they took him too. This shows that Jesus' parents took his education very seriously, for they wanted him to know and participate in remembering all that God had done for his people.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus' parents educated him by teaching him all that the Lord had done to save his people. Pray that as parents you will not neglect the spiritual schooling of your children OR that as children you will grow to love learning about all that the Lord has done for you.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"Didn't you know I had to be about the things of my Father?" **Luke 2:49**

Write the words of this week's verse onto different pieces of paper and hide them throughout your house. Just as Jesus' parents searched Jerusalem to find him, get your kids to find the words of the verse, assemble them, and start to learn the verse.

INTRO:

What sort of things does your dad do? Kindly do an impression of him!

RECAP:

What did Jesus do after the Passover festival?

READ LUKE 2:46-50

⁴⁶After three days they found Jesus in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." ⁴⁹"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be about the things of my Father?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

EXPLORE:

Where did Jesus' parents find him? (*In the temple courts*)

What was he doing there? (*Listening to the teachers of the law and asking them questions*)

How did Jesus respond when his mum asked why? (*He said he had to be about the things of his Father*)

APPLY:

It makes sense that Jesus' parents didn't understand his answer to them; it is difficult to understand! As God's Son Jesus was saying that it was necessary to be about his Father's business. He was concerning himself with God's work rather than simply the things of his earthly parents. How essential do you feel it is to take time out to spend with the Lord? Is this something you feel you have to do, or is it an optional extra?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for Jesus' clear understanding of what is important. Pray that we will prioritise the things of the Father as Jesus did.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"Didn't you know I had to be about the things of my Father?" **Luke 2:49**

Act like your father as you say this week's verse.

INTRO:

Share something that you found hard to understand in this last week.

RECAP:

What did Jesus say he was doing when his parents found him?

READ LUKE 2:51-52

⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

EXPLORE:

How did Jesus relate to his parents? (*He was obedient to them*)

How did Mary respond to these events? (*She treasured them in her heart*)

How did God feel about Jesus as he grew? (*Jesus grew in his favour*)

APPLY:

The first verse in our passage today is hard to understand: Jesus, Lord of all, and the Son of God who created all things, was obedient to his earthly parents! If Jesus was willing to do this how much more should we!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus so delighted in obeying Him that he would make himself obedient to his earthly parents. Pray that we too might love the Lord God so much that we delight to do all he asks of us, even those things that we find hard to understand.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"Didn't you know I had to be about the things of my Father?" **Luke 2:49**

Turn this week's verse into a prayer, asking God to help us to 'be about his things' with joy.

INTRO:

Work together as a family to locate your child in history by naming their class teacher, a head teacher, deputy principal, principal, local member, state premier, prime minister etc.

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 3:1-2

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Tracoonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—²during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

EXPLORE:

Who was ruling God's people at this time? (*Caesar, Pilate and Herod*)

Who did the word of God come to? (*John, son of Zechariah who had now grown up*)

Where was he living? (*In the wilderness!*)

APPLY:

God's word impacts lives in the real world. Here we are told about world events so that we can perfectly place the start of John's ministry. While all these important people are ruling, God's word begins to be preached in the wilderness (of all places!). Our prayer is that something similar might happen in our day and age: while important events are happening around the world we want to pray that God's word will come to people in the Northwest of Sydney to impact their lives!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that his word comes to people and can transform their lives. Pray that this will happen in our local communities as Mission 2020 begins.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord!'" **Luke 3:4**

Try to draw today's passage by designing a poster with the emperor Caesar, four kings and two high priests around this week's verse in the centre of the page.

INTRO:

Imagine someone is coming to stay at your house over the Australia Day long weekend. What would you do to prepare for them to sleep over?

RECAP:

Where did John begin his ministry?

READ LUKE 3:2-6

²During the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. ⁵Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. ⁶And all people will see God's salvation.'"

EXPLORE:

What did John preach? (*A baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins*)

How did Isaiah describe John? (*As a voice who called people to prepare the way for the Lord to come*)

What would happen as a result of John's ministry? (*People would be ready to see God's salvation*)

APPLY:

John's ministry was to prepare people because the Lord was coming to visit. He did this by teaching them to repent so that their sins would be forgiven so they would see the Lord's salvation. Every day we should do the same: we should repent for the forgiveness of our sins. We can also prepare others to meet the Lord by praying that He will soften their hearts to see their need for salvation.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that when we repent Jesus freely forgives our sins. Pray that the Lord will prepare many people to see his salvation in the year ahead!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord!'" **Luke 3:4**

Get your family members to stand in different rooms of your house and call out to one another this week's verse.

