

Dear Parents,

We have just begun our new teaching series, “Get Ready for Christmas.” This Family EnterAction Guide is designed to help you reinforce with your children what is being taught each week during the weekend services.

Each page has a week’s worth of fun ideas and activities you can do as a family. On the back of each weekly page, you will find the memory verse we are learning for the week.

We suggest that you keep this Family EnterAction Guide on your desk, dresser or kitchen table to remind your family to read it each day.

We pray as your children learn more about how to “Get Ready For Christmas,” they will “Enter into Action” and will begin to apply what they are learning in their daily life!

The Children’s Staff

Get Ready For Christmas

Week One

Word of the week is

“Hope”

Birth – Kindergarten

“Nothing is impossible with God.”

Luke 1:37 NIV

Grades 1 - 6

“For nothing is impossible with God.”

Luke 1:37 NIV

Get Ready For Christmas

Week One – Hope

Day One: What Should I See?

Grab a Bible and look up this week's Bible story in Luke 1:26-56

Take turns reading the verses in the story. When you are all done, talk about the story by allowing everyone at the table a chance to answer the following questions about the story. Pass a wooden spoon around and the person with the spoon is the only one who can talk, while everyone else practices good listening skills. After everyone has answered the first question, go on to the second and then the third question. Question One: What do you think is the most amazing part of this story? Question Two: How do you think Mary and Joseph felt after an angel visited them? Question Three: Would you like to have an Angel visit you? Tell why or why not.

Day Two: What's the Key?

The key to this story is to understand that we have HOPE no matter what circumstances we are in. God did a miracle by sending an angel to Mary and then choosing her to carry God's Son. But God still does miracles today. While you are eating breakfast, lunch or dinner today, share a time when you have witnessed God doing a miracle. Maybe it was by healing someone of a disease or by bringing someone to know Christ before they died. Then give your family a chance to share their own stories. Afterward, say a family prayer thanking God for all He does for us.

Day Three: What's That to Me? (Art supplies needed: poster board, paints, paintbrushes, and markers)

As a family, make a poster advertising the HOPE that we have in Jesus because of the miraculous power He has. Include the memory verse for the week, "For Nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37 NIV) Use a large poster board and let everyone in the family participate in the project. When you are done, think of someone who needs to see the poster to be reminded of the Hope that we have in Jesus and deliver it to them.

Day Four: How Should I Be? (3 x 5 cards needed)

Since we know that God can do miracles, we need to trust Him with the problems we have right now. Give everyone a 3 x 5 card and ask them to draw a picture or write down what problem or situation they need to trust God with. Then have them write the words, "Nothing is Impossible with God" and sign their name. Then have everyone trade cards. Pray for the person whose card you received this week.

Day Five: Live-It!

It's time to live out what you have learned this week about hope! Who do you know that needs to hear about God's hope? Is there someone who is in the hospital or has been sick for a while? Or maybe they are going through a hard time right now with their job or family? Reach out to this person by doing something kind for them and sharing God's hope with them. Maybe invite them over for dinner or go and visit them in the hospital. Take the time to be there for someone else this week!

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Two

Word of the week is

“Prepare”

Birth – Kindergarten

“Be ready to tell about Jesus.”

1 Peter 3:15B (Paraphrase)

Grades 1 - 6

“Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope.”

1 Peter 3:15 CEV

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Two – Prepare

Day One: What Should I See?

Read the story of John the Baptist in John 3:1-12

Sit together as a family and choose one person to be the narrator and read the story aloud. Choose someone else to be John the Baptist and others to be the people he told about Jesus. Act out the story together. Then talk about what made John the Baptist so special.

Day Two: What's the Key?

The key to unlocking this lesson is the word "prepare." What does it mean to prepare for something? Play this game to help your kids understand. Choose a topic like giving a gift to someone, making Christmas cookies or getting ready for school. Then take a piece of paper and fold it into 4 equal parts, drawing a step in each square. Cut on the fold lines and mix up the squares. See if your child can order the steps correctly!

Day Three: What's That to Me?

Right now is the time to prepare for Christmas. Write down some things that everyone in the family can do to help prepare for Christmas, like decorating the tree, wrapping presents, and sending out Christmas cards. Then cut these into strips and put them in a bowl, so that everyone can take turns choosing one. (If you have younger children, partner them up with a parent or older sibling.) Talk about how John prepared the way for the very first Christmas and how they are helping the family prepare for this Christmas.

Day Four: How Should I Be? (Card making supplies needed)

Think about someone who doesn't go to church. Then make them a special invitation asking them to come to your church next week with you. Offer to pick them up on the way if possible. Often times people are more willing to attend church during the holidays, so it is a great time to invite your unchurched friends or family.

Day Five: Live-It!

It's time to live out what you have learned this week about preparing the way for Jesus! As a family, reach out to another family in need this Christmas. Ask your church or school if there is someone that you can "adopt" and do something to help them have a special Christmas. Maybe it is buying them a tree, some gifts for the children, or groceries for a yummy turkey dinner. Be sure and invite them to come to church with you next week so they can hear about Jesus.

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Three

Word of the week is

“Give”

Birth – Kindergarten

“God loved us and gave His Son”

John 3:16 (Paraphrase)

Grades 1 - 6

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16 NIV

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Three – Give

Day One: What Should I See? (Nativity scene needed)

Read the Christmas story aloud together. It is found in Luke 2.

