

FAMILY BIBLE PLAN Part 3

The Life of Christ - Matthew-John



This set of lessons is the third section of a five volume set of devotionals to help parents teach an overview of the entire Bible and basic doctrines for families with children aged Kindergarten through high school.

By Shelley L. Withem

Psalm 145:4 “One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts.”

How to Use these Lessons

Welcome to Family Bible Plan! These lessons are designed for parents who desire to spend time teaching God's Word to their family in a systematic way that emphasizes application to everyday life. They are also intended to be used for families with a wide range of ages. Most other materials available favor either small children or high school students. However, the format of these lessons is designed so the parent can pick and choose which questions and applications would work best for their family group. They are appropriate for families with children ages kindergarten through high school.

The first section of each lesson is called "Discussion." This part takes you through the passage to be studied for that day and gives questions to discuss as well as background information that will help you understand the passage. The next section, "Application," gives insight as to what can be applied to your lives from that story in the Bible. The underlined parts of each of these sections are the questions you should ask your family during the lessons. The answers are given in parentheses after the underlined question. "Possible answers" are given for open-ended questions that ask for opinions; you may come up with better answers than the ones given for those! Also, suggested passages to memorize together are given intermittently.

The last section, "Digging Deeper," is only for those families who wish to assign written work to older children in the family. For example, if a home-schooling family taught these lessons then the older children could complete the "Digging Deeper" sections for homework. Finishing all of the "Digging Deeper" lessons in this section could be credited as New Testament Survey Part 1. The "Digging Deeper" lessons cover sections that would be difficult to cover together with children that are under junior high age. Also, some sections are taught here that are not covered for the younger children.

The purpose of studying the Bible together is much more than gaining mere knowledge of its construction and its stories. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 says, "4 "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! 5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. 8 "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 9 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

I pray that as you and your family open God's Word together in your home regularly you will grow in your relationship with God and each other. God's Word is powerful and unlimited in its ability to give you strength, hope, joy, perseverance and peace. God gave us Himself when He gave us His Word. I hope you find it ever-new and always convicting, spurring you and your children to change and become more like Christ.

Studying God's Word becomes much more than just an exercise, something to check off the list, when we look at God's purposes. We come to love Him more and more when we study His Word. It enables us to love Him with our whole being, heart and soul and mind. We will grow in our love for Him and for our families. And as we study, pass it on to our children, not just one or two nights a week in a formal study, but as we talk, walk, lie down and rise up. The heart of these lessons is not to have academic understanding – it is to grow in Christ and become what He has designed us to be. Regularly teaching your children in a systematic and purposeful way gives you opportunities to mold your child's character. If we only teach our child in the heat of conflict, they may not hear us or be positively impacted by our message. It is when we daily impart to our child the truths of God and live those truths before them that God can use us in the spiritual development of our children.

Do not think you must teach every part of every lesson. There will be parts that will be appropriate for very young children in each lesson, but most of the lesson may not apply. Choose those things in the lesson that you feel will apply best to what you are working on with your children at the time. Pay special attention to the "Application" section, for this will give you ideas on how to make the lesson practical and real to them. I will indicate places that are not appropriate for very young learners, but those of you with older students don't be afraid to broach difficult passages. You may be surprised at what your child can absorb and understand. It is most important, though, to not be consumed by just getting through the lesson. This is the time that you are to speak to the character of your child, whether they are 5 or 18. Ask them how they are doing in their walk with God. Do they trust Him? Are they submitting to the authorities God has placed in their lives? This is the time you can share your struggles and how God has changed and rescued you. They will never forget it. I know, because my mother and father did this with me!

In Christ's love,

Shelley L. Withem

Special note for the Life of Christ Study:

We are posting the Life of Christ series first on our website because this year, 2008-2009, the ncc kids' ministry program on Sunday mornings will be studying Matthew, Luke and John.

There are two ways to use this series on the Life of Christ. The first is to read the indicated Bible passages for each lesson and proceed as through the "Discussion" and "Application" sections. The second way to use this material is to use the book, *Jesus Christ: The Greatest Life*. Instead of jumping around in the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), this harmony of the gospels is a compilation of all four gospels in chronological order. This book has taken each of the gospels and blended them together with nothing added or left out. Johnston M. Cheney translated this version from the original Greek, so this is not a familiar translation such as the NIV or the NASB. Each lesson as the Bible passages listed and the page numbers for those using *The Greatest Life*. The story name corresponds to one of the sections in the book, but the page numbers usually cover more than just that section.

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Memorization for Lessons 134-139

Galatians 4:4-7 NIV

“But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”

Lesson 134 - Between the Testaments – the 400 Silent Years

1. Discussion– (Note: Most of this information is too advanced for preschool – 1st grade and should be skipped. If you do wish to cover an event during this period though, the events of Hanukah happened during this period. Check out a picture book from the library and read this story to them.) Between the books of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament and the events leading up Jesus’ birth in the New Testament approximately 400 years pass. They are called the 400 silent years because no new revelation from God comes to Israel during that time. However, these times were far from uneventful! Alexander the Great conquered Persia and as a result Greece ruled Israel. During this period the Old Testament was translated into Greek and it was this version, the Septuagint or LXX, which Jesus quoted from in the New Testament. The Romans in turn conquered Greece and they appointed Herod to govern Jerusalem in 37BC. Roman roads and trade routes were established throughout the Roman Empire and the Greek language became the universal language of the land around the Mediterranean Sea. Also, the iron hand of the Romans had achieved a peace unknown at almost any other time in history, which was known as the Pax Romana. God was preparing the way for the spread of the Gospel throughout the world.
2. Application– During this time several books were written which are called the Apocrypha. Some Bibles contain these books, but most Bibles do not. Below is a section from *Easton’s Bible Dictionary* explaining why:
 - “(1.) They are not once quoted by the New Testament writers, who frequently quote from the LXX. Our Lord and his apostles confirmed by their authority the ordinary Jewish canon, which was the same in all respects as we now have it.
 - (2.) These books were written not in Hebrew but in Greek, and during the “period of silence,” from the time of Malachi, after which oracles and direct revelations from God ceased till the Christian era.
 - (3.) The contents of the books themselves show that they were not part of Scripture.”The Old Testament Apocrypha consists of fourteen books, the chief of which are the Books of the Maccabees (q.v.), the Books of Esdras, the Book of Wisdom, the Book of Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, etc.”¹

Jesus in Luke 24:44-47 affirms which books are to be included the Old Testament canon (inspired books). Read this passage together and discuss which passages Christ might be speaking of from the Old Testament when He declares that it prophesied His death (Isaiah 53) and His resurrection after three days (Jonah). In the Hebrew Old Testament the books start with the Books of Moses (Genesis – Deuteronomy) and ends with the Psalms with all of the other books we have in our Old Testament in between. Thus, Jesus Himself gives us the beginning and ending of the Old Testament. He doesn’t mention the books of the Apocrypha at all.

¹Easton, M. G., M. A. D. D., *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1996.

There are many historical and geographical inaccuracies in these books – therefore they cannot be part of God’s Word, which is perfect in every part. Here are two examples of errors found in the Apocrypha:

“The books of the Apocrypha abound in doctrinal, ethical, and historical errors. For instance, Tobit claims to have been alive when Jeroboam revolted (931 B.C.) and when Assyria conquered Israel (722 B.C.), despite the fact that his lifespan was only a total of 158 years (Tobit 1:3-5; 14:11)! Judith mistakenly identifies Nebuchadnezzar as king of the Assyrians (1:1, 7). Tobit endorses the superstitious use of fish liver to ward off demons (6: 6, 7)!

The theological errors are equally significant. Wisdom of Solomon teaches the creation of the world from pre-existent matter (7:17). II Maccabees teaches prayers for the dead (12:45-46), and Tobit teaches salvation by the good work of almsgiving (12:9) -- quite contrary to inspired Scripture (such as John 1:3; II Samuel 12:19; Hebrews 9:27; Romans 4:5; Galatians 3:11).”

From: <http://www.inplainsite.org/html/apocrypha.html>

If you wish, look up a book from the Apocrypha online and read some of the verses.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. From a history book or encyclopedia look up Hanukah (or Chanukah) and relate the events that led to this celebration that is still observed by the Jews today during the later part of December.
- b. Find a copy of the Apocrypha (available on the net) and read at least a chapter or two. (Suggestion: Bel and the Dragon) Research how and why these books were written and then write a paragraph explaining why or why not Christians should study these books.

Lesson 135 - An Angel's Message to a Virgin
Pages 27-30 or Lk 1
Other passages covered - Jn. 1:1-18; Mk 1:1-17

FYI – The writers of this chronology maintain that Jesus' ministry really was closer to four years than three and it is laid out on that premise. (For an explanation of this see pages 271-277) The first section is called "Years of Preparation" and deals with all the events before Jesus' first full year of ministry.

1. Discussion for all ages – Before reading "An Angel's message to a Virgin" on page 28, read John 1: 1-13 together. Who is this passage talking about? How does it describe Jesus? (Jn 1:1, 3, 5 – He is described as God, the Creator and the Light) **Worldview Alert** – Mormons translate vs. 1 to read, "the Word was *a god*." – That is an incorrect translation. The indefinite article, "a", is *not* in the original Greek and the verb actually denotes *equality*! What does "the Word became flesh" mean? (cf. vs. 14 – God became flesh – a human being) Now turn to "An Angel's Message to A Virgin" on page 28 (Luke 1:26-28). How does Mary respond to the angel? (possible answers: fearful, troubled, humble, submissive) With older children discuss why a virgin birth for the Messiah was necessary. (In order for Jesus to be sinless, he couldn't have been born with a human father. Sin entered into the world through Adam – Rom. 5:12. Jesus did not have a sin nature because his father was God.) Also talk about the implications of a pregnancy for Mary without a husband in that day. (Possible answer: women who became pregnant without being married were banished from their homes and some were even put to death.)
2. Application for all ages – After Mary learns about the birth of Jesus by the angel Gabriel she rushes to her cousin, Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist (Two Women Rejoice section or Luke 1:39-56). What amazing thing happens when she comes in? (the baby in Elizabeth's womb jumps for joy) What does Elizabeth say about Mary? ("you are blessed more than all women") For what does she commend Mary? (Belief in what the angel told her) Mary was just a person like the rest of us – just a young teenager, actually, but she met the toughest test of her life with faith. She believed what God said even though it seemed impossible. Gabriel said, "...with God, nothing is impossible". How do we react when trials or tests come to us? Mary knew that what God asked her to do she could do. Not because of any great qualities in her life, but because of the greatness of God. What thing in your life or your family's life seems impossible right now? Identify areas in your life in which you need to yield your fears and doubts to him in faith as Mary did. Pray together over this area recognizing that God can do anything and tell God of your determination to obey Him in every circumstance.
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Page 14 in the text, Jesus Christ: The Greatest Life, (from here on referred to as the "text") shows a chart of the four gospels. (If you aren't using the book, try to find one on the Internet.) There is also more information on page 24. Reproduce the chart adding the following information:

- i. Under the “Written to” section list evidence for this claim. (You may use commentaries, Bible dictionaries, or any other source for this information.)
 - ii. In the “Emphasis on” section include at least one verse from that gospel that demonstrates this emphasis. Write out the verse and include the reference.
 - iii. In the “Themes” section include at least one verse that illustrates the theme from that book.

- b. Study of the mother of Jesus, Mary, is sometimes neglected by evangelicals due to the worship of Mary by the Catholic Church. However Mary is an important person in the story of Jesus and much can be gleaned from her example. From pages 28-30 (or Luke 1:5-56) write a brief character sketch of Mary. Pay special attention to her prayer (also called The Magnificat). Conclude with what you learned from her life that applies to you.

Lesson 136 - Good News of Great Joy

Pages 32-36 or Luke 2:1-21.