INTRO:

Have you ever had to do work, a project or a speech and have it judged by others? How did it make you feel?

RECAP:

How did John prepare people for the Lord to visit?

READ LUKE 3:7-11

⁷John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ⁹The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰"What should we do then?" the crowd asked. ¹¹John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same."

EXPLORE:

How did John describe God's judgement? (*A time of wrath or anger; a time when fruitless trees or people would be cut down and thrown into the fire*)

How then did John urge the people to act? (*To produce fruit in keeping with repentance*)

What things did he specifically instruct the crowd to do? (*Share with those who have nothing*)

APPLY:

John's message begins by calling everyone snakes, continues with him telling his listeners God is angry at them, and ends with a challenge to be radically generous! It can't have been easy to hear! Nonetheless people listen and respond. The idea of God judging us is never popular. Do you avoid ever really thinking about it? Do you ever talk about it? John's warning could be timely for us, for how could we prepare for Judgement Day if it is never on our minds?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that John was courageous enough to warn those who would face God's wrath one day. Pray that we and those around us might know the relief and comfort that comes from understanding that Jesus faced our judgement and experienced God's wrath so that we don't have to!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord!'" **Luke 3:4**

Use this week's verse to pray that, during Mission 2020, voices will cry out in our community to prepare people to meet the Lord.

INTRO:

Who do you think is better than you? In what areas do you feel this is the case?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 3:15-16

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. ¹⁶John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

EXPLORE:

What were the Jewish people wondering? (*If John was the Messiah, the promised king*)

Who did John say he was? (*Someone who baptised with water*)

How did he say the Messiah would be better than him? (*He would be more powerful than John and baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire*)

APPLY:

John had no hesitation in admitting that Jesus was better than him. John both understood and was willing to fulfil his role as 'the voice of one crying in the desert' that the Messiah was coming. How willing are you to do the same for Jesus? How often do you lead conversations to Jesus? How do you go with passing praise on to God when you receive compliments? This is something we can probably all work on!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for John's humility in recognising and proclaiming that Jesus is more powerful than us all. Pray that we might be willing to admit that we are not worthy to untie Jesus' sandals and so give all praise and glory to him.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." **Luke 3:22**

Make a poster using this week's verse, and decorate it to show that Jesus is greater than everything!

INTRO:

Who do you know that you love and who really pleases you by the way they act?

RECAP:

What did John tell everyone about Jesus?

READ LUKE 3:21-22

²¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

EXPLORE:

What did Jesus do when John was baptising people? (*He was baptised as well*)

What happened while he was praying? (*Heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended onto him*)

What did the Father say to Jesus when this happened? (*'You are my Son; I love you and am pleased with you'*)

APPLY:

Jesus was baptised to show he was one of us. It pleased the Father that Jesus was not ashamed to take on flesh and blood like us so that he could be 'one of the family' (Heb 2:11). This also shows Jesus is the Messiah, for this is what the Father said to the Christ in Psalm 2!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that He not only loves Jesus and is pleased by him, but because Jesus became one of us He loves us and is pleased with us. Pray that, like Jesus, this will give us courage and confidence as we go out to do ministry.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." **Luke 3:22**

Write this week's verse in a place where you will regularly see it to remind you that, because we are in Christ, this is true of us!

INTRO:

Work together with your family to create a family tree, going back as far as you can.

RECAP:

What did God the Father say to Jesus when he was baptised?

READ LUKE 3:23,27,31,34,38

²³Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph [...] ²⁷the son of Zerubbabel [...] ³¹the son of David [...] ³⁴the son of Abraham [...] ³⁸the son of Adam, the son of God.

EXPLORE:

How old was Jesus when he began his ministry? (*About thirty years old*)

Who did people think was Jesus' father? (*Joseph*)

Who was Jesus ultimately descended from? (*God himself*)

APPLY:

Jesus' family tree was pretty impressive! Although only a few names have been picked to read today from many verses, they show there were great expectations about Jesus! He was the son of Zerubbabel, who led Israel's return from exile and who rebuilt the temple. Jesus was also the promised Son of David, who would rule forever as God's Son. He was descended from Abraham, the father of the Jews, and also the son of Adam, the father of all. As such these verses help us see that Jesus was the Messiah sent to save the world!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus came to rebuild a people for God and that he rules forever over us all. Pray that we would remember these things as we begin to minister in the year ahead at school, work and in our community.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL- ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." **Luke 3:22**

Use this week's verse as a basis for a time of praise.

