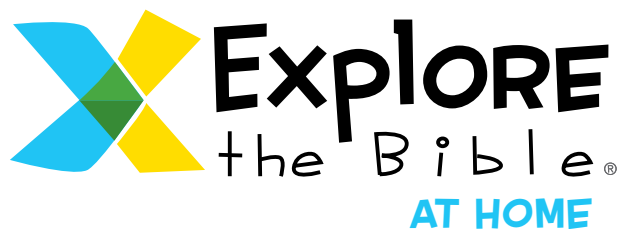


FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 3, 2017



BIBLE STORY:

Matthew 3:1-17

BIBLE VERSE:

John 1:29

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

John told about Jesus.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

John told people that the Messiah was coming.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

John called for the people to repent and prepare for the Messiah's arrival.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 13:26-39

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 13:30

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 13:13-15*

MONDAY: *Acts 13:16-25*

TUESDAY: *Acts 13:26-33*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 13:34-41*

THURSDAY: *Acts 13:42-47*

FRIDAY: *Acts 13:48-52*

SATURDAY: *Acts 14:1-7*

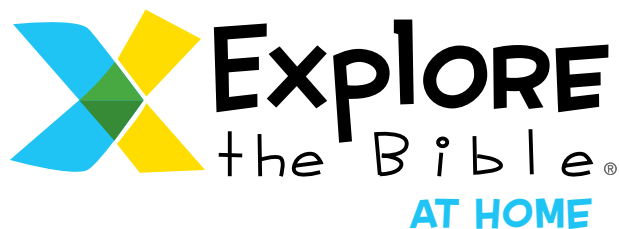
FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Matthew and Acts together as a family:



- **The Message.** John the Baptist proclaimed the time had come for the Messiah. The Jews had been waiting for hundreds of years for the Messiah to make His way onto the scene. Matthew 3 clarified that Jesus was indeed the Messiah who had been promised many years before. The Messiah would come and establish His kingdom, but many Jews misunderstood how that would occur. In Acts 13, Paul identified Jesus as the Messiah Who had been promised in the Old Testament. Paul went on to tell that Jesus was rejected by men and crucified on the cross. Jesus willingly paid the penalty for our sin by His death on the cross.
- **The Messiah.** As John preached to the crowds, Jesus came to the banks of the Jordan River to be baptized. When John saw Jesus approaching, John identified Jesus as the One of whom he was speaking. The gathered crowd likely did not understand John's words but as Jesus was baptized, perhaps the crowd understood better the things that had taken place through the signs that accompanied this event. Modern baptism serves as a picture of what Christ accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection. In Acts 13 Paul preached to the crowd that Jesus' physical baptism foreshadowed His death and resurrection. Those who witnessed Jesus' physical baptism, and those who witnessed His resurrection, became messengers of His glory at those events.
- **The Moment.** The moment Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened and God's Spirit descended. God's voice was heard declaring that this was His Son in Whom He was well pleased. God sent Jesus to earth to die a death we all deserve, thus making the way of salvation for all. Paul reiterated in Acts 13 that forgiveness of sin and justification of sin can be found only through belief in Jesus. Jesus provided the way to create a clean relationship again with God.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 10, 2017



BIBLE STORY:

Matthew 4:18-25; 9:9-13; 10:2-4

BIBLE VERSE:

Matthew 4:19

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus chose men to work with Him.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus called twelve men, the disciples, to join Him in His mission.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus called the disciples to join Him in His mission of seeking the lost.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 14:8-20

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 14:15b

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 14:8-13*

MONDAY: *Acts 14:14-20*

TUESDAY: *Acts 14:21-23*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 14:24-28*

THURSDAY: *Acts 15:1-5*

FRIDAY: *Acts 15:6-11*

SATURDAY: *Acts 15:12-21*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Matthew and Acts together as a family:



- **Obedience as commanded.** Jesus' called His earliest disciples as they fished in the Sea of Galilee. Jesus preached a message of repentance and invited 12 ordinary men to come alongside Him and join in His mission of seeking the lost. When Jesus said, "Follow Me," the men left their tasks and immediately followed Jesus. Throughout their lives the disciples lived in such a way as to honor the calling Jesus had placed on them. Paul, though not one of the original 12, was likewise obedient to Jesus' call when he received it. Paul continued Jesus' mission by helping the lame to walk, the blind to see, and by sharing the message of repentance wherever he went.
- **Healed.** Jesus, as part of His mission, healed the crowds who came to follow Him. The news of Jesus spread throughout the land. Many more people came to be healed by Jesus. When Paul was preaching in Lystra, a lame man was healed through Paul's word. The crowd perceived Paul and Barnabas to be gods. Paul and Barnabas were shocked and tore their robes and helped the crowd realize that God alone had healed the man. Paul and Barnabas were but men, unable on their own to bring about the healing.
- **Devotion to the one true God.** One of the words used in the narrative of the calling of Jesus' disciples is the word *immediately*. When Jesus called someone to follow Him, that person immediately left what he was doing and followed Jesus. As Jesus sent the disciples out on a mission to preach, their devotion to Jesus and their future preaching of the one true God never ended. Later in Acts, when Paul and Barnabas are mistaken for gods, their display of bereavement led visitors from the surrounding lands to stir up the crowds against them. Eventually Paul and Barnabas were stoned and left for dead. Jesus told His disciples that they would suffer hardship and rejection. Paul and Barnabas experienced that rejection but graciously lived to continue their preaching.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 17, 2017



BIBLE STORY:

Matthew 5-7

BIBLE VERSE:

Matthew 6:33

BABIES-PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus taught people. (BT)

Jesus taught people to live like God wants. (P)

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus taught His followers how to love and obey God.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus taught His followers how to love and obey God with their thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 15:6-11,24-31

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 15:9

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 15:22-29*

MONDAY: *Acts 15:30-35*

TUESDAY: *Acts 15:36-41*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 16:1-5*

THURSDAY: *Acts 16:6-10*

FRIDAY: *Acts 16:11-15*

SATURDAY: *Acts 16:16-24*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Matthew and Acts together as a family:



- **The sermon on the mount.** As Jesus began His early ministry He spent a great deal of time with the twelve men whom He called to minister alongside Him. On one particular occasion, Jesus retreated to a hillside in Galilee and began to teach His disciples. As crowds of people began to gather, Jesus preached about God's kingdom and characteristics that His followers should display in order to glorify God and introduce many to Jesus and His message.
- **The great blessings.** Jesus' sermon began with a series of blessings Jesus pronounced on those who were His followers. The beatitudes are separated into three categories and outline the remainder of Jesus' sermon. The beatitudes speak of issues of the heart, a desire for righteousness, and appropriate relational skills between people of God. Jesus' sermon laid out for His hearers what it looked like to be a Christian.
- **Heresies arise.** In Acts 15, Paul and Barnabas were together again, this time in Antioch. The crowds who had heard Jesus' sermon had forgotten some of the things He taught. Preachers had come from Judea and began preaching that salvation was different for Gentiles than it was for Jews. This teaching clearly was in opposition to what Jesus taught in His sermon. Paul and Barnabas met with the apostles and other church leaders in Jerusalem and reminded the leaders of Jesus' teaching.
- **Jesus taught that He was the only way to salvation.** Jesus preached on the mount to explain what a life lived for God looked like. Paul and Barnabas defended Jesus' words in open council and helped the church leaders to identify that Jesus was indeed Who He said He was. Paul preached that Jesus was the only way to salvation. God did not have different requirements for certain groups of people; salvation was available to anyone through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The council faithfully sent word to the churches assuring them that God had provided one way of salvation for all.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 24, 2017

BIBLE STORY:

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20

BIBLE VERSE:

Luke 2:11

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus' birth was good news.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

The Savior was born in Bethlehem.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus is the Savior and Messiah, born in Bethlehem, as promised by God.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Luke 2:25-38

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Luke 2:7

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: Acts 16:25-34

MONDAY: Acts 16:35-40

TUESDAY: Acts 17:1-4

WEDNESDAY: Acts 17:5-9

THURSDAY: Acts 17:10-15

FRIDAY: Acts 17:16-21

SATURDAY: Acts 17:22-29

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Matthew and Luke together as a family:



- **Salvation has come.** Matthew 1 records an angel's visit to Joseph. Joseph had decided that he would secretly divorce Mary. When the angel announced to Joseph the wonderful news that Mary's Son would be the promised Messiah, he instructed Joseph to name the boy Jesus, because He would save His people from their sins. The name *Jesus* is translated to mean "Yahweh saves." The name given by the angel for the boy identified Him as the promised Savior.
- **Jesus, the promised Messiah, was born.** Jesus, the promised Messiah, was born in Bethlehem. His birth fulfilled many prophecies from the Old Testament. The Book of Isaiah prophesied more than 700 years before Jesus' birth about the event. Matthew 1 identifies the birth of Jesus as a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Joseph, led by a decree, returned to the city of his ancestors, Bethlehem, to be registered. The Bible tells us that Joseph took Mary, who was pregnant, and they traveled to Bethlehem. While they were there, Jesus was born.
- **Let's celebrate.** In a place where animals were kept, Jesus—God's salvation—was born. To make His birth known, angels announced to the shepherds that the Messiah had been born. The shepherd's promptly searched for the child. As the shepherds celebrated Jesus' birth, Mary quietly kept watch and treasured the visit in her heart.
- **The Savior identified.** Mary and Joseph, in accordance with Jewish tradition, took Jesus to the temple to dedicate Him to the Lord and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving. In the temple were two faithful servants of the Lord. Simeon was a man who had received a revelation that he would not die before seeing the promised Messiah. Anna was an elderly woman who served God in the temple faithfully for many years. As Mary and Joseph approached the temple, Simeon knew Jesus was the promised Messiah. Simeon took Jesus in his arms and offered praise. Anna likewise identified Jesus as the promised Messiah, leaving no doubt about Who Jesus was for Mary and Joseph and others gathered in the temple complex.

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 31, 2017



BIBLE STORY:

Matthew 2

BIBLE VERSE:

Matthew 2:2

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

People knew Jesus was special.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We should worship Jesus.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Jesus is worthy of worship.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-5

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 16:5

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 17:30-34*

MONDAY: *Acts 18:1-4*

TUESDAY: *Acts 18:5-8*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 18:9-17*

THURSDAY: *Acts 18:18-23*

FRIDAY: *Acts 18:24-28*

SATURDAY: *Acts 19:1-7*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Matthew and Acts together as a family:



- **God has a specific purpose for each person and He desires faithful obedience to that purpose.** God, in His sovereignty, has given every person a specific job to do. In Matthew 2 we see that a job for a group of men from the east was to find and present gifts to the king of the Jews. These traveling men had come from what the Bible identifies as “the east” and may have traveled for up to two years. Having identified a star they believed announced the coming of a new king of the Jews, the wise men obediently set out on their journey. Likewise, Paul and Barnabas, as recorded in Acts 15, were obedient to God’s call. When the time came to revisit the churches that had been started as part of their ministry, Paul chose Silas as a traveling companion and returned to the churches. Barnabas took John Mark and continued his journey to spread the gospel.
- **Faithful followers.** The wise men arrived in the city of Jerusalem looking for the king of the Jews who had been born. Herod, the king, was very concerned about what this event might mean for his role as king. Herod told the wise men to find the child and report back to him so he could also worship the king. Later, the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod. Herod’s intentions were not God-honoring and the wise men, though likely not followers of God, were obedient to God’s warning.
- **The spread of the gospel.** When the wise men left Bethlehem, they likely spread the message of the birth as they returned to their own country. Many years later Paul and Silas began a new journey to spread the message of Jesus to churches. Paul chose another companion, Timothy, who was from a Jewish background. Paul and Silas, along with Timothy, preached in many churches as they traveled. The message of Jesus was spread as the missionaries shared the gospel and continually encouraged believers in the churches to follow their example of telling others about Jesus.

FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 7, 2018



BIBLE STORY:

1 Peter 1-2

BIBLE VERSE:

1 Peter 1:22b

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

Peter taught people about Jesus.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We can face tough times because we have hope in Jesus.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We can endure difficult times because we have hope in our future with Jesus.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 16:22-34

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 16:31

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 19:8-10*

MONDAY: *Acts 19:11-17*

TUESDAY: *Acts 19:18-22*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 19:23-27*

THURSDAY: *Acts 19:28-34*

FRIDAY: *Acts 19:35-41*

SATURDAY: *Acts 20:1-6*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study 1 Peter and Acts together as a family:



- **A living hope.** Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples, wrote a letter of encouragement to churches composed primarily of Christians who had been scattered because of persecution from Rome. These Christians had been living in various areas and had been part of the spread of the gospel throughout the region. These Christians had been faithful to God's command to share the message of Jesus. Peter encouraged the Christians to keep sharing the message in spite of persecution, because the message they were sharing was much too important to keep hidden. The Christians had a living hope in knowing that God's power was with them.
- **Persecuted.** Persecution was not something uncommon for the early Christians and God's Word is full of examples of times when Christ's followers were persecuted because of their faith. Paul and Silas, in one example, were taken to prison for teaching about Jesus. In an attempt to make sure they would not escape, the jailer put them in stocks in the interior portion of the prison. With this level of protection the jailed men couldn't escape.
- **Live a life that honors God.** Peter's letter to the Christians encouraged the believers to live lives that would honor God and be an example to others of what a life lived for God looks like. By living in this way, others would see their lives and desire to know what drove them to live that way. When Paul and Silas were in prison, they sang songs and worshiped Jesus. An earthquake hit and the jail flew open. The jailer assumed the prisoners had escaped. When Paul and Silas announced their presence, the jailer, moved by the Spirit, asked what he needed to do to be saved. Paul and Silas had a wonderful opportunity to share the good news with the jailer and his family. By living holy lives, as Peter suggests, Paul and Silas were given an opportunity to share the gospel with a jailer. As we live holy lives, God will give us opportunities to tell others about Him.

FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 14, 2018



BIBLE STORY FOR PRESCHOOLERS:

Acts 12:3-17

BIBLE STORY FOR KIDS:

1 Peter 3-5

BIBLE VERSE:

1 Peter 5:7

BABIES-PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

God will take care of us.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We must do what is good even when it is hard.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Even during suffering, our actions should honor God.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 17:22-34

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 17:30

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: Acts 20:7-12

MONDAY: Acts 20:13-16

TUESDAY: Acts 20:17-24

WEDNESDAY: Acts 20:25-31

THURSDAY: Acts 20:32-38

FRIDAY: Acts 21:1-6

SATURDAY: Acts 21:7-14

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study 1 Peter and Acts together as a family:



- **Always be ready to give a defense.** Peter began the second half of his first letter by encouraging Christians to always be ready to share the gospel with anyone. Peter's admonition began by highlighting the life of a Christian and the qualities that a Christian should have. Once someone notices the hope that is in you, be bold in telling about the gospel. Peter's life also showed his belief that God would provide for needs. As Acts 12 tells, Peter was miraculously released from prison the night before Herod planned to execute him. In Acts 17 Paul identified a statue in Athens dedicated to an unknown god. The statue served as the perfect opportunity to share the gospel with those in Athens.
- **Doing good.** Peter advised his readers to always do good. Peter gave a recommendation to the churches to be hospitable, even when they did not want to, and to always show Christlike love to others. Paul, likewise, as he made his address in Athens, admonished the crowds to live lives that were good, reminding them that God would judge men by the righteousness of Jesus. Since Jesus lived a perfect life, His righteousness was an impossible standard to live by. Ultimately, Christ paid the penalty of sin for all who believe in Him.
- **Stand firm.** The people of Athens were confused and had been led to worship many gods. Once Paul revealed the one true God to the Athenians, they were confronted with the truth. Some Athenians became believers and followers of God. There is no guarantee that the words we share with others will be received by them. However, Christians have a responsibility to share the gospel regardless, and must stand firm in their commitment to share. As Peter closed his letter, he used the same admonition to the church—stand firm in your faith! Continue to share the gospel message with all who need to hear it. Do not be disheartened when some choose not to listen. As you experience trials and frustrations know that throughout all, God is still in control.

FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 21, 2018



BIBLE STORY FOR PRESCHOOLERS:

Luke 4:16-28

BIBLE STORY FOR KIDS:

2 Peter

BIBLE VERSE:

2 Peter 3:18a

BABIES--PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

The Bible tells the story of Jesus.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We should continue learning about Jesus.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We should grow in our knowledge of Jesus so we can resist false teaching.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 16:16-19; Psalm 139:13-16

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Exodus 33:14

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: Acts 21:15-25

MONDAY: Acts 21:26-30

TUESDAY: Acts 21:31-36

WEDNESDAY: Acts 21:37-40

THURSDAY: Acts 22:1-10

FRIDAY: Acts 22:11-16

SATURDAY: Acts 22:17-22

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Luke, 2 Peter, and Acts together as a family:



- **Know the Word.** In Peter's second letter to the churches he shared that Christians need to be people of the Word. Peter highlighted the reality of false teachers among the congregations. Peter's admonition to the people was to discover the false teachings through knowing what God's Word taught. Christians could evaluate teaching they heard by matching it up to God's Word. Knowing truth highlights falsehoods.
- **Be like Christ.** Peter shared a list of qualities that Christians should possess. By becoming more familiar with God's Word, and by responding to God's love, one can display these qualities and characteristics and continue in growth and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Peter shared that believers should supplement their walk with goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, and a love of people that shows respect for all life.
- **Eyewitness accounts.** Peter assured the crowd that the words he spoke were not mere stories he had made up. Peter, himself, was an eyewitness to the events that he spoke about. Peter's eyewitness accounts gave the church boldness to teach about the events since they came directly from Peter's experience. God's Word is inspired and useful for teaching. All the words are truth, and by knowing the truth, Christians can boldly share the truth with others. Jesus, in Luke 4, shared the truth that He was indeed the Messiah sent from God.
- **Respect for life.** Paul and Silas traveled and preached about Jesus. The men took up residence with Lydia, a local businesswoman in Phillipi, whom Paul had helped become a follower of Jesus. As the believers went to pray, they encountered a young girl whom Paul had healed from an evil spirit. Paul understood, as did Peter, that life was precious and to be respected. Paul healed the girl. Once her owners discovered what Paul had done they were angry and had Paul arrested. God is the author of life and, as is seen in Psalm 139, God knit the body together as He intended. Rejoice in the life God gives!

FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 28, 2018



BIBLE STORY PRESCHOOLERS:

Acts 15:1-35

BIBLE STORY KIDS:

Jude

BIBLE VERSE:

Jude 1:20-21

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

Learn what the Bible teaches about Jesus.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Be ready to stand up for and tell others about Jesus.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

Be ready to defend and share the gospel with false teachers.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 18:24-28; 19:1-7

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 18:28

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 22:23-30*

MONDAY: *Acts 23:1-5*

TUESDAY: *Acts 23:6-11*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 23:12-18*

THURSDAY: *Acts 23:19-24*

FRIDAY: *Acts 23:25-35*

SATURDAY: *Acts 24:1-9*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Jude and Acts together as a family:



- **Defend your faith.** The Book of Jude is very similar in nature to Peter's second letter. Jude opened by telling his readers that his desire was to speak of the common salvation the believers shared. Jude was led by God's Spirit, however, to discuss the false teachings that were continuing in the church. Jude told his audience that smooth-talking preachers had infiltrated the church and were possibly leading many believers down a path of unrighteousness. We remember Peter's solution—know the truth! Jude went on to say that knowing the truth is good, but you should also give a defense of your faith to those teaching falsehoods.
- **Apollos received the truth.** Acts 15 and Acts 18 both give examples of Jude's suggestion to defend your faith. Acts 15 shows Paul's defense to church leaders about wrong teachings by some in the church. Acts 18 introduces Apollos, a believer in Ephesus, who was preaching. Priscilla and Aquila, former helpers alongside Paul, heard that Apollos was teaching the truth, but he was not teaching the whole truth. When Apollos finished his preaching, Priscilla and Aquila approached him and invited Apollos to hear the whole message of Christ.
- **The message continued to be shared.** Priscilla and Aquila shared the whole message with Apollos who then departed from them and began to share the message of Christ in the surrounding regions. Apollos' new-found knowledge allowed the message of Christ to spread throughout the world. Priscilla and Aquila were perfect examples of what Jude taught in his letter to the churches. By knowing the truth and defending that truth, Priscilla and Aquila helped Apollos go forth and teach an accurate account of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- **Be ready to stand up for your faith in Christ.** As believers today we should always be ready to stand up for our faith and beliefs and be encouraged to defend our faith when confronted with others who are not sharing the truth of the message of salvation.

FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 4, 2018



BIBLE STORY:

Joshua 3–4

BIBLE VERSE:

Joshua 1:9b

BABIES–PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

God helps people. (BT)

God is always with us. (P)

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

God is always with us.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We can have courage because God is always with us.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 20:22-35

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 20:35

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 24:10-14*

MONDAY: *Acts 24:15-21*

TUESDAY: *Acts 24:22-27*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 25:1-5*

THURSDAY: *Acts 25:6-12*

FRIDAY: *Acts 25:13-22*

SATURDAY: *Acts 25:23-27*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Joshua and Acts together as a family:



- **Fulfill the mission.** The Book of Joshua opens with Joshua being commissioned following the death of Moses. God spent some time reviewing with Joshua Israel's history. God then charged Joshua to lead the people of Israel into the land that God had promised them many years earlier. Joshua was called to fulfill the mission that God had ordained. Similarly, Paul, as he wrote to the Ephesian church in Acts 20, stood firm in the knowledge that he had fulfilled God's mission for his ministry there. Paul's mission was to finish the course of sharing the gospel—the commission given to him by Jesus Christ outside of Damascus.
- **Be holy as God is holy.** Poised on the banks of the Jordan River preparing to cross, Joshua charged the people to consecrate themselves because God was going to do something miraculous the next day. The consecration of the people allowed God to see them as He intended—people holy unto God. Paul also taught the Ephesians to choose holy living. Paul warned that after he left, many false teachers would come and attempt to lead the church to make decisions contrary to God's call. Similar to the messages of Peter and Jude, Paul also encouraged believers to live lives that honor God and to resist false teachings.
- **Deliverance.** God led the people of Israel across the Jordan River just as He promised them He would. The Israelites' faithfulness to see God's deliverance was rewarded by a miraculous crossing of a rain-swollen river, a miracle that could have only come from the hand of God.
- **Committed.** Safely on the other side of the river Joshua commanded 12 representatives to choose stones from the riverbed. The stones were to be erected as a memorial to remind the people, and future generations, of God's faithfulness and encourage committed worship of God. Paul likewise closed his discourse to the Ephesian church by challenging them to live lives committed to the worship of God.

FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 11, 2018



BIBLE STORY:

Joshua 2; 6

BIBLE VERSE:

Psalm 28:8a

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

God shows people what to do.

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We should trust and obey God.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

When we truly trust God, we obey God completely.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 22:3-8,15-22

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 22:15

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 26:1-7*

MONDAY: *Acts 26:8-11*

TUESDAY: *Acts 26:12-18*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 26:19-23*

THURSDAY: *Acts 26:24-32*

FRIDAY: *Acts 27:1-6*

SATURDAY: *Acts 27:7-12*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Joshua and Acts together as a family:



- **An odd request.** After Joshua and the people crossed the river and entered the promised land, God gave Joshua another task to complete. The task this time was one of battle, and the battle plan was a bit odd. Joshua and the priests and leaders were to march around the city of Jericho once a day for six days. On the seventh day, the same would happen, except the march this time would require seven trips around the city. After the marching on this day, trumpets would blast, the people would shout, and God would send victory.
- **Faithful obedience.** The people responded with obedience to this battle plan and as they faithfully completed the task God had given them, God provided the victory He had promised. The walls of Jericho fell and the people of Israel took the city as God intended. Their move into the promised land had begun.
- **Rahab.** God placed a woman, Rahab, inside the city. As two men spied the city before the battle, Rahab invited them in and told them that she knew God had given the city over to Israel. Rahab hid the spies while men from the city came looking for them. In exchange for Rahab's help, the men promised that she and her household would be saved if she hung a scarlet cord from her window in the wall.
- **Salvation.** Salvation came to Rahab and her family. As Israel entered Jericho, Rahab and all those who lived in her house were saved. Similar to this salvation, Paul shares a story in Acts 22 of his miraculous salvation. Paul identified himself as one opposed to the gospel and as one who was convinced that he was right. Paul went on to share about his salvation and being confronted by Jesus Christ and his subsequent commissioning to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. God had granted him new life in Christ and a new focus for his mission of sharing the gospel. Joshua and Paul both trusted God and were obedient to His commands. We should also trust and obey God in our daily lives.

FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 18, 2018



BIBLE STORY:

Joshua 10

BIBLE VERSE:

Psalms 62:8

BABIES—PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

God hears us talk to Him. (BT)

God answers prayer. (P)

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

God answers the prayers of His people.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

God answers the prayers of His people in the way that is best for them.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 26:19-29

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 26:20

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 27:13-20*

MONDAY: *Acts 27:21-26*

TUESDAY: *Acts 27:27-38*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 27:39-44*

THURSDAY: *Acts 28:1-6*

FRIDAY: *Acts 28:7-10*

SATURDAY: *Acts 28:11-16*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Joshua and Acts together as a family:



- **Gibeon.** Gibeon was a city in the southern region of the promised land. Gibeonites tricked Joshua into making a treaty with them for safety and protection. Once Joshua made this treaty—without God's guidance—five other cities in the region decided that it would be good for them to band together and fight against Gibeon, drawing Israel into a trap.
- **God rescued Gibeon.** Even though Joshua had made a poor decision to ally with Gibeon, God told him to go and fight. Joshua and his troops marched all night and arrived to engage the five kings in battle. As the battle raged, Joshua prayed for God to stop the sun from setting so Joshua and his troops could finish the job God had called them to do.
- **God's response.** In response to Joshua's prayer, God did exactly as Joshua asked—He stopped the sun from setting to provide enough light for the battle to continue. God rescued Gibeon in response to prayers offered by Joshua. God answers the prayers of His people and does so in a way that is best for them.
- **Followers of God.** Paul is described many times in Scripture as being a man who faithfully followed God, and he was often found praying and singing even when he was in prison. On one occasion, Paul was in prison before being sent to Rome. At that time Paul had the opportunity to share the message of his salvation with King Agrippa. Agrippa, his wife Bernice, and the governor, Festus, gathered to hear Paul. Paul boldly shared the message of Christ with the king and those gathered. Paul concluded by offering salvation to Agrippa as well as those around them. Though Agrippa did not become a Christian, Paul remained a faithful follower of God.
- **Pray and respond.** God hears the prayers of people. God responds and gives opportunities to share about His love with others. Let us pray and ask God to grant us opportunities to share the gospel with those we meet.

FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 25, 2018



BIBLE STORY:

Joshua 23-24

BIBLE VERSE:

Joshua 24:24

BABIES-PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH:

Obey God and love Him. (BT)

Obey God and worship Him. (P)

YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We should love God more than anyone or anything else.

OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH:

We should be completely devoted to God.

ADULT CORE PASSAGE:

Acts 28:17-28

FAMILY MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 28:31

FAMILY READING PLAN:

SUNDAY: *Acts 28:17-22*

MONDAY: *Acts 28:23-24*

TUESDAY: *Acts 28:25-29*

WEDNESDAY: *Acts 28:30-31*

THURSDAY: *1 Corinthians 1:1-9*

FRIDAY: *1 Corinthians 1:10-17*

SATURDAY: *1 Corinthians 1:18-25*

FAMILY BIBLE EXPLORATION

Share these points as you study Joshua and Acts together as a family:



- **Love God more than anything.** After Israel took the promised land, Joshua gathered the people once again on the plains of Shechem. Shechem was the place God had called Abraham to move many years before and where God issued the promise to make Abraham into a great nation. Joshua 24 shows a great nation assembled on the very land God had promised. Joshua issued the command to the people to love God more than anything else. The people once again committed themselves to following God and God alone, instead of the gods of the people around them.
- **Paul's life exemplified the command to love God more than anything.** The apostle Paul can be lifted up as an example of one who truly loved God more than anything. Paul had finally been delivered to Rome where he would stand trial before Caesar. Paul began his mission desiring to speak to Caesar and now he had been given that opportunity. As he spent his nights and days under house arrest awaiting his trial, Paul continued to encourage the believers to be faithful to God no matter what situation they were in. Paul lived his life as an example to the believers in how they should act and respond to trouble around them.
- **The response.** You can see a similar response by the people of Israel in Joshua 24 and the people of Israel in Acts 28. Both groups committed themselves, though not completely, to living lives that were examples to others of a devoted life to God. Joshua, in his most quoted words, stated that he and his family would follow God no matter what everyone else decided to do. Likewise, Paul asserted that he had been faithful to follow God no matter the circumstances or situations he encountered. We can use the lives of Joshua and Paul to strengthen our commitment to follow God and to tell others about the gospel.