Other passages – Luke 2:22-39; Matt. 1:18-25, 2:1-12

1. Discussion – With older children start the discussion with the section, Call Him Jesus (Mt. 1:18-25). How do you think Joseph felt when he found out about Mary’s pregnancy? (possible answers: angry, hurt, revengeful, disbelieving) Old Testament law considered an engagement equal with marriage and Joseph was within his rights to divorce her or even have her executed. What does he consider doing? (He didn’t want to make a public spectacle of her, so he thought about quietly divorcing her.) What does that tell us about him? (possible answers: kind, forgiving, compassionate, doesn’t retaliate when wronged). As he agonizes over what to do an angel appears and puts his fears at rest. How does the angel address him? (son of David) Why is this an appropriate greeting? (Joseph is the direct descendant of King David – The angel knew, as did all Jews, that the Messiah would come from David’s family. See Matthew 1:17) The angel tells him to go ahead and marry Mary and that the son she would have would save the world from sin. Joseph, as the legal father, was to name him Jesus, which is Greek for “Jehovah the Savior.” Some time later Joseph and Mary are required to go to Bethlehem to register for the Roman tax. Why would they have to go Bethlehem when they live in Nazareth? They may have *thought* they were going because that was their hometown and where the Romans required them to be registered, but look up Micah 5:2 to find out the real reason!) They arrive in Bethlehem and find it packed with people (By the way, the Bible does *not say* she rode there on a donkey! More likely they walked since they were poor). There was no room for them at any inn. The Son of God, who would save the world, was born in a dirty, smelly stable and put in a food trough for a bed! Who does God choose to share the message of the coming Messiah with? Shepherds! Shepherds were on the bottom of the social ladder in Israel at that time. They, along with women, were not allowed to testify in court and their every move was considered suspect. Yet God chose these humble men to testify of the birth of the Savior.
2. Application– John 1:11 says, “He came unto His own and His own did not receive him.” Israel was looking for a king, one who would deliver them from Roman rule and set up an earthly kingdom. A song from a few years ago speculated, “How should a king come?” Certainly Jesus did not come in the way anyone expected! Was Jesus coming to free the Jews from the Romans? What does the angel tell Joseph was His mission? (Jesus would save His people from their *sins*.) The people that God used, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds, were just ordinary people, going about their business, not in any position to do any great and wonderful things for God. Yet God chose them. We need to understand that God wants to use us as we go about our ordinary lives. What He needs is willingness, faithfulness and obedience. How did Mary, Joseph and the shepherds demonstrate these qualities? (possible answers: Mary didn’t argue with the angel – she accepted her position with humility and grace, realizing that it might bring her shame in the minds of others; Joseph readily believed the angel and then obeyed God’s mission for him – caretaker of God’s Son; the shepherds really listened and rejoiced at the message – they didn’t

doubt – they praised God and told others about the baby who had come.) Share times when God has used you in the ordinary times of your life. Have you ever had a “divine appointment”? Tell about it. How can you be ready for God to use you this week, today?

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Imagine you are Joseph as he learns the news about Mary and what he believes are the dashing of his hopes for a loving and beautiful relationship with Mary. Write two journal entries that Joseph might have made (had he kept a journal!) the day before the angel’s visit and the day after. Be sure to include all the information included in the text as well as his feelings.
- b. Research why Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem eight days after his birth. Write a paragraph about this information, who they met there and the importance of these two people in the story of Jesus.

Lesson 137 – Gifts for a King

Pages 35-38 or Matt 2:1-23 & Luke 2:40

Other passages: Luke 2:41-52; Mt. 3:1-12; Mk 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18

1. Discussion – The next group of people who come and worship Jesus are a great contrast to the humble shepherds. They are the Magi, or wise men, from the East, probably Persia. How did these men know about the birth of Jesus? Besides the star what other way could they have known about a coming king? (They most likely had all the Old Testament, particularly Daniel 9, because many Jews stayed behind in Persia after the exile period and they had copies of the Hebrew Scriptures.) What did the Magi expect to find when they got to Jerusalem? (That everyone knew about the birth of God’s Son and all would know where he was.) When they came to King Herod what did they ask? (Where is the one born King of the Jews?) What did he do? (He had the priests and teachers of the Law look into the Bible and see what they were talking about.) What part of Micah 5:2 might alarm the king? (That a ruler had been born.) What did he tell them? What did he plan to do? (He lied and told them go, find the baby and come back and tell him where the baby was because he wanted to worship him too.) The Magi go on to Bethlehem and give their gifts; gold, frankincense and myrrh. (Jesus was probably between 1 and 2 years old by this time – note they no longer live in the stable but a house.) The wise men were NOT at the manger!) Does the fact of the three gifts mean there were three magi? How many were there? (No one knows! – Three gifts does not necessarily prove that only three came; the plural means there was more than one wise man.) These were sacred gifts, meant for a king sent by God. (The gifts are symbolic: They gave gold for his royalty, frankincense for His divinity and myrrh for His suffering.) What happens after their visit? (They are warned in a dream from God to not go back to Herod, because he was going to try and kill the child.) Joseph and his family flee to Egypt, which was prophesied in Hosea 11:1, and stay there until the death of Herod. Discuss with older children the terrible thing Herod does in Bethlehem after Joseph’s escape. (Mt. 2:16-18. Herod has every single male child ages 2 and below murdered.)
2. Application– It is interesting to note that only the Magi, out of all the people of the world at that time, interpret and correctly understand the prophecies of the Old Testament. They also act on their understanding. They leave their home to see the newborn king and bring him gifts that show their worship and belief in the Lord Jesus. When the wise men of Herod learned of the birth of the king did they go with the Magi to worship and rejoice? No. Many people know about God and the Bible, but they do not act on what they know. James says, “I will show you my faith by my works.” The wise men are a good example to us of what faith looks like in a person. They didn’t care that they were the only ones coming to Jesus; they just wanted to worship Him. How have we searched for Christ? Do we act on what we know? How can we worship the Lord in a special way this week? Are we willing to stand up and be obedient even if we are the only one who is? Identify areas in your life where you need to act on what you know from God’s Word. Determine an action that you can take to change this and tell your parents about it afterwards.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Using a commentary, Bible handbook, dictionary or any other resource you have, research the star that the wise men saw. Give various explanations that have been given that explain what the star was that they saw. Chose which one you think is the best explanation and explain why you think this.
- b. Write an article for the “Bethlehem Times” as if you were one of the reporters on the day of the events of Matt. 2:16-18. You may use other sources to help you get more information on this event.

Lesson 138 – Jesus’ Baptism
Pages 38-41 or Mt. 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-38
Other passages: Mt 3:1-12, Mk 1:2-8; Lk 3:1-18

1. Discussion– John the Baptist, a cousin of Jesus, had been preaching that the people of Israel needed to repent. He was an attention-getter as he wore camel’s hair clothing and a leather belt, lived in the wilderness and ate locusts (grasshoppers!) and honey. Isaiah had prophesied that a prophet would come before Messiah, “I send my messenger before you, to prepare a path for you.” John did this by telling the people that they needed to turn away from their selfish and sinful ways and prepare their hearts for the message of the Christ who was soon to come. Some of the people even thought John might be the Messiah himself. John knew better. Jesus, at about the age of 30 (in Numbers 4:1-4 it indicates that a priest started his ministry at the age of 30), comes down from Nazareth to see John. What does He ask? (He wanted to be baptized.) How does John respond? Why would John try to stop Him? (Because he knew Jesus was sinless and did not need to repent from sin) What does Jesus say? (It was appropriate to do what was right.) Look up Is. 53:12 and II Cor. 5:21. These verses indicate that Christ humbled Himself and was “numbered” among sinners. This is the official beginning of Jesus’ ministry to the people of Israel. What was Jesus doing as He came out of the water of the Jordan? (praying) What happened next? (As Jesus rises from the water the voice of God the Father is heard commending His Son and then the Holy Spirit descended on Him *like* a dove, Note: no actual dove was present! However, this is where we get the sign of a dove for the Holy Spirit.) The Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are clearly seen at this occasion.
2. Application– Jesus’ baptism by John was an act of obedience to the Father, an acknowledgment to the Father and to the people of Israel that He had arrived and was dedicated to bring healing, love and ultimately salvation to the world. Ask your children how Jesus’ baptism is different from the other baptisms John performed. (Jesus was not repenting from sin) Why would the people need to repent before they met Jesus? Is this still true today? Yes, it is crucial to understand our need of a savior and our inability to reach God on our own merits. Just as the rulers of Israel, who thought they were righteous and didn’t need to repent, many people today refuse to admit their sin and their need for salvation. Do you have a hard time admitting your sin? Does pride stand in the way of you being in close relationship to the Lord? Pray and repent of the sins that are bothering you and ask for God’s forgiveness (Jn 1:9). Also, pray for your unsaved family members and friends today, that they would be willing to humble themselves and seek the Lord. Think of ways you can be like John and “prepare the way of the Lord” for your unsaved friends and loved ones.
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Many denominations baptize infants. Do some research on the practice and write a persuasive paragraph (with topic sentence, body and clincher) on why you think infants should or should not be baptized. You must use Scripture references to back up your stand!

- b. Write about a time you were (or *are*) able to be like John the Baptist and “prepare the way for the Lord”. Tell how you felt, what you said and what the outcome was. (Note: If you are sharing about a current “John the Baptist” time you may not be able to give the outcome.) How did the Lord help you? Did your training from youth group help you? If so, how?
- c. Write a compare/contrast paragraph about the differences in the genealogies of Christ found in Luke and Matthew. Why are two given? Who do they include and whom do they leave out? Why?

Lesson 139 - Tempted in Body, Soul and Spirit
Pages 41-43 or Mt. 4:1-11; Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-13.
Other passages – Jn. 1:19-34

1. Discussion– Right after Jesus was baptized where did He go? (the wilderness) How long was he there? (forty days) Why was He there? (The Spirit led Him there to be tempted!) What amazing thing did Jesus do during the 40 days? (He did not eat!) At this point Satan appears to Jesus and just like in the Garden of Eden he attempted to make Jesus depart from the Father and sin as Eve and Adam did. (It is interesting to note that Satan knew very well who Jesus is as he addresses Him as the “Son of God”.) There are three ways that Satan tempts Jesus. What did he say to Jesus first? (You are hungry and since you have power as the Son of God make the stones into bread) We can only imagine how hungry Jesus must have been because we have never gone without food for 40 days. What was Satan trying to get Jesus to do? (By making the stones into bread, Jesus would have used his power in a selfish way.) Jesus did not come to use His power for Himself. NEVER did He use His power as the Son of God selfishly. He came to serve, not be served. What did Jesus say to Him? (a quote from Deut. 8:3) Each time Jesus counters Satan’s tricks with God’s Word. What is the next temptation? (Satan this time uses Scripture himself, albeit wrongly.) What does he say Jesus is promised? How does Jesus respond? (Deut. 6:16) Why does He use that passage? (Jesus meant that to test God is to try to force His hand to do what we want.) What is the next temptation? Is Satan really able to offer the world’s kingdoms to Jesus? (Absolutely – see Rev. 13.7; Jn 14:30) What sin is Satan trying to get Jesus to commit here? (To take a shortcut – refuse Calvary!) If Jesus had taken control of the world under the aegis of Satan, the torment of the cross and the resultant salvation for man would have never happened! What was Jesus’ response? (a quote from Deut 6:13-15) Satan is unmasked here. What he really wants is for Jesus to worship *him!* He wants to be like the Most High. What happens after Satan leaves? (The angels ministered to Jesus.)
2. Application– There is so much here to apply to our own lives. First of all, we need to recognize the greatness of Jesus Christ and His power to resist Satan. He is truly the Son of God. He is not selfish and does not use His power for His own advantage. He is humble and obedient to the Father. He is willing to take the harder way and endure Calvary for our sake. Also, it is important to emphasize to your children the way Jesus resisted temptation. What did He do each time Satan tempted Him? (quote the Bible) This is one of the core reasons we spend so much time in God’s Word – to know what is right so we can discern what is wrong and not sin. Look up Ps. 119:11 and discuss why we memorize God’s Word. Lastly, *we* do not always come out triumphant when Satan tempts. We tend to be selfish and want to control God rather than let Him control us. We also want to do things our own way and not the way that is God’s design for us. Talk about ways that your children fail, discuss your own struggles. Are we trying to take shortcuts or are we willing to do things God’s way, even though it may seem hard and/or not practical? Are we impatient with God’s timing in our lives? Are we selfish or are looking out for the interests of others? Pick one or two Bible verses that you will use this week to “renew your mind” (Rom.

12:1-2) and to help you avoid Satan's tricks. Give an account next time you meet about how you resisted temptation.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Draw a comparison between the temptations of Eve and Adam and the temptation of Christ. Use I John 2:16 as a guide (the lust of the flesh, eyes and pride of life). Show how each of these was used in Eden and in the wilderness and what the response of each was. Draw conclusions that apply to your life.
- b. Tell about a time you were tempted and were able to use God's Word to help you avoid sin. What verses helped you? How did they help? Or you could tell about a time when you sinned and failed to follow a Scriptural principle and what you learned. What will help you next time?