INTRO:

Have some fun with your family by writing Job Descriptions for your place in the family. Think about things like: what must a father be able to do? If someone applied to be your mum what would you look for? What sort of person must you be to be the youngest member of your family?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 4:14-19

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. ¹⁶He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, and to set the oppressed free, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

EXPLORE:

What did Jesus read in his hometown synagogue? (*The scroll or book of Isaiah*)

What did the scroll say was upon Jesus? (*The Spirit of the Lord [see also v14!]*)

What did Isaiah say was Jesus' Job Description? (*To proclaim good news & the Lord's favour to the poor, the prisoners and the blind, and to set the oppressed free*)

APPLY:

As Jesus began his ministry he was very clear what he had been sent to do. His main role was to proclaim or preach. While Jesus did many miracles these showed that God's hand was upon him so that people would listen to him (Acts 10:38). Similarly as we enter a new year properly (school starting, holidays are over) we pray the Spirit will fill us so we can continue to do good in order to proclaim good news and freedom from the devil.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus came to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. Pray that we might experience that same grace this year as we proclaim the good news.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news."

Luke 4:19

Make a scroll and write on it this week's verse so that you can begin to learn it.

INTRO:

Play something like 'Simon Says' with your family, taking turns to let others have the authority to lead the game.

RECAP:

What was Jesus' Job Description?

READ LUKE 4:31-37

³¹Then Jesus went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he taught the people. ³²They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority. ³³In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an impure spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, ³⁴"Go away! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" ³⁵"Be quiet!" Jesus said sternly. "Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him. ³⁶All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What words these are! With authority and power he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!" ³⁷And the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area.

EXPLORE:

How did the crowds respond to Jesus' teaching? (*They were amazed, because his words had authority*)

How did the demon respond to Jesus' words? (*It came out without injuring anyone*)

How did the crowds respond to this event? (*They were again amazed at the power of Jesus' words and spread news about him throughout the surrounding area*)

APPLY:

In the previous devotion we saw that Jesus came to proclaim or preach good news. Here we see the power of his word! Simply by speaking Jesus can defeat evil, because even demons recognise him as the Holy One of God. This should give us great confidence in the word of our Lord!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that his word is powerful and active, sharper than a two-edged sword. Pray that the Word might defeat evil both in us and in our community.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news."

Luke 4:19

Come up with actions for this week's verse.

INTRO:

What is the most important thing you feel you have done all week?

RECAP:

How did people respond to Jesus' word when he cast out a demon?

READ LUKE 4:40-44

⁴⁰At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. ⁴¹Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah. ⁴²At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them. ⁴³But he said, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent." ⁴⁴And he kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

EXPLORE:

What did Jesus do for those who had various kinds of sickness? (*He healed them all*)

How did the people respond? (*They tried to keep him from leaving*)

What did Jesus say he must do? (*Proclaim the good news to other towns, and so he continued preaching*)

APPLY:

While Jesus' miraculous healings were undoubtedly important, Jesus understood that the most important thing he could do was to preach about the kingdom of God. It is the news that God is king that should most affect the way we live, not just how healthy we are.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for the important things that your family accomplished this week. Pray that we would never be so busy that these things distract us from prioritising speaking to others about the good news of the kingdom.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news."

Luke 4:19

Practise telling this week's verse to others by picking two non-family members who you will share it with before the end of the week.

INTRO:

Who have you spoken to about Jesus? How did they respond?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 8:11-15

¹¹“This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹²Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

EXPLORE:

Why does the devil take away God’s word from some people’s hearts? *(So they may not believe and be saved)*

How do others respond to God’s word at first? *(They believe but then fall away or don’t mature because of the worries, riches and pleasures of life)*

What does the seed that fell on good soil stand for? *(Those with a noble and good heart who hear God’s word, retain it and by persevering produce a crop of righteousness)*

APPLY:

The well-known parable of the sower reminds us of how people respond when they hear the good news about Jesus. Which soil are you? Which are those you have told about Jesus in the past? Who is in your life at the moment that might respond to become good soil?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that his Word can produce a crop of righteousness in us. Pray that we will mature in the faith so that we might spread the seed of the good news into the lives of others so that they might produce a crop too.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

“My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s word and put it into practice.”