After reading the story, set up a nativity scene. Allow the kids to place the figures where they think they would go in the Christmas scene. Then ask them to retell the story to you, using the figures to help them. (Purchase a Nativity set like Fisher Price Little People Christmas Story Set or PlayMobil Nativity Set. Leave it out so the children can play with it.)

Day Two: What's the Key?

The important word this week is "give." God gave us a way to heaven. He gave us His son, Jesus. We give gifts this Christmas because God gave the first gift to us. When you are eating together as a family, go around the table and finish this sentence, "This Christmas I will give Jesus_____." Jesus wants you to give Him your heart, by making Him the boss of your life. He wants you to love Him and worship Him every day. How will you do that this season?

Day Three: What's That to Me?

At Christmas time it is easy to think about "getting" instead of "giving." Using the word "GIVE" make an acrostic that spells out what the word give means. (Example: G-God gave us His son, Jesus.) Let everyone in the family help.

Day Four: How Should I Be?

Allow your children to wrap a special gift for a friend or family member. Then make a gift tag for your package and write the words, "Jesus is the best gift ever!" on the gift tag.

Day Five: Live-It!

Consider as a family, how you can give to help other families or orphans who need help. There are many children around the world who have no mom or dad. Get involved with an organization that reaches out to them and give back to God by giving to others who are less fortunate. One organization to check out is www.hadassahshope.org.

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Four

Word of the week is

“Seek”

Birth – Kindergarten

“Seek the Lord.”

Isaiah 55:6 NLT

Grades 1 – 6

“Seek the Lord while you can find Him. Call on Him now while He is near.”

Isaiah 55:6 NLT

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Four – Seek

Day One: What Should I See?

Read Matthew 2:1-11 as a family together.

Talk about how the shepherds and the wise men looked for Jesus. Ask everyone if they would rather have been a shepherd or a wise man (who saw Jesus) and have them share why.

Day Two: What's the Key?

The word “seek” means to look or explore for something or someone. First the shepherds and then the wise men looked for Jesus and found Him. Play a family game of Hide and Seek today! (If you have little ones, pair them up with someone older.) You can pretend that those hiding are “Baby Jesus” and the seekers are the shepherds and wise men! Have fun “seeking!”

Day Three: What's That to Me? (Sticky notes needed)

Have everyone in the family make little sticky “love” notes for everyone else. They can write “I love you” or “God loves you” or “Seek the Lord” on the note and then sign their name. When finished, have them go and hide their little notes somewhere they know the person will find it. (Mom’s might go on her bathroom mirror, Dad’s on his briefcase, brother’s in his box of cars, sister’s in her book, etc.)

Day Four: How Should I Be?

Seeking God means being active. Try doing something new this week to seek after God. Maybe it is praying together as a family, where everyone says at least a one-sentence prayer. Or maybe you start reading a Christian book together as a family, such as the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis. Lastly, maybe it is making a new commitment to get to church each week in this New Year.

Day Five: Live-It!

How do you live out the word “seek” in your life? You seek to know more about God! Think about how you are spending your time together as a family. Is it watching TV or playing electronics. Instead of doing those activities, shut the TV off and spend some time together reading God’s Word around the dining room table. Make hot chocolate and coffee and have everyone bring their own Bible to the table. Then spend 15 minutes reading silently before you each share what you learned. Close your “family quiet time” by praying aloud together!

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Five

Word of the week is

“Grow”

Birth – Kindergarten

“Jesus grew wise and strong.”

Luke 2:52 (Paraphrase)

Grades 1 - 6

“Jesus became wise, and He grew strong. God was pleased with Him and so were the people.”

Luke 2:52 CEV

Get Ready For Christmas

Week Five – Grow

Day One: What Should I See?

Find Luke 2:39-52 in your Bible.

Read the story of Jesus as a boy at the temple during the Passover Feast. Have everyone take turns answering the following questions. 1) What do you think it was like traveling to Jerusalem each year for the Feast? 2) Would you have liked to be a child in those days? Why or why not? 3) What do you think Jesus was talking about with the teachers at the temples?

Day Two: What's the Key?

Grow is our key word of the day because that's what Jesus did! The Bible tells us that Jesus grew in four different ways: wisdom, stature, favor with man and favor with God. Talk about how you can grow in each of those four ways this next year!

Day Three: What's That to Me? (Growth chart needed)

One of the ways that Jesus grew was in stature. That means he grew bigger and stronger, just like all kids do! Find a cool place in your house where you can hang up a growth chart or mark directly on the wall. Take turns measuring and marking how tall everyone is in your family. Keep track of your physical growth this next year by using this chart or wall.

Day Four: How Should I Be?

Another way that Jesus grew was in favor with God. Jesus went through difficult times in His life, just like we all go through difficult times. He leaned on and trusted in His Father, God, to help Him get through those tough times. He allowed those tough times to help Him grow. Your family can do the same thing. Talk about something that you are dealing with right now that is difficult and remember that God can help you grow in your faith and your trust in Him through this time!

Day Five: Live-It! (3 x 5 cards needed)

Pass out 3 x 5 cards to everyone in the family. Ask them to write down or draw pictures of two ways that they want to grow in this year. It may be something like, "Being organized with my schoolwork", getting better at baseball, making three new friends at school or reading the Bible each day. Here's the catch! Mom or Dad gets to write a 3rd way that they would like to see each of their kids grow! Put the cards on your mirror or somewhere that you can be reminded daily of your growth goals.