Memorization for Lessons 140-148

Matthew 6:33, 34

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 7:12-14

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Lesson 140– Jesus Chooses the First Disciples Pages 43-45 or John 1:35-41

1. Discussion– Look up “disciple” in the dictionary and/or thesaurus. What is a disciple? (a follower, believer, devotee, student) What does John the Baptist say when he next sees Jesus? (“Look! The Lamb of God!) As a result of this testimony, who are the first disciples? How does Jesus call them? (Andrew and John) Who does Andrew bring to Jesus? (His brother, Simon Peter) What does Jesus call him? (Cephas – rock, Peter means “sword” – Peter changed from a sword to a rock as He followed Christ) In the next section Jesus calls Philip and asks him to follow. Who does Philip bring? (Nathanael) What happens when he asks Nathanael to come along? (Nathanael gives a common quote of the day, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” People in Israel at that time had a low view of people from Galilee – where Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth was located. Nathanael doesn’t think much of Christ at first.) How does Jesus reveal Himself to Nathanael? What does Nathanael say? (Jesus tells Nathanael that he is an honest Israelite. Evidently this impresses Nathanael profoundly as he asks, “How do you know me?” Jesus then reveals who he really is by telling Nathanael that when he was under the fig tree, he saw him. Most likely, Nathanael had been praying to God at that time. Jesus showed Nathanael that he was the Messiah by supernaturally knowing about his communion with God.) Jesus tells him that he would see even better things than that! He makes his first prophecy when He tells Nathanael he would see the angels of heaven ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

2. Application– What brought these five men to Jesus? How much information about Christ did they have when they decided to follow Him? How did they show their willingness to believe in Him? (Possible answers: They left what they were doing before, they brought others, they called Him King – acknowledging His right to rule their lives) Are we followers of Jesus like these men? Have we left our former lives and its habits? Ask your children to identify things that they have “left” since having Jesus as their Savior. (Many of them may have accepted Christ at a young age so they might have a hard time seeing “change”. Encourage them to see that conviction of sin and guilt when they disobey are evidences of the Spirit in their lives.) Have they brought others to Christ? Which people are you trying to lead to Christ right now? What things should we talk about when we share Christ with our friends? Do we have to convince them? Lastly, are we like Nathanael and recognize that Jesus is King with the right to rule us? What areas do we want to rule? Pray and give these over to God. Ask the Lord to help you be like the disciples and leave all behind in the grand adventure of being one of His disciples!

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Pick three of the 12 disciples and study their lives before, during and after their years with Christ on earth. Write a paragraph on each of them. Be sure to include what tradition says about how they died (we don’t know for sure about some of them) and how they impacted the kingdom for Christ.

- b. Write a journal entry as if you were Nathanael that day. Postulate what he might have been thinking about under the fig tree and why Jesus would mention that. Be sure to include interesting and colorful word choices and vivid descriptions.

Lesson 141 – Jesus Changes Water Into Wine
Pages 45 –46 or John 2:1-12.

1. Discussion– Jesus in this story comes to Cana (look up on a map – very close to Nazareth), which is only a few miles from his home town, Nazareth. In the stories last week He was in the area just east and north of Jerusalem around the Dead Sea and the Jordan River where John the Baptist ministered. What is the event Jesus attended and who is with him? (his mother and disciples, also his brothers) What happens? (They ran out of wine) Marriage ceremonies in Israel at that time lasted 2-7 days and it was the duty of the family to provide food and drink for all during that time. Failure to do so would bring shame and humiliation upon the family. What does Mary do? (She tells Jesus.) It is possible that one of the people getting married was one of Mary and Jesus’ relatives. That surely would explain Mary’s eagerness and insistence on Jesus’ participation. What does Jesus say to her? (Note: the term “woman” is not disrespectful in any way. Jesus also uses this term to describe Mary when he places her in John’s care as He is on the cross.) Why does he rebuke her? Some suggest that he is telling her that his public ministry has not started yet. Others say he is telling her that He has not come to just do miracles. Nevertheless, she understands He means to help out because she tells the servants to obey His commands. How many jars do the servants bring and how big are they? (6 large jars, each holding about 20-30 gallons. About 150 gallon’s worth.) What does Jesus say to do with them? What happens? (He tells the servants to fill them with water – as it is poured, the water miraculously turns to wine) What is the comment of the banquet host? (You have saved the best wine for last – the wine Jesus made from water was far superior to the first of the wine served. Usually people left their inferior wine for last.) This was Jesus’ first miracle. Afterwards where do Mary and Jesus go and who goes with them? (Capernaum – Jesus’ brothers and the disciples)
2. Application – It is significant that Jesus’ ministry started at a wedding. Marriage is important to God. He started it in the Garden of Eden and Jesus chose to sanction marriage by His presence there and by performing a miracle as well. Marriage is a picture of God’s love relationship with his bride, the Church. (see Eph. 5:22-33) What does the text indicate (Jn. 2:11) is the reason for Jesus’ miracle in this instance? Was it just for the comfort of the family; so they would not lose face? Not at all. His glory was displayed, showing Jesus’ power over nature. Also His disciples *trusted* in Him. Jesus is building a relationship with His own called-out ones. They see His provision and care about the concerns of everyday life and know His is willing and able to care for them. How has Christ increased your faith? What areas of your life do you need to go to Jesus with and ask for help as Mary did? Share with your children how God is strengthening your trust in Him in your life right now.
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Name the people that have so far given testimony about Jesus. Start on page 21 and go through page 46. Tell what each has said or inferred about who Jesus is. (hint: Gabriel, Anna, etc.)

- b. Tell the story of the miracle of Cana from the perspective of either Mary, one of the servants, one of his disciples or one of his brothers. Be sure to tell what that person took away from the event – how it impacted their life.

Lesson 142 – Jesus Teaches the New Birth
Pages 49-52 or John 2:23-3:36.

1. Discussion– (FYI – If you are using the book, take a good look at the chart on page 48 to orient yourself on the events of this first year of public ministry. Note that several events occur in clusters.) Jesus in this passage is in Jerusalem (locate on map). He has chased the moneychangers from the Temple (If you have time, you could also read this story on page 49.) and all Jerusalem is “abuzz” at the outrageous – to them – act. During that time a rabbi named Nicodemus came to see Jesus. Who was Nicodemus? When did he come? What did he know about Jesus? (He was a teacher or rabbi; he came at night; he knew Jesus had come from God) Jesus doesn’t spend time discussing His claims to be Messiah or Nicodemus’ good deeds as a teacher. He immediately goes for the crux of the problem – Nicodemus needs to be born again. Nicodemus fails to understand what Jesus means so Christ explains it to him. What does it mean when He says, “unless a person is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”? (water – human birth, spirit – spiritual birth – see Jn 3:6 for clarification) Nicodemus, as Jesus indicates, is *the* premiere teacher of Israel yet does not understand what Jesus is talking about. What Old Testament story does Jesus bring up to help Nicodemus understand? (Numbers 21 – Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness) Just like the people of Israel who had been bitten by snakes, Nicodemus had been bitten by sin. They needed help so God had Moses build a bronze serpent. When they looked at the serpent, their wounds were healed. Jesus said He would be lifted up just like the serpent. To what is He referring? (His death on the cross.) Nicodemus would receive new life by looking to Jesus’ death on the cross, just like looking on the brass serpent saved the Israelites. He then gave probably the most famous verse in the Bible. What is it? What does this verse say about God, Jesus, man? (John 3:16. God loved all the world so He sent His son, Jesus. If people believe in Him they will receive eternal life.) List the things we learn about God and men from verses 16-21. (Possible answers: God loves the whole world, God sent His Son, if people believe in Jesus they will receive eternal life, Jesus did not come into the world to condemn it, etc.)
2. Applications– What does “believe” mean in verse 16? Does it change the “believer”? Look at the rest of the verses – 16-21 - to back up your answer. (These verses speak of living by the light.) Remember that we do nothing for our salvation, but true salvation is always seen by the person stepping out of darkness and living by the light. Have your family share when they were born again. If you have children who have not yet accepted Christ, this might be a good time to ask them if they are want to be born again as Jesus said. Pray for friends and family that you are witnessing to that they would accept Christ as Savior. Final note: We are not told whether Nicodemus was born again that night. See Jn. 7:50 and 19:39 to determine if he was.
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem started with driving the moneychangers out of the Temple (page 49). Pretend you are preparing a talk to the youth group on this

passage and write down what you would teach from this passage. Most importantly, beside the facts and significance of this event, include the application to your life and the students' lives. You may use an outline or paragraph format.

- b. Do a study on the Pharisees of Jesus' time. What was their history? What purpose did they have? What power did they have? What was their spiritual temperature at the time of Christ? Why were they at odds with Jesus most of the time? Cite references.

Lesson 143 – The Woman at the Well
Pages 52-54 or Mt. 4:12, Mk 1:14a, Luke 3:19-20 and John 4:1-42.

1. Discussion– Why does Jesus leave Judea and travel north? (John the Baptist was put in prison by Herod and the Pharisees are putting John the Baptist and Jesus into a contest to see who has the most baptized followers!) He travels through Samaria, something most Jews would avoid at that time. Why? (The Jews hated the Samaritans because they were the descendants of the northern tribes of Israel and the Assyrians. They had built their own temple at Mt. Gerzim and mixed the faith of the Old Testament with idol worship.) Find Sychar on your map. Jesus stopped at Jacob’s well, the one Jacob gave to Joseph long ago. Who meets him there? What does Jesus ask her? How does she respond? She is amazed that a Jew would even speak to her. Jesus doesn’t really tell her why; He just points her to who He is. What does Jesus mean when He says He will give her “living water”? (He is using water as a metaphor for the life He gives to those you believe in Him – Jesus gives eternal life. cf. Jn 3:16.) When Jesus points out her sinful condition (She has had 5 husbands and the person she is with now is not her husband.), how does she respond? (She changes the subject!) Jesus kindly brings her back to the truth – if you want to worship God you must do it His way. He then admits to her that He is the Messiah, the I AM mentioned in Exodus 3:14! This is His first public avowal of His identity. At this point the disciples intrude – in what seems like terrible timing – on the scene. They question Jesus about what He is doing and she departs. Instead of being frustrated at their inopportune questions, He takes the opportunity to tell them about the need for people to spread the good news (sowers and harvesters). As he finishes the townspeople of Sychar show up, excited to meet Jesus because the woman at the well shared her story with them. They came, just as Jesus had said, in response to her testimony and joyfully accept Jesus as Messiah.
2. Application – Did Jesus perform any miracles at Sychar? Did the woman and the people come to Him because of a healing or miraculous sign? No. The woman at the well knew she needed a Savior. His words changed her life, her attitude and she joyfully went to bring others to Him so they could experience the same thing. Jesus points out to his disciples that God has prepared people for the harvest. It is our job to present the “food” of salvation to them. No fancy tricks needed. No spectacular presentation. Just the truth. Have you received the “food” Jesus spoke of? Are you presenting His truth to those around you? How can you “seize the moment” today or tomorrow and share Christ with someone? Have everyone share about who they are praying for for salvation and ask God for opportunities to tell them the Good News.
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Draw a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. Include who they were, their beliefs, their attitudes and their response to Jesus. If you don’t know what a Venn diagram is, check out page 550 in Writer’s Inc.
 - b. Jesus confronts racial prejudice when he meets up with the Samaritan woman. She immediately wants to get into an argument about religious viewpoints. He

defers and goes on to talk about what was really important – her soul. Using this story as a pattern, outline the steps Jesus took to tell her about Himself. Be sure to include the things He didn't do (such as get into an argument) also. End with a time you shared the Gospel with someone using any of these steps. What was the outcome?

Lesson 144 – Nobleman’s Son is Healed

Pages 55-57 or Jn. 4:43-54; Lk. 4:14-30.

1. Discussion -We now turn to Galilee where Jesus will serve and teach for a great part of His earthly ministry. The passage notes that “after two days” Jesus left the village. This means that He and the disciples stayed in Sychar for two days before coming up to Cana. He does not go home to Nazareth yet. Why? (a prophet has no honor in his home town – because of their familiarity with Jesus, they would not accept him as the Messiah) In Galilee news had spread of the things he had done. Who came to Him from Capernaum? Why did he come? (A royal official from Capernaum – his son was dying and he wanted Jesus to come heal him.) This man was of the ruling class, rich and a leader but he had no resources to make his son, who was at the point of death, well. What does the official ask Jesus to do? What does Jesus say? (Please come down before my child dies. Jesus said that the people would not believe unless they saw signs and wonders.) The nobleman continues to beg Jesus to come. What does Jesus say to the nobleman? (You may go. Your son will live.) Why is this an amazing thing? (Jesus does not actually have to go to the boy to heal him like the nobleman thinks is necessary.) What does the man do? (He believed and left immediately. No questions.) One translation says, “The man took Jesus at His word...” This is a great example of true and living faith. Jesus said the boy was healed and that was good enough for this man. What happens as he travels home? What does he ask his servants? What happened in this man’s family as a result? (The nobleman is met by his servants you reported to him that his son was living. The father asks at what time the boy was healed and as he suspects it was at the exact hour that Jesus said his son would live. All of his household believed in Jesus.)
2. Application – As Jesus comes to Galilee the crowds want and expect signs and miracles. What a contrast to Sychar! Jesus did no miracle there, but just shared who He was and what He came to do. They all believed. In contrast Jesus will meet with skepticism and criticism as he performs miracles throughout Galilee and Judea. In contrast though, the nobleman from Capernaum does show a unique faith. When Jesus asks him to believe that his son was healed without even His presence, the man does not bat an eye, but in faith returns home. Jesus shows us here His power over disease and death and even distance! People today want signs as well. Do you tend to spend your time in prayer trying to get God to do things your way, or do you ask God for some big sign so you’ll know what you’re supposed to do? Christ, however, is looking for a simple faith. Someone who will, as did the nobleman, take Him at His word. Identify with your family areas in which you need to take God at His word and step out in belief – without sight – and trust Him. (Some examples: If we are afraid, we don’t believe that the Lord is with us all the time – something he has promised us. If we are constantly getting into arguments, we don’t believe that God knows what is best for us or we don’t like the authority He has placed over us. We don’t really trust him with the circumstances of our life.) Determine steps to make changes to trust God completely. Pray for each other to have a simple faith that is obedient to the will of God and not argumentative or complaining!

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Write a journal entry from the point of view of the mother of the son who was healed in this story. Include rich words filled with emotion and sensory detail. Be sure to emphasize the result of the miracle.
- b. Tell about a time when you called to demonstrate your faith dramatically? How did God work in this situation? What were the results for you and those around you?

Lesson 145 – Healing Hands

Pages 58-61 or Mt 4:23; 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-39; Lk 4:38-44; 5:1-11

1. Discussion – Jesus has been rejected, actually nearly killed, at His hometown of Nazareth and He now makes Capernaum His home. He has called James and John to be His disciples and to the amazement of the people commanded a demon to come out of a man. The passage just before today’s story reads, “His fame spread at once through all the region of Galilee.” This fame as we will see becomes a blessing and a complication. Jesus goes to Peter’s home and what does He find there? (Peter’s mother-in-law is ill.) What does He do? (He touches her hand and heals her.) How does Peter’s mother-in-law respond? (She gets up and waits on them.) What does this tell you about her? (Jesus’ healed her completely. She was able to immediately pick up her regular duties. She evidently was a person who loved to serve others.) When people in the town heard Jesus was at Peter’s that night what happened? (Everyone started bringing sick and even demon-possessed people to the house.) What did Jesus do for them? (He healed them all.) What did Jesus do the next day? What time of the morning was it? (Before sunrise Jesus went to a secluded place to pray.) The disciples searched for Jesus and told him everyone was looking for Him again. What was Jesus’ response? Why? (Jesus told them that they needed to go to other cities so He could preach there as well.) What did the people of Capernaum do when He tried to leave? (They tried to restrain him from leaving.) What reason did Jesus give for not staying? (The reason he was sent was to preach the Kingdom of God – he couldn’t do that if he stayed in one place.) The passage ends giving an overview of His work in Galilee. What were the two main things He was doing? (Preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing people.)
2. Application – Jesus said His main purpose was to preach the kingdom of God. Why then did He spend so much time healing people? His mission was to spread the gospel and His healing of the people proved He was who He said He was. His words were not empty. He had the power to save and to heal. One of the most important parts of this passage is when Jesus took Himself apart from the crowds and His disciples to spend time to pray “long before sunrise”. He had been healing people all evening at Peter’s and for Him to get up so early to pray means He probably got very little sleep that night. What does that tell us about the importance He placed on time with the Father? If Jesus needed to spend time with the Father, how much more must we! This is essential for us to understand. Nothing should stand in the way of our time with God. Not rest, not “deserved” recreational time, not work, not anything. Assess how each of you in your family is doing in the area of making time with God alone a priority. Testify how this time has helped you or share what has happened in your life when devotion time was neglected. Help your children plan strategic times for them to pray and read God’s Word. Hold them accountable! A habit learned at this age will carry them on through their entire life. They’ll thank you for it someday. Make sure they see you doing the same thing!

3. Digging Deeper - Do an inductive study on the “Rejection at Nazareth” story on pages 56 and 57. Use the following outline as your guide, writing down your findings in each of the five sections:
 - I. Content – who, what, when, where (write down what you observe from the passage – make no conclusions) Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.
 - II. Compare – are there any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one? Look them up and write how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
 - III. Concept – What do you think the passage is teaching? What is the core idea?
 - IV. Commentaries – You may now go and jot down what you can glean from other people’s ideas on this passage. Do not skip to this step before you complete I, II and III!
 - V. Application – What can you learn from this passage? What will you take away from your study? Is there an example to follow? Something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid?

Lesson 146 – Jesus Heals a Leper
Pages 61-64 or Mt. 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45 and Lk 5:12-16.
Other passages: Mt 9:2-17; Mk 2:1-22; Lk 5:17-39.

1. Discussion– A man comes to Jesus with leprosy. What is leprosy? (Check it out in your Bible dictionary.) How did the people of that day feel about leprosy and how were people treated that had it? (If a person got within 6 feet of a leper on a windless day he was considered unclean himself and banished from society just like the leper.) What does the leper say to Him? (If you want to, you can make me clean.) How did Jesus feel about the man and what amazing thing did He do? (He has compassion on the man. He actually touches the man – something no one would have done to a leper – and says he is willing to heal him.) Was the man healed? (Yes – instantly.) Jesus told him to not tell anyone, but to go the temple and present himself before the priests as was commanded in Lev. 14:3, 4, 10, and 22. It is interesting to imagine the consternation of the priests when he arrived for their inspection. Up to this moment in history no Jew had ever been healed from the disease except for Miriam, Moses and Naaman! How did the crowd respond to this new evidence of Jesus’ supernatural power? (Large crowds were everywhere looking for him to heal themselves or their loved-ones.) In the last sentence of the passage note once again what Jesus makes a priority. (Prayer – alone with God.)

2. Application– Jesus actually touches a leper in this story. How this must have amazed and horrified his watchers at this point! The Messiah was to be pure, free of disease – and here the One who they believe to be the savior touches an unclean man! This would have proved He was not the Messiah except for one thing: Jesus healed the man. He was no longer unclean and Jesus could not be accused of being unclean Himself. How are we doing in the area of reaching out to “unclean” people in our society? Who are the “unclean” in our culture? (Possible answers: homeless people, immigrants, drug addicts, HIV infected, convicts, etc.) Are we afraid of them or do we have compassion on them like Jesus? Note that the man indicated that He believed in Christ: “if you want to you can make me clean.” This shows he knew who Jesus was. Helping the outward problems of the sick and destitute is good and even necessary, but what is our priority? (To point them to new life in Jesus Christ.) Ask your children who they know that seems “unclean” (untouchable) to them. Determine ways to reach out to that person this week, both in meeting physical needs and then in helping them understand the gospel.

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Identify a “leper” group in our community. Develop a plan for helping these people in their “perceived “needs that would lead us to be able to share the Gospel with them. Outline precise steps and be sure to include spiritual preparation and as well as practical plans.
 - b. Write a haiku poem about “The First Miraculous Catch” on pages 60 and 61 from Peter’s point of view. Instructions for writing a haiku are found in your Writer’s Inc. book.

Lesson 147 – Lord of the Sabbath Pages 67-69

1. Discussion– This event begins the 2nd year of Christ’s ministry on earth. Review with your children the highlights of his first year: baptism, temptation, choosing His disciples and healing many in Galilee while teaching about the kingdom. The 2nd year was one of great public approval and growing anger by the religious leaders. Today’s story finds Jesus and the disciples in a field of ripe barley. They were hungry. What did they do? Was this stealing or acceptable in the Law? (Deut. 23:25) What was the problem the Pharisees had? (They believed Jesus and his disciples were breaking the Sabbath.) What was the Sabbath? (The 7th day of the week – the day God rested after creation.) The Sabbath was established from the beginning of creation as a day of rest for man to worship and thanksgiving. The Pharisees though had added many rules to the Sabbath over and above the ones mentioned in the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy. Since the Bible said harvesting and reaping were not permitted on the Sabbath, any activity that resembled these was also banned. Thus, the disciples broke this law when they rubbed the grain. In the Pharisee’s eyes this was harvesting! In fact they went so far as to say it was better to go hungry than break one of their extra laws. Of what story does Jesus remind them? (I Sam. 21:1-6) David and his men ate the Temple bread that was only to be eaten by priests. He also reminds them that according to *their* laws the priests in the Temple who baked and served the bread on the Sabbath were also lawbreakers! Jesus explains to them that God wants mercy from people, not robots (my words not his!) who obey the law outwardly, but have no compassion, no inward obedience to what God really wants. What statement does He make about the purpose of the Sabbath day? (The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.) What mistake were the Pharisees making? (They believed obedience to their extra laws was more important than understanding why the Sabbath was given. They had made their laws a god, which everyone had to bow down to.)
2. Application– It is easy to condemn the Pharisees for their blindness in believing that God would want an outward show of faith rather than a heart turned to him. However, we do the same thing sometimes. What things do Christians do that they think will please God? (Go to church, give money to the offering, not swear, etc.) What really pleases God? Read: Romans 12:1,2; Phil.2:2-4) God said to Samuel, “Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.” (I Sam. 16:7) We can do all sorts of things that look good, but if we are rebellious inside and selfish nothing we do pleases Him. What areas of our lives are we holding back from giving to God? How are we like the Pharisees? Do we show mercy or do we demand that everyone follow our “rules”? Are we hypocrites in that we outwardly look good but inwardly we want our way and not the Lord’s? Spend time in prayer and confession as a family if you answered yes to any of these questions. Discuss specific ways you will begin to truly worship God with not only actions but also with a heart that lives in obedience to His will.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read "A Crippled Hand" on pages 67 and 68. Write a devotional on this passage. Include what you think the reason was the passage was written and what Jesus' hearers were intended to learn. Make a personal application from your own life and tell how you could use this passage to admonish and encourage your friends.
- b. Have you ever been in the position Jesus was in in this story when someone was just waiting for you to make a mistake? Write about the incident. Tell how you felt and how you handled the situation. How were you like or unlike Christ in facing opposition?

Lesson 148 – Love Your Enemies

Pages 70-74; Mt. 5:38-48, Lk. 6:27-30, 32-36

1. Discussion– This section is from the Sermon on the Mount, one of Jesus’ most famous sermons. People have quoted from these passages probably more than any other of His teachings. We are only going to focus on a few of His points in this lesson and the next. However, it would be a good idea if you have older children to read the whole section together over the next few days. (Pages 70-79; Mt. 5-7) Jesus’ emphasis in this sermon is once again not the outward obedience to the law but the inward attitude of the heart. Jesus, in the minds of his listeners, made shocking statements such as even *thinking* evil thoughts was the same as *committing* them. Next he turns to one of the most amazing assertions of all: We must love our enemies. What Old Testament verse does Jesus quote? (An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth Ex. 21:24) What was the original intent of that verse? (It was to establish a proper judgment for restitution of a crime – It was NOT intended as a way of taking revenge.) Jesus illustrates several ways one should not pay back evil. What are they? (Not to resist; give in return rather than react, go “the extra mile”, don’t refuse to lend, no demands, etc.) Jesus also tells them that if they only love their friends they are really no different from those who do not know God at all. His standard is much higher – we must love and pray for those who hate us.

2. Application– All of us have people in our lives that we could term enemies. Some of them may even be family members! How do we handle them? With love? Or do we avoid and ignore them? Or maybe even constantly be fighting with them? What would Christ have us do? (possible answers: refuse to be hurt and angry, forgive them, pray for them, show kindness to them, go out of our way to show them love, serve them in some way) Why is it so hard to do these things? (We are basically sinful. Rom. 3:23 We want things our way, we don’t trust God to get us through tough times with people, we refuse to forgive, forgetting that we were forgiven, we focus on other’s sins and not our own, we think we’re better than other people, pride, unbelief) In the last line of this passage Jesus tells us to be perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect. We all know that is impossible. What does He mean? We will not be perfect until we reach heaven, but we are to grow and mature in our faith relying on the Holy Spirit to fill us with the fruit of the Spirit. God expects his people to change with the Holy Spirit’s help and not lead a life that is characterized by being bound by sin. We are to grow up and be mature – that’s what being “perfect” means. He is talking about showing perfect love to those around us. Even our enemies. One way that love can be clearly seen in a believer is how they handle difficult people. Identify one or two people in your life and the lives of your children. Evaluate how you are doing in loving your enemies. If needed, help your children ask God’s forgiveness for their attitudes and actions toward them and ask God to help them love these difficult people. Spend time today in prayer for them and strategize ways you can show kindness to them instead of hostility or just avoiding them. We can start being “perfect” in love today!

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Rewrite the Beatitudes in your own words either in poetical form or prose. You may need to refer to a commentary on Matthew 5:1-12 to help you understand and interpret the meaning of these verses.
- b. Do you have any enemies? Write about a current or past time you dealt with an “enemy”. What scriptures were helpful to you? How did you show love to them? How did they respond? What did you learn?

Memorization for Lessons 149-159

John 10:25-30

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

**Lesson 149 – No Parading of Good Deeds (& The Lord’s Prayer)
Pages 75-80; Mt. 6:1-18**

1. Discussion– What is a hypocrite? (You may want to look this up in a dictionary together. What is the origin of the word?) How were the people in Jesus’ example being hypocrites? (They were doing good deeds in order to be seen and appreciated by people – they loved the praise of people. They weren’t doing it to be pleasing to God.) How does Jesus tell us to act instead? (When you give, don’t tell anyone about it. What advice does He give about prayer? For whose benefit is the prayer? In what wrong ways had the people He was speaking to been praying? (possible answers: praying to be noticed by others instead of God, memorizing and saying the same words over and over without thinking) Recite the Lord’s Prayer together and discuss what it means. Take each part and show what Jesus was saying about prayer (see below). Did Jesus mean for them to memorize this prayer and pray only that one? No, of course not. This is a pattern for prayer.

2. Application – The following chart is a way to show your child how the Lord’s Prayer is a pattern for prayer. Take each section, explain it, then stop and pray specifically in the way that section suggests. For example under “Adoration” take time and praise God for who He is: faithful, true, holy, etc. Discuss which area(s) of prayer you tend to neglect in your prayers.

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father in heaven, may Your name be held in awe,	ADORATION- Start your prayer by recognizing who you are talking to, His authority over everything and His greatness.
May Your kingdom come, and may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.	INTERCESSION – Next, pray for God’s will to be done in the world. For example: Pray for world leaders and those who are power. Pray for missionaries who are spreading the good news in foreign lands. Pray for the needs of those around you and pray that they will learn what God is trying to teach them through trials.
Give us the bread we need each day.	PETITION – Ask for yourself the necessities of life. Be thankful for what you have. Bring your problems and concerns to Him.
And forgive us our sins, as we also forgive those who sin against us.	FORGIVENESS – Consciously recall those who have offended you or sinned against you. Forgive them in prayer remembering that God has forgiven you your sins through the blood of Jesus. Confess ways you have been sinful to others. If necessary, stop and ask for their forgiveness before going on.
And do not allow us to be led into temptation, but save us from the evil one.	TEMPTATION – Ask God to show you areas in your life that you have not yielded to Him. Confess them and then ask for His help in obeying Him completely for the upcoming day. Thank Him for his love and help.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read “The Proof of Discipleship” on page 79; Mt. 7:12-20, Lk 6:31, 43-45.

Choose one main idea from the passage that speaks to you and illustrate that idea in a painting or drawing. Be sure to title your illustration and sign your name!

- b. Rewrite Matthew 6:25-34 in your own words and insert your own specific worries and cares. Think carefully about your attitudes and concerns and then write a prayer giving them over to the Lord. Be specific and honest

Lesson 150 – A Centurion’s Faith

Pages 80-87

1. Discussion – Jesus finishes His sermon and enters Capernaum. Some Jewish elders meet him. What do they ask Jesus to do (They ask Jesus to heal a certain Roman centurion’s slave.) What is a centurion? (A Roman soldier who has command over 60 groups of 100 men. They were powerful men and commanded respect in Israel. “The centurions mentioned in the New Testament are uniformly spoken of in terms of praise, whether in the Gospels or in the Acts. It is interesting to compare this with the statement of Polybius, that the centurions were chosen by merit, and so were men remarkable not so much for their daring courage as for their deliberation, constancy, and strength of mind.”, Dr. Maclear’s N. T. Hist.2) What information did they give Jesus about the centurion? (He was worthy of the miracle because the centurion loved Israel and had built their synagogue for them.) As Jesus approached the home of the centurion some of the friends of the centurion stopped Jesus. Why? Why did the centurion feel he was not worthy for Jesus to enter his home? (As a Gentile, he felt he wasn’t worthy of the honor of Jesus coming to his home. It was the law that a Jew was not to enter the home of an infidel or pagan.) He instead told Jesus to just say the word and he knew his beloved servant would be healed. Just like himself, who had command over men, he knew Jesus had the power to command his servant to get well. How did Jesus react to this statement? (He was astonished.) Why? (Because this was the first time he had met with such faith – even in his own people.) What prophecy does He make? What does it mean? (Many people from all nations will go to heaven and fellowship with the Jewish fathers of the Old Testament, but most of the Jews of that day would go instead to hell because of their unbelief.) Jesus told them that the servant was healed. Why did He heal him? (Because of the belief of the centurion.)
2. Application – What do we know about the character of the centurion from studying this passage? (He was compassionate and loved his servant, he believed in the God of the Bible, he valued the study of the Word as seen in his building the synagogue for the Jews, he respected the laws of the Bible and would not let Jesus be defiled by entering his home, he was humble because he would not go to Jesus personally and demand help, etc) How does he demonstrate his faith in Christ? (He tells Jesus to just command the servant to be well and he knew he would be healed.) Jesus marveled at the faith of this Roman and compared it unfavorably to the lack of faith He found in His own people. John 1:12 says, “He came unto His own and His own did not receive Him.” Why is it ironic that the most amazing faith Jesus found was in a Roman and not a Jew? (The Jews had had God’s Word for centuries and should have recognized Jesus was the Messiah, instead of a Gentile who didn’t know about the Messiah.) Many of you and your children have had the same advantage that the Jews had had. However, exposure to and study of God’s Word does not necessarily mean that we believe it or act on it. That takes faith. Do you trust Christ? Do you have

2Easton, M. G., M. A. D. D., *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1996.

faith like the centurion and believe that He can do anything? Are you trusting God, like the centurion or are you skeptical like the Jews? How are you demonstrating your faith? Have your children tell ways that they show their trust in God. (Obey His commands, even when we want to do things our way, for example) Ask them how they have seen *you* show your faith in God! Identify ways you all need to grow in faith in the specific problems you are facing right now.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Do an inductive study on the “Jesus and John the Baptist” story on pages 82 and 83; Mt. 11:2-19, Lk 7:18-35. Use the following outline as your guide, writing down your findings in each of the five sections:
 - i. Content – who, what, when, where (write down what you observe from the passage – make no conclusions) Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.
 - ii. Compare – are there any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one? Look them up and write how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
 - iii. Concept – What do you think the passage is teaching? What is the core idea?
 - iv. Commentaries – You may now go and jot down what you can glean from other people’s ideas on this passage. Do not skip to this step before you complete I II and III!
 - v. Application – What can you learn from this passage? What will you take away from your study? Is there an example to follow? Something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid?
- b. Read the story “Jesus Anointed by Outcast Woman” on page 84; Lk 7:36-50. Draw a Venn diagram comparing the outcast woman and the Pharisee, Simon. At the bottom of the page draw conclusions about your findings. Answer these questions: What is your impression of Simon? The woman? Why does Jesus tell the parable about the moneylender? What is Jesus’ main concern in this story? What did you learn from it?

Lesson 151 – A Parable of Four Soils & Why Parables?
Pages 87-91; Mt. 13:1-11; Mk 4:1-30; Lk 8:4b-15, 13:13-23.

1. Discussion – If you are using the book, be sure to read and discuss the definition of a parable given in the side-notes on page 87 of the text before going over this story (If you do not have the book, look up the definition in your Bible dictionary). Read the parable together and then identify what each element is. (the sower is Christ, the seed is the Word of God and the soils are different people and how they respond to the truth of the Word.) The first three seeds and soils have problems. What are they? (1st soil – hard pathway, so the birds came and ate it. 2nd soil – rocky, so the seeds sprouted but were unable to grow because of lack of room for roots and lack of water. 3rd soil – thorny, these plants choked out the new sprouts) What happens with the last soil? (4th soil – good soil, so the seeds produced a good crop) Now go to the next section and see what each soil actually stands for. Why did Jesus talk in parables? (He was purposely unclear to those who would not seek to find out more and work to find the explanation of the parable. It was foretold in Isaiah that people would not comprehend what He said because of their hard hearts.)

2. Application– Match each soil with its interpretation. (The first seed, which fell by the wayside, is when a person receives the Word, but without real understanding. This seed is soon snatched away by Satan. The second, which fell on rocky ground, is like a person who received the Word and does not fully act on it. Persecutions and trials come and the person falls away. Next, the seed falls on thorn-infested soil. This is one who hears the Word and tries to mix it with worldliness and the pleasures of this life. These things soon choke the Word out of the person’s life. Lastly, the seed falls on fertile soil and grows. This soil is like the person who hears, believes, trusts and then acts on his faith. This is the only true believer of the four soils.) Each soil stands for a response one can make to the claims of the Gospel. Identify people you have known that have fallen into the first three categories. Pray for their salvation. Are you like the fertile soil or one of the others? How do you know? Are you growing in your knowledge of the Word and in your relationship with Christ? Have each one share what God is teaching them right now and how they are responding in obedience.

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Rewrite the parable of the four soils but use a modern-day image. Growing crops was a common thing that all understood when Christ spoke. Choose a current image and write the story again with images that today’s readers would understand and take to heart.
 - b. Read “Harvest, Mustard and Yeast” on page 90; Mt. 13:31-35, Mk 4:26-34, Lk 13:18-21. Jesus says that He is speaking in parables to fulfill a prophecy found in Psalms 78:2. Take each one of these parables, identify what it stands for and what Jesus is trying to teach in them about the kingdom. Write about your findings and be sure to add what you learned and how it applies to your life. You may use other sources for help. Please cite any sources used.

Lesson 152 – Calming of the Storm
Pages 92-94; Mt. 8:18, 28-34; Mk 4:35-41, 5:1-20; Lk 8:22-39

1. Discussion– After Jesus finishes telling the parables He steps into a boat along with His disciples and as darkness falls heads across the Sea of Galilee (locate on map). The Sea of Galilee is located at the eastern base of some mountains, which abut the Mediterranean Sea on the west. The Sea of Galilee is about 700' *below* sea level and storms can typically appear out of nowhere and be particularly violent as winds shear down the mountainside and onto the water. That's what happened the night Jesus and his disciples try to cross! Waves crash over the small vessel and threaten to sink the boat. What is Jesus doing? (sleeping) What are the emotions of the 12 and what do they say to Jesus? (They were terrified, believing they were about to die. They woke Jesus and pleaded with Him to save them.) What does He say to them and then what does He do? (He asks them why they were afraid and why they have so little faith.) Ask your family to picture the scene (you could even act it out). One moment they are about to die, the boat heaving up and down and water drenching them as they clutch at the sides. Then Jesus utters, "Peace, be still." And the storm immediately disappears and is replaced by an "intense calm". How do the disciples react and what did they say? (They were astonished and filled with awe when they saw that Jesus had power over the weather and the sea. They wondered what kind of person would be able to do such a thing.)
2. Application– Jesus reveals something to His disciples in this story they have not experienced before. They have seen His power over nature in turning the water to wine and in the various healings He has performed, but this is different. With just a word, a word mind you, Jesus changes the *weather*! His ultimate command of creation is vividly portrayed before their astonished eyes. Before the miracle they were fearful, afraid of death. What does Jesus say is the reason? (lack of faith in Him) After experiencing such a dramatic instance of His power and care of them, how do you think they responded the next time that they were in danger? How do you respond in a dangerous or fearful situation? Relate to your children ways in which the Lord has helped you when you were afraid. Then ask: What do you fear? Death? Disease? The dark? (For the youngest!) Harm? Rejection? Consequences? Failure? Help each family member recognize what his or her fears are. These fears keep us from trusting God and understanding that He is in control. Spend time in prayer giving these fears over to God. One helpful way to pray is: "Lord, even if _____, (add what you fear) happens, I will trust in You and You will give me the grace to get through it". (CTO, "Fear", T-6) Fear is a huge issue especially in today's world. Giving into fear and living in fear is not an option for the believer. Remember our Lord is the One who has control over *everything*! Do your children really believe that? As you close your time have each person give a verse that they will chose to remember the next time they are tempted to fear. (Some possibilities: Ps. 91:4-6.11; 18:30; 27:1; 56:3; Prov. 29:25; John 10:29; Hebrews 13:5b-6)

3. Digging Deeper

- a. How has God helped you when you were fearful? Has it ever seemed like Jesus was asleep while you were drowning? Tell about it and how the Lord helped you through it. Why do you think the Lord had you go through that particular trial; what was He trying to teach you?
- b. Read “Conquering Demons” on pages 93 and 94. Illustrate the story as if you were going to teach it to a 4th-5th grade Sunday School class. Make at least 4 illustrations (or use a comic book layout) and on the back of each one write what you would say to the class about the story. Be sure to address the issue of these pig raising Jews! Make an application at the end that would be appropriate for this age group.

Lesson 153 – Faith and Healing

Pages 94-100; Mt. 9:1, 18-34, 13:53-58; Mk 5:21-6:6a; Lk 8:40-56;
Jn 5:1-47

1. Discussion– Jesus is coming into His “own town”, which is Capernaum, after crossing the Sea of Galilee. A large, eager crowd gathered probably because they had heard about Him calming the sea. Many others were there to be healed. Jairus, a synagogue official, approaches Jesus. What does he do? (falls down and worships Jesus) What does He ask Jesus to do? (come to his home because his 12 year old daughter, his only daughter, was dying) How does Jairus indicate he believes in Jesus? (He says that if Jesus comes and lays his hands on her, she *will* be healed.) As they move through the crowd many people press up against Jesus and the disciples. A woman came up behind Jesus and touched the hem of his robe. What do we know about this woman? (She had suffered for 12 years from internal bleeding, been to many doctors and had undergone many painful and unsuccessful treatments, but she was still getting worse) What was she thinking to herself as she doggedly came closer to the Lord? (If I can just *touch* His clothing, I’ll be healed!) What happened after she did? How did Jesus know the woman had been healed? (Immediately she was healed. Jesus felt power go from Him as she touched the hem.) What does He say? (Who touched me?) Did Jesus need to ask or did He already know? (He already knew – He wanted the woman to identify herself.) When Jesus asks this question how do the disciples react? (They see the crowd of people pushing at Jesus and wonder why he is asking who touched him – many people were touching him!) The woman realizes she must come forward because Jesus will not go on until she does. How does she feel as she reveals her identity? (fearful and trembling) She tells Jesus and the crowd everything. What does Jesus say has caused her healing? (Her faith!) This delay has however made things more difficult for Jairus as he learns that his daughter has died. What encouragement does Jesus give Jairus? (just believe) Jesus takes only Peter, James and John with Him into Jairus’ home, where the official mourning had begun. Jesus pointedly tells the crowd to leave. What else does He say that causes all of them to laugh at Him? (She is only sleeping.) Quietly, Jesus, Jairus, his wife and the three disciples enter the room where the girl is lying. What does he say to her? (Young girl, get up) What happened and what order did Jesus give? (She got up and Jesus said to give her food!) What warning does Jesus give them as they leave the house? (Don’t tell anyone.) As He leaves the area, Jesus heals three more people. Who were they? (two blind men and a demoniac who could not speak) Jesus once again pointed out the faith of those being healed. How did people in the area react? (Some were amazed; the Pharisees claimed His power came from Satan).
2. Application– These passages contain several valuable lessons. First, since Jesus already knew who had touched His garment, why did He make the woman come forward? (She needed to realize that her faith in Christ had healed her and that she needed to acknowledge this to others) There are no “secret service” Christians. God asks those who believe in Him to tell the world. (“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.” Ps. 107:2; Rom. 10:9) It was for her sake and not His that she came forward. When did you and the members of your family tell others about your salvation? How

did it strengthen your faith? What would be the dangers of keeping your faith to yourself? (Possible answers: You might doubt your salvation, you would not be held accountable for your newfound faith, you miss out on the fellowship and love of other believers, you are not being obedient to the Lord, etc.) During the delay with the woman, Jairus' daughter dies. Why might Jesus have allowed this? (possible answers: to test Jairus' faith and to show His power over death to His disciples) Why was it important to include that part about the people laughing at Jesus? (possible answer: It proves they all knew she was dead, which would help prove her revival from death.) Why did He tell Jairus' family to keep her healing a secret? (He would be overrun with people wanting their dead to be raised and seeking help, but not necessarily looking for the Messiah and listening to His words.) Later Jesus will publicly raise Lazarus from the dead, proclaiming His power over death. This occurs, however, at the end of His ministry. What is really the focus of Jesus ministry? Healing of the body or healing of the spirit? He desires faith and a response to the truth of His message, not people merely looking for a temporary fix to their health problems. How do we come to Jesus? Do we just come with a list of things we want? Then how are we any different from the crowds that followed Him around, but didn't listen to Him? It says in Hebrews 11:6, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Examine yourself as it says in Ps 139: 23 and see if your motives in coming to God are correct. Do you worship and believe in Him? Are you interested in doing what He asks? Are you focused on yourself or God and others? Pray and ask God to change your heart if you see a selfish pattern in your walk with God. Begin to put His wishes first and deny yourself.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read "Do You Want to Get Well" on page 97 study it carefully and then do an inductive study on the passage. Use the following outline as your guide, writing down your findings in each of the five sections:
 - I. **Content** – who, what, when, where (write down what you observe from the passage – make no conclusions) Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.
 - II. **Compare** – are there any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one? Look them up and write how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
 - III. **Concept** – What do you think the passage is teaching? What is the core idea?
 - IV. **Commentaries** – You may now go and jot down what you can glean from other people's ideas on this passage. Do not skip to this step before you complete I II and III!
 - V. **Connection** – What can you learn from this passage? What will you take away from your study? Is there an example to follow? Something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid? In what significant way did this passage affect you?
- b. "From Death to Life" on page 98 and 99 contains Jesus' sermon about who He is. Make a list of all the evidences Jesus gives of His deity and contrast that with how

unbelievers have responded to them. What is the main point of the passage and what specifically have you learned are applying to your life?

Lesson 154 - John the Baptist Killed
Pages 103-104; Matt 14:1-13a; Mk. 6:14-29; Lk. 9:7-9

1. Discussion –The story of John’s murder is told as a *flashback*. That is, Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great – the king who tried to murder Jesus as a baby in Bethlehem) has already beheaded him, hears of Jesus’ ministry, is perplexed and then remembers the events of John’s death. This is a little confusing! What are people saying about Jesus that confuses the wicked monarch? (That Jesus is John the Baptist come back to life, that He is Elijah or some other Old Testament prophet.) Why did Herod arrest John the Baptist? (For the sake of his wife, Herodias – John had condemned her and Herod for marrying when she was already married to his brother!) Herodias had wanted Herod to kill John all along, but what held him back? (He was afraid and held John in awe – he also knew John was right! He also feared the wrath of the Jews.) He would call John up out of prison every once and awhile to hear him speak. What did he think about what John said? (He liked hearing him speak, but was unable to understand what he was really saying.) What event brought the situation to a head? (a banquet) What happened at the banquet? (Herodias’ daughter, Salome, danced for the group) Herod is pleased at her performance and foolishly promises her anything she wants. With whom does she confer and then what does she ask for? (Her mother and she asks for the head of John the Baptist on a platter!) How did the king feel about this? Why does he go ahead and agree with the request? (He was unhappy but so he wouldn’t lose face with his banquet goers he goes ahead with the execution!) What does Salome do with her “gift” (She presents the head to her mother – this was a triumph for her mother who hated John and his message about her sin) John’s disciples bury the headless body in a tomb and Jesus hears about the beheading later.

2. Application– This is an ugly story. It paints a true and vivid picture of the rulers and their households during the Roman Empire. Pride, greed and revenge motivate Herod, Salome and Herodias. The story, though, is certainly not unique to Roman times! No one likes to be told they are sinful and in danger of judgment. Herodias was looking for a way to revenge herself on John for his accusations against her sin. She used her daughter to do so and caused her to sin – commit murder - as well. Herod was too prideful to go back on his word and did what he *knew* was wrong. When we ignore warnings of sin in our lives, the consequences can be huge and not just for ourselves. Our sin affects those around us as well. What areas of your life are you unwilling to surrender to God? Have you ignored warning from your parents, friends, family, church? How is your sin affecting others? Herod Antipas continues in his sinful life and eventually helps condemn Jesus to death as well. Do not be like Herod and stubbornly keep on going the wrong way. Don’t be too prideful to turn around and do what is right. Today pray with your family over areas that you have decided to give to God using I John 1:9 as a guide. Encourage one another and hold one another accountable to your promise.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read “Workers in the Harvest” (page 100) Write a paragraph about what Jesus asked them to do and make a conjecture about why Jesus asked them to do it. Use other sources for ideas and clarification. Cite them. At the end of this passage, Jesus gives them important teaching about how to face fear and gives perspective on the future trials they will face. Make an outline of the teachings and at the end note what you found the most helpful for your life right now.
- b. Many people have lost their lives for the sake of Christ over the centuries. Research a martyr and write a paragraph about his/her life and how it impacts you. Good sources for this assignment are the magazine, *Voice of the Martyrs*, or the book, *Jesus Freaks*, or even *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*. You can read *Foxe’s Book* online at: <http://www.ccel.org/f/foxe/martyrs/home.html>.

Lesson 155 – Feeding the 5,000

Pages 104-108; Mt. 14:13b-23a; Mk. 6:30-46; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:10-15

1. Discussion– This is such a familiar story. Your children probably already know it quite well. However, we can always get fresh insights from God’s Word each time we approach it. Encourage your family to see something in the story they have never seen before. If you have young children it might be fun to act it out together at home. (Note: This story is one of the few that is mentioned in all four gospels.) The disciples and Jesus are trying to get away for a quiet time together. However crowds of people are following Him. Why? (because of His miracles) As Jesus sees the crowd, how does He feel? (compassionate toward them – they were sheep without a shepherd) How do sheep without a shepherd act? (possible answers: they run around, get lost, hurt, etc) Even though none of them had had anything to eat Jesus starts teaching about the kingdom and heals many. Late in the day Jesus pulls away but the group of people keep on coming. What does Jesus ask the disciples? Why? (He asks them to feed the people. He does this to test them) How do they respond and what are their suggestions? (They ask if they are supposed to go and spend 2/3’s of a year’s wages and feed the crowd!) Jesus asks them what they already have. What do they have on hand? (They have 5 loaves and two fish from a young boy) Jesus asks for the food to be brought to him and he has the disciples get the crowd to sit down. How did Jesus have the disciples seat the crowd? (in groups of 50 each or 100 each) How many people were there? (Careful – there were 5,000 men not counting women and children!) How did Jesus feed them? (He prayed over the food – fish and loaves. Then he started to break apart the fish and loaves. As he broke them apart they did not diminish. Jesus filled up basket after basket with the food.) Did they get full? (All were satisfied – no one was left hungry) Was there any left? (12 baskets of food were left) How did the crowd respond to this magnificent miracle? (They wanted to make Him king.) How did Jesus respond to their wish? (He dismissed the crowd, withdrew to pray).
2. Application– Once again we see that the crowd is only interested in what Jesus can do for their temporal needs – either heal them or feed them. However, the disciples learned much from this. What did the disciples learn from this miracle? (possible answers: That they needed Jesus’ help in order to solve peoples’ problems, to rely on Jesus for that help, they didn’t need to go outside of what they already had to be successful – God could use whatever they had. They learned that Jesus cared about peoples’ physical needs) Many times we think we cannot do anything for God because we are not wise enough, skillful enough, good enough, old enough, young enough, etc. Jesus says, “What do you have?” You see, if we surrender the things we have to him, even though those may seem inadequate, even ridiculous, He WILL use them and us! Tell of a time that you surrendered what you had and how God used it. What do your children have that they can give to Him? Identify ways we can yield ourselves and our possessions to God. Determine not to wait until you are “ready”, but serve Him today with what He has given us.

3. Digging Deeper -Write the story, “Walking on the Sea” (page 107) from Peter’s perspective. Tell what happened, how Peter felt and what he learned. Be sure to include sensory details and at least ONE simile, metaphor, or personification!

Lesson 156– Bread of Life

Pages 111-115; Jn. 6:22-71

1. Discussion– (This story marks the beginning of Jesus’ 3rd year of earthly ministry. Also, the Bread of Life discourse includes “Bread of Life, “True Food, True Drink” and “Many Walk Away”.) The evening after Jesus had fed the five thousand his disciples boarded a boat and started to sail to Capernaum. (If you have time lookup John 6:16-21 and read how Jesus came to them that night *walking on the water!*) The next morning the crowd that had been fed by Jesus the day before went in search of him. They jumped into boats and followed Him to Capernaum. Obviously they had been on the watch for Him because when they caught up with Him they asked when (and how) He had gotten there! Jesus immediately puts His finger on the problem by stating that now they weren’t even following Him because of miracles, but because they wanted food! He told them that they were focused on the wrong things, things that wouldn’t last. What did He say they should work for? (Eternal life) They asked, “What sort of thing should we be doing to satisfy God’s requirements?” What “work” did He tell them to do? (Not a work at all but to believe in Him!) Do they believe? No, instead they ask for another miracle to convince them to believe. They suggest that since Moses gave their ancestors manna to eat, that Jesus should do the same. Do you see where their minds are? Their stomachs! Jesus’ answer is wonderful. He first points out the error of their thinking: Moses did NOT give the Jews manna, the Father did. And now God is offering them “bread” that would give them life. What do they say? (They demand the bread *now*.) What amazing and perplexing thing does He say to them? (I am the Bread of Life – this is a metaphor. Jesus is saying that he is like food) He points out to them that to believe in Him would satisfy their souls. He also says that if they would believe in Him they would have eternal life and be resurrected. The crowd began to grumble at this. Why? (They believed He was merely the son of Joseph and as such could not have come down from heaven as He claimed.) He then makes a statement that really troubles them: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. The bread I offer is My body, which I will give for the life of the world.” He also says they also had to drink His blood, which really offended them! (The Law stated in Lev. 7:26-27 that one should never ingest blood – it was a sin. They didn’t understand he was speaking figuratively) As a result of this message many followers of Jesus left Him. What did Jesus ask the 12 disciples? (Do you also want to leave?) How did Peter answer? (Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.) Jesus ends the discussion by pointing out that one of them was a traitor. Who was this traitor? (Judas)

2. Application– When Jesus talks about drinking His blood and eating His body, what do Christians think of? (Communion – the time we commemorate the death of Jesus for our sins.) When Jesus is talking about these things He is referring to His broken body and the blood that He spilled on the cross to take away the sins of the world. Belief in this results in eternal life. He did not mean to literally eat and drink His body and blood. He is harking back first to the Passover (which they were celebrating at this time) when a lamb’s blood was spread on the doorpost and

unleavened bread was eaten. He was looking forward to the cross, when He would become the Lamb that was slain. And He is telling us that in the future believers would commemorate this sacrifice with the wine and the bread of communion. It was not Passover that saved people back in the days of Moses. It is not now taking communion that saves people. It is simply belief in the sacrifice of Jesus for their sin. No good works. No difficult stunts. Just believe. But this belief must have a foundation – placing complete trust in Jesus’ saving life and death. Ask your family if they are focused on the wrong things as were the Jews. Are they more interested in earthly things such as their food, clothes, school, friendships, and stuff? Do they realize that belief in Christ and His desires are to be their focus? Is it yours? Can you answer Jesus like Peter did? Do you believe that the only way to eternal life is through Jesus? Pray together thanking God for His incredible gift of eternal life and confess wrong attitudes and priorities. Discuss how to renew your minds and keep focusing on the eternal and not the temporary this week.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. From the three sections of the Bread of Life discourse, pages 111-114, make a list of all of the promises Jesus gives to those who believe in Him. List next to each promise another place in the Bible that gives the same promise, if possible. Which promises have the most significance to you? Why?
- b. Read “Man’s traditions versus God’s Commands” on pages 114-115. What traditions or beliefs do people have today that some think will make a person “unclean”? What really makes a person unclean? What is Jesus trying to teach in this passage? How was that difficult for the Jews to understand? Why is it hard for most people to understand today? What do you need to remember most from this passage?

Lesson 157 – Crumbs from the Table

Pages 116-122; Mt. 15:21-28; Mk 7: 24-30

1. Discussion – This story covers pages 116 and 117. Jesus leaves Capernaum and travels out of Israel to the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. Locate these on your map. Jesus, having been rejected by most of the Jews, now travels more frequently to Gentile places. Who comes up to Jesus? (a Canaanite woman.) What does she want? (Her daughter to be healed of demon possession.) How does Jesus respond at first? (He doesn't!) What do the disciples say? (Send her away!) Jesus sounds very harsh when He next says that He had not been sent except to the Israelites. He then says that it wasn't right to take food for children (His people) and give it to dogs (Gentiles). How does she reply? (That even the dogs get the crumbs from the table.) Jesus commends her faith and heals her daughter.

2. Application– How do the things that the woman says to Jesus show what she believes about Him? (She falls at His feet, she calls Him the Son of David indicating she believed He was the Messiah) The things Jesus says to this woman seem cruel. However, He had a reason for what He said. First, she could not refer to Jesus as the Messiah because that term was reserved for the Jews. He wanted her to come to Him on the basis of her need of grace. She changed her view of herself when she accepted the “dog” reference and admitted her need. The “crumbs” that fallen from the table of Israel was in actuality the blessing that came from belief in the Lord Jesus. Something His own people had rejected and brushed off as if it were not important. She calls Him Lord at this point, pointing out her trust in Him. Jesus traveled 100 miles on foot to this area and the only thing He did that was recorded was heal the daughter of this woman! He was not looking down on her at all – it was all part of His plan. It looks like the woman came to Jesus, but in reality He came to her! How is Jesus doing things like this today? Just as the woman had to admit her need of Christ and her own unworthiness we must do the same. It may seem as if the Lord is far from us, but when we hear God's Word and believe on it He helps us. He has promised to do so. Read Hebrews 4:2 and 16. Jesus is waiting for us to ask for his help – he is very near! Read Ps. 34: 17-18. Spend time in prayer with your family admitting your need of His grace and help.

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Draw a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the feeding of the 5,000 Jews with the feeding of the 4,000 Gentiles. What was the significance of both events? What can you learn from them? You may consult commentaries for help on this. Cite references.
 - b. List all the references to the “bread” in pages 104-109. What is each one teaching about Jesus, faith and life? Which lesson speaks to you the most? Why?

Lesson 158 – Woman Caught in Adultery

Pages 123-126; Jn. 8:2-11

1. Discussion– This lesson covers page 124. The Pharisees, trying to trap Jesus, bring to him a woman who had been caught with another woman’s husband. The Law in the Old Testament demanded that if she was guilty she should be stoned to death. What do they ask Jesus? (The Law says stone her – what do you say?) How does He respond? (He writes in the dirt and then says, “Whoever is without sin can throw the first stone.”) The question the Pharisees ask Jesus is a trap because if He says she should be stoned He is transgressing Roman Law which alone had the right to execute and it also went against His teaching that He had come to save people. If He says don’t stone her He is going against the Mosaic Law. They thought they had Him! However, Jesus is never trapped! He knows, as do they, that when a person is condemned for adultery BOTH parties must be present. His reply to them is masterful and could only come from the Son of God. He implied that they were the sinful party and that they had no right to condemn her. They melt away, the oldest first, unable to respond to or accuse her anymore. She is left alone with Jesus. What does He say to her? (Where are your accusers? Didn’t anyone stay to accuse you?) What does she say? (No one, sir.) Jesus tells her to go on her way and stop sinning.

2. Application– Were the Pharisees really interested in this woman’s sinful condition? (No – they set her up – they wanted to trap Jesus and this showed their true motives. It wasn’t about following the Law at all. It was all a sham.) What is Jesus’ view of sin and forgiveness? (We need to forgive those who sin because we sin ourselves!) How does an awareness of our own sin affect our relationships with others? (It helps make us patient and compassionate towards them.) Jesus is not saying there should be no consequences for sin, but that our view of the sinner must be forgiving. Jesus had taken all our sins on Himself and has forgiven us. We must do the same to those who sin against us. Are we like the Pharisees who do not care about people, but just want to look good to others? Do we judge people or do we try to reach out to them with the love of Christ? Identify people that you need to be more compassionate about. Pray, asking God to help you forgive those who sin against you today. Confess your own sin to God. Praise Him for His loving-kindness!

3. Application for older students
 - a. Tell the story of the Woman Caught in Adultery from the perspective of the woman. Make up your own ending about how the experience with Jesus affected her afterwards.
 - b. Read “The Truth Shall Make You Free” on page 126, study it carefully and then do an inductive study on the passage. Use the following outline as your guide, writing down your findings in each of the five sections:
 - I. **Content** – who, what, when, where (write down what you observe from the passage – make no conclusions) Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.

- II. **Compare** – are there any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one? Look them up and write how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
- III. **Concept** – What do you think the passage is teaching? What is the core idea?
- IV. **Commentaries** – You may now go and jot down what you can glean from other people’s ideas on this passage. Do not skip to this step before you complete I II and III!
- V. **Connection** – What can you learn from this passage? What will you take away from your study? Is there an example to follow? Something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid? In what significant way did this passage affect you?

Lesson 159 – A Man Born Blind **Pages 128-131; Jn. 9:1-41.**

1. Discussion– This story extends through A Man Born Blind, Kicked Out of the Synagogue and Lord, I Believe. What question do the disciples ask Jesus when they see the man that was born blind? (Whether it was his or his parents' sin that had caused the blindness) What does this show about what they thought was the cause of disabilities and illness? (It was the person or the family's fault due to some sin in their life.) How does Jesus respond? (He says it was neither his or his family's fault that he was born blind. It was so that the works of God might be displayed in his life.) What did Jesus do to the man? (Spit in the dirt, made clay, put it on his eyes and told him to wash in the Pool of Siloam.) The man did so and went home with his eyesight! Imagine how it must have felt for this man to be going home, seeing for the first time all the places and people that have surrounded him his whole life! However, the story doesn't end here as Jesus has stirred up a hornet's nest by once again healing on the Sabbath. The man is brought before the Pharisees at his local synagogue. They question him about how he came to see. After the man's testimony they start to argue. Some declare flatly that Jesus does not come from God because He doesn't keep the Sabbath. Others say that how could He be a sinner if He heals? They finally turn to the man and ask for his opinion. What does he say? (He is a prophet.) At this point the Pharisees' only choice is to doubt the man's blindness so they call up his parents for testimony. His parents nervously assert that he was most assuredly born blind but that they know nothing else. Why are they afraid? (They have heard that anyone who follows Jesus will be thrown out of the synagogue – a shameful and terrible thing.) The Pharisees once again turn to the man basically demanding that he deny that Jesus healed him. How does the man respond? (Very wisely! He doesn't get into the sinner-sinless debate about Jesus; he just asserts the truth - that once he was blind, now he can see.) At this point we begin to see a change in the healed man. As the questioners badger him, repeatedly asking him over and over about the healing – hoping to trip him up – the man becomes bolder and bolder in his stand for Christ. He sarcastically asks them if they want to be Jesus' disciples. The anger of the Pharisees gets stronger and stronger. What does the man finally say about Jesus that causes him to be kicked out of the synagogue? (If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.) The story doesn't end here. Jesus now seeks him out. What does He say to him? (Do you believe in the Son of Man?) What is the outcome of their conversation? (The man declares his belief in Jesus as the Son of God.)

2. Application – Jesus Himself gives us the application for this lesson at the end of the story in Jn. 9:39-41. What does He mean when He says, “I came into this world to pass judgment, that the blind may see and those who see might be blinded.”? (Jesus' purpose in coming to our world is to save those who acknowledge their need for Him. There is judgment for those who think they can make it on their own and do not need Him and His salvation.) Pride is believing a lie about yourself. The Pharisees thought they knew and obeyed the Law. They thought they were the only ones who were righteous because they so carefully followed all kinds of outward works of obedience, such as the Sabbath laws. Jesus pointed out time and time again the

emptiness of such an outward show. This story in fact points out several errors in the beliefs and ideals of men: 1. Suffering is not bad – God will use it to display His power and purposes. 2. Knowing God’s Word is not the same as knowing God. 3. Miracles will not convince those who do not believe in Christ to believe in him. Discuss each of these truths with your children. Ask them if they have a blind area in their life like the Pharisees. Point out that the Lord is waiting for them to admit their blindness (their need of Him) so He can help them. Pray together giving these issues over to Him and asking for His guidance.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Make two lists. In the first one list the steps of faith made by the man that was born blind. Then list the steps into further darkness made by the Pharisees. What is the ultimate effect of Jesus, “The Light of the World,” on the blind man and on the Pharisees?
- b. Was there ever a time you had to stand up for your faith in a hostile situation like the blind man in this story? Write about it and how the Lord helped you and what the outcome was.

Memorization for Lessons 160 - 167

Philippians 2: 5-11

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Lesson 160 – The Good Shepherd

Pages 131-133; Jn 10:1-21

1. Discussion– Jesus in this story uses the parable of a shepherd and his sheep to teach the people about His care and love for them. Read Ezekiel 34:1,2 and 11, 12 and 31. The people of Israel knew this passage well and were most likely aware that Jesus was referring to it when He spoke to them as the Good Shepherd. What was He really saying to them? (I am the Lord Your God.) What does Jesus say that He will do for the sheep, that is, His followers? (Protect them, save them, feed them, give them life – abundant life, give His life for them and then rise to life) What does He say that the sheep will do? (Follow Him, refuse to follow others, recognize His voice, go in the door and find pasture – that is believe in Him and have life) Who are the “hired hands”? (The Pharisees and other religious leaders.)

2. Application– Look at verses 19-21. What was the reaction of the crowd? What conclusion did they make about Him? (He was crazy. He was a liar/demonized. He was God.) These really are the only three conclusions we can make about Jesus. In this passage His hearers clearly understand that Jesus is saying He is God. What do you believe? When Jesus says, “I am the Door”, what does He mean? (He is the ONLY way of salvation – others may say they have the way to God but they are robbers and thieves.) When He says, “I am the Good Shepherd”, what does He mean? (He is the one who will save His people. His people are not just the Jews but all that believe in Him. – See vs. 16 – All who believe in Christ are one flock and they all know Him and He knows them. They refuse to listen to anyone else.) Have you ever thought about the fact that Jesus knows you? That is an amazing and wonderful truth. How do you recognize His voice? (That can only happen if you are a follower of Jesus.) Who are the “hired hands” in your life – those voices that try to take you away from following Christ? Discuss ways in which Jesus has been like a shepherd to you and your family. How can this knowledge of Christ as our Shepherd help you in the future?

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Psalm 23 is probably the most famous passage that refers to the Lord as our Shepherd. Write out the Psalm and after each verse write down how the acts of the Shepherd have been specially revealed to you in your life. For example how have you seen the Lord put you in “green pastures”?

 - b. We have looked at three sermons and one parable that Jesus taught: The Sermon on the Mount, The Four Soils, The Bread of Life and The Good Shepherd. Pick *one* of these and write a summary of what He said, what He wanted his hearers to understand (why He said it) and what you learned and are applying to own life right now. Use quotes from the passages to help explain what you mean and be sure to list the references.

Lesson 161 – Threatened with Stoning

Pages 133-134; Jn 10:22-42

1. Discussion– [FYI – This is the last story given for Jesus’ third year of ministry.] The Feast of Dedication that is mentioned in this passage is what we commonly call Hanukah today. This feast was to celebrate the purification of the temple after the Greeks had defiled it. What did the Jews ask Jesus as He walked around the temple? (They asked if He was the Messiah.) Why would this festival be the time they would want the Messiah? (The remembrance of Greek occupation of their land would make them unhappy over the current occupation of Rome. They were looking for a political leader to free them from Rome, not a personal savior for their sins.) What does Jesus say? Why aren’t Jesus’ miracles enough for them to believe in Him? (They aren’t His sheep and can’t recognize His voice!) He also says plainly, “I and My Father are one.” What is their reaction to this? (They are very angry and want to murder Him, so they pick up rocks to stone Him.) Jesus asks them to tell Him for which miracle they are stoning Him. They respond they are stoning Him because he claimed to be God. Some religions, such as Islam, say Jesus never said He was God. This passage and many others show Jesus plainly claiming that very thing. Jesus says that if they would only look at what He was doing and believe, they would understand who He was. They tried to arrest them, but He escaped. How was He able to do that? (It was a miracle - It wasn’t time for His execution yet in God’s plan.) Where did He go next? How did the people there react to Him? (Many believed.)

2. Application– How important is it to believe that Jesus and the Father are one? If we don’t believe that then we can’t see Jesus for who He really was – God in the flesh. If Jesus wasn’t God then He could not have died for our sin. He would have had to die for His own sins. Make a list together of all the benefits we have because Jesus and the Father are one. (forgiveness of sin, eternal life, abundant life on earth, a home in heaven, answers to prayer, protection from evil, unfailing love, etc.) How hard it must have been for Jesus to face His people whom He loved, knowing what He was going to face for their benefit and be treated with such ingratitude, rejection and hatred. Spend time in prayer thanking God for His gift of salvation and His unconditional love. Have you treated the Lord this week with ingratitude or rejection? Ask His for forgiveness and change your attitude to thanksgiving. Read (or sing!) together the words of “How Deep the Father’s Love” and discuss what it means to you. (next page)

How Deep The Father's Love For Us lyrics

Stuart Townend

Lyrics:

How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

How great the pain of searing loss,
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the chosen One,
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice,
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection

Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom
(REPEAT)

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Write your own song of love and praise to the Lord after you have meditated on this story. You may use either free form poetry or metered poetry. If you want compose music for your song as well. (Some of you can do that!)
- b. Take the text and make a chart of all the miracles Jesus has performed to this point. (They are numbered in gray above the text.) List the miracle, the reference(s), what the reaction to the miracle was and what it teaches you about Jesus Christ.

Lesson 162 – The Transfiguration
Pages 139-142; Mt. 16:13-17:21; Mk. 8:27-9:36; Lk. 9:18-43a

1. Discussion– This story begins the fourth and final year of Jesus’ ministry on earth. Be sure to read “He Must Die” on page 139-140 before teaching the transfiguration story to your children. You may also teach this section as well if you have older children. In that story Jesus tells the disciples his plan – go to Jerusalem and there die and rise from the dead. They do not believe him. He also tells them that some of them (Peter, James and John) would see him “coming in his kingdom”, which is a reference to the next story, the transfiguration. Ask your children what they think “transfiguration” means before you start. After you read the story see if their answers were correct. (Transfiguration refers to Jesus when he changed appearance from a normal man to his glorified self.) Who went with Jesus up the mountain and why did they go? (Peter, James and John – to pray by themselves) What happened to Jesus while they were there? (His appearance radically changed and he glowed with light.) Discuss Jesus’ appearance and how you might have felt if you were Peter, James or John. Who else appeared on the mountain? (Moses and Elijah, FYI – Moses the lawgiver represented the testimony of the Law and Elijah the testimony of the Prophets about exactly who Jesus was: the Messiah was predicted by them.) What was their discussion with Jesus about? (His “departure” or death) What suggestion does Peter make and why does he make it. (He suggests they stay on the mountain and build shelters for all of them. He was babbling, talking off the top of his head because he was scared to death!) What happened next? (Clouds descended and they heard God’s voice identify Jesus as His son and told them to listen to him!) Discuss the disciples’ reaction to these events and Jesus’ words of encouragement. What command did he give them? (Not to tell anyone about what had happened.) Why didn’t they understand what “rising from the dead” meant? (They could not understand what Jesus was going to do – they believed that he was going to establish an earthly kingdom, conquer Rome and rule Jerusalem. His death and resurrection was a complete mystery to them.) Seeing Elijah caused them to inquire about OT prophecy concerning him. Jesus clarified that Elijah would come in the future (Mal. 4:5) but that he also came in the form of John the Baptist.
2. Application– Why was it important for the disciples to see Jesus in his glory and with the Old Testament prophets, Moses and Elijah? (It helped them understand who He really was – the Son of God, not just a man.) It is significant that the subject matter on Moses’ and Elijah’s minds was the coming death and resurrection of Christ, something the disciples were clueless about. Why would Jesus tell them not to talk about this experience with others? (Possibly to keep the focus on the cross and not a sensational story about his appearance that could be embellished or exploited.) Peter’s outburst on the mountain was typical of his “speak before you think” mentality. Discuss times when you or members of your family have done the same thing. Has God ever had to correct your understanding of His plans as He did Peter’s? How did He do that and what was your response? What is Christ trying to get you to truly understand about His character or His plans right now? How can you obey Him in this?

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Write about a “mountain top” experience, when you really felt and saw God’s power and glory. How did it affect you then and has it continued to help you? Why or why not?
- b. Read “A Father in Tears”. Summarize the story and answer these two questions:
 1. Why couldn’t Jesus’ disciples heal the boy?
 2. What does Jesus really mean when he says we can move mountains if we have the faith of a mustard seed? Is this teaching that if we have enough faith we can do anything we want? List any reference materials you used.

Lesson 163 – Who’s The Greatest?
Pages 142-145; Mt. 18:1-14; Mk 9:33b-50; Lk 9:46-50

1. Discussion– What question did the disciples ask Jesus? (Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?) What question did Jesus ask them instead? (Jesus already knew what they had been thinking. They had been arguing over which one of *them* was going to be the greatest.) How did Jesus answer their question? (Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.) What did Jesus use to illustrate to the 12 disciples to show them how to be great? (a small child) Once again the disciples show they really do not understand Jesus. John objects to a person doing work in the name of Jesus who wasn’t “one of them”. They had even gone so far as to make the man stop. Jesus pointed out that anyone serving in His name was for them not against them. He next brings the conversation back to children. Why would it be better to have a millstone (a large, flat stone used for grinding grain to flour) tied around our neck and be thrown into the sea than cause a child to sin? (The punishment for such a sin is very great. It would be better to die than have done such a thing.) What amazing thing does Jesus say about our bodies and sin? (That if any part of us causes us to sin it is better to cut it off and throw it away than to continue sinning. It is better to be maimed in this life than go to hell.) Once again Jesus brings them back to children. He points out that they must not despise them. He points out that they each have an angel and they are the objects of the Father’s search for the lost. Jesus gives the illustration of a shepherd who has lost 1 sheep in a herd of 100. He leaves the 99 and searches diligently for that lost sheep. The Father does the same for His lost children. He loves them and wants to save them.
2. Application– This is a rich passage and full of many lessons that we all, adults and children alike, must learn. Start off by asking yourselves how you are serving one another in your home. Is there an attitude of humility or pride? Recall acts of service your children have made to you or each other. Then ask if there are influences in their lives that causing them to sin. Make plans on how to remove those this week and hold them accountable to do them. Ask them if there is anyone they are influencing in a sinful way. Tell them to go to that person and ask their forgiveness. Is your home characterized by peace? Does everyone in the family feel that way? How could your home become a place of peace? Develop a plan of action to live in peace with each other this week and to serve one another with humility. End with prayer for those you know who need Christ as their Savior.
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Children throughout history have born the brunt of the worst kinds of abuse and discrimination. Write a paragraph about God’s view of children from this passage. Discuss how Roe vs. Wade changed the way children are treated and thought of in America. Contrast and compare how Christians treat children with how the world (both foreign countries and the USA) treats them.
 - b. Who needs a “cup of water” from you? List ways you could give them a “cup of water” and then *this week* do it! Afterwards, record what happened, how they responded and how you felt.

Lesson 164 – Sin & Forgiveness

Pages 146-150; Mt 18:15-19:2; Mk 10:1

1. Discussion–(If you have a CTO Book, the chapter called “Forgiveness” would be a good resource to have to teach this lesson.) List together the steps we must take when a brother (another Christian) sins against us. Peter asks how many times we must forgive each other. What is Jesus’ answer? (70 times 7 – this indicates that there is no limit to granting forgiveness to those who sin against us – not that we can count 490 and stop!) Carefully read the story of the king and servant together. Summarize the story and have the children act it out, if possible. (Watch out for the choking part!☺)

2. Application– What is the story of the king and the servant really about? (forgiveness) Who is the king in the story? (God) Who is the servant? (each one of us) Who is the “fellow citizen”? (those who have sinned against us) On what basis are we to forgive others