Luke 8:21

Draw a picture of your family. Write around it this week’s verse so that you can start to learn it.

INTRO:

If someone in your extended family came to visit you, who would you like it to be?

RECAP:

What type of person did Jesus describe as ‘good soil’?

READ LUKE 8:19-21

¹⁹Now Jesus’ mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. ²⁰Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.” ²¹He replied, “My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s word and put it into practice.”

EXPLORE:

Who came to visit Jesus? *(His mother and brothers)*

Why couldn't they see Jesus? *(They weren't able to get near him because of the crowd)*

How did Jesus respond when he was told this? *(He said his closest family are those who live according to God's word)*

APPLY:

Jesus is not being rude to his family here! Instead Jesus is showing how close to him we are if we listen to God's word and then do it. What a great privilege it is that Jesus died to adopt us into his family so that we can be as special to him as his earthly mum!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that through Jesus' death we can be part of God's family. Pray that yourselves and your entire extended family will know and obey God's word.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."

Luke 8:21

Design another family tree and write on it this week's verse to remind you to regularly pray the prayer above for them all.

INTRO:

What do you think is the hardest thing about following Jesus?

RECAP:

Who did Jesus say are his true family?

READ LUKE 9:51-62

⁵¹As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; ⁵³but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" ⁵⁵But Jesus turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶Then he and his disciples went to another village. ⁵⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." ⁵⁹He said to another man, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family." ⁶²Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

EXPLORE:

How did the Samaritans respond to Jesus? (*They didn't welcome him*)

What did Jesus warn the first man who wanted to follow him? (*That he didn't have a home*)

What distracted the other two men from following Jesus? (*Their family commitments*)

APPLY:

Since this passage follows the parable of the sower we can see it describes people's actual responses to Jesus! For the Samaritans the word of God was taken away by the evil one. For the other men the worries and pleasures of this world caused them to fall away or fail to grow. We might sometimes see the same; the cost of following Jesus is considerable!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus paid the ultimate price so that we might follow him. Pray that those around you would be willing to follow Jesus despite their worldly concerns.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."

Luke 8:21

Declare this week's verse to your family members!

INTRO:

What is your favourite thing to do with your best friend?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 10:1-2

¹After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

EXPLORE:

Where did Jesus send his disciples in twos? (*To every place he was about to go*)

What did he tell them about the harvest? (*It was plentiful, but the workers were few*)

What then did he ask them to do? (*Ask the Lord to send out other workers*)

APPLY:

In this passage Jesus perfectly balances prayer with getting involved in the actual work one is praying for! How have you been going with praying for Mission 2020? What are your actual plans to help with it? What might you be able to ask others to do with you?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that the harvest is still plentiful, for there are still many people around us who need to hear the good news of Jesus. Pray that we might not only be faithful in praying for people to share the good news with them but that we would be willing to get involved ourselves.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." **Luke 10:2**

Write this week's verse on fruit shapes and get your family to gather in the harvest so they can unjumble the verse and start to learn it.

INTRO:

Where have you visited recently? How were you welcomed? How did this make you feel?

RECAP:

What did Jesus ask the seventy-two to do?

READ LUKE 10:5-12

⁵“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ ⁶If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. ⁸“When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. ⁹Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ¹¹‘Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God has come near.’ ¹²I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

EXPLORE:

What did Jesus tell his disciples to do if they were welcomed? (*Eat what is offered and heal the sick*)

What did Jesus tell his disciples to do if they were not welcomed? (*Go into the street and wipe the dust off their feet as a warning*)

What were the disciples to declare regardless? (*The kingdom of God is near*)

APPLY:

How Jesus’ disciples were treated was a reflection of how they were with God. In fact Jesus went on to say a few verses later: “Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. Whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me.” The way people respond to us when we talk about Jesus or invite them to church regularly shows what they think of the Lord.

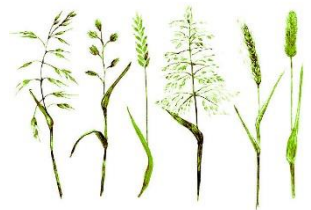
PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he came to us in the person of Christ while we were still in our sin. Pray that regardless of how people respond to us we will still declare the same message that God’s kingdom has come in Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” Luke 10:2

Write out this week’s verse and then decorate it by using some long heads of grass, dipping them in paint, and then hitting the page with them numerous times to show how the harvest is plentiful.

**WEEK 8: February 16-22****INTRO:**

What fills you with joy? What have you seen or done so far this year that made you rejoice?

RECAP:

What did Jesus instruct his disciples to say regardless of their welcome?

READ LUKE 10:17-20

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.” ¹⁸He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome

all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

EXPLORE:

What filled the seventy-two with joy? (*The demons submitted to them in Jesus' name*)

What did Jesus see as a result? (*Satan fall like heaven*)

What did Jesus command his disciples to rejoice about? (*That their names are written in heaven*)

APPLY:

When the good news of Jesus is preached evil is defeated. However Jesus warns his disciples to not get too excited about this or the authority we have in his name. Instead he wants us to rejoice that our names are written in heaven because evil has been defeated by Christ for us!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus beat Satan and triumphed over evil on our behalf. Pray that we might see this happen in our communities as a result of the Word going out in Mission 2020.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." Luke 10:2

Turn this week's verse into a prayer as you ask the Lord of the harvest to send out more workers into the field.

INTRO:

How do you feel you rate as a gardener? Is it something you do? Is it something you enjoy? Or does everything you try to grow not do so well?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ LUKE 13:6-9

⁶Then Jesus told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. ⁷So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' ⁸"'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

EXPLORE:

What did the man find on his fig tree? (*No fruit*)

What did he suggest should be done? (*The tree should be cut down*)

What did the gardener suggest? (*He would care for it for another year to see if anything changed*)

APPLY:

In the Old Testament the fig tree was sometimes used to represent God's people Israel (e.g. Jer 8:7,13). Here then the picture is of God saying that it is time to judge his people (see Luke 3:9) but Jesus pleads for a little bit more time to care for them to see if they will produce the fruit of righteousness. How does this picture of Christ only providing a little bit more time before Judgement Day effect you? Does it spur you towards action?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that the patience of the Lord means salvation (2 Peter 3:9). Pray that we might do all we can to care for those around us in the short time we have so that they might be saved from the judgement to come.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches." **Luke 13:19**

Write the words of this week's verse onto leaves using a black texta. Work together to put the verse in its correct order, and then keep these leaves for the next devotion.

INTRO:

How would you explain the kingdom of God to someone? What do you think it's like?

RECAP:

What did the gardener suggest should happen to the fruitless fig tree?

READ LUKE 13:18-21

¹⁸Then Jesus asked, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? ¹⁹It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches." ²⁰Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? ²¹It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

EXPLORE:

What did Jesus say the kingdom of God was like? (*A mustard seed*)

Why did he say this? (*It would start small but become huge*)

To what else did Jesus compare God's kingdom? (*Yeast, which again is small but it still works through an entire loaf of bread*)

APPLY:

These are very encouraging pictures of what God's kingdom will be like! While what we believe might at times seem insignificant to the rest of the world, Jesus himself assures us that many people from every nation will come to belong to God's family.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that, although his kingdom began with only Jesus, there are now billions of people around the world who call on his name. Pray that we might see the kingdom grow even more in the next few months, and indeed even more so in our lifetime!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches." **Luke 13:19**

Draw a trunk and then stick on to it the leaves from the previous devotion that have this week's verse written on them. Again, keep this for the following devotion

INTRO:

What jobs or tasks must you currently get done by a certain time?

RECAP:

To what did Jesus compare the kingdom of God?

READ LUKE 13:22-25

²²Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. ²³Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them, ²⁴"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. ²⁵Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

EXPLORE:

What question was Jesus asked on his travels? (*Are only a few people going to be saved?*)

How did Jesus answer? (*Make every effort to enter through the narrow door*)

What did he say would happen to those who didn't enter? (*The homeowner wouldn't let them in because he didn't know them*)

APPLY:

Jesus' reply in this passage doesn't contradict what he taught in the previous one. While the Kingdom of God would start small and grow large he challenges this man to make every effort (literally to agonise) to make sure that he would be saved. This would be a better use of his time than merely wondering about who would and wouldn't make it! In this sense, the door is narrow not because not many will make it but because the homeowner is closing it, creating an urgency to respond!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has graciously given us Jesus, the door to salvation (John 10:7). Pray that we will not waste our time wondering who will or won't accept our invitations but that we will urgently encourage everyone we know to make every effort to turn to Christ while the opportunity is still there.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

"It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches." **Luke 13:19**

Draw people you know as birds in the tree you've created for this week's verse. Pray that the Lord will help these people to agonise over entering the kingdom while they still can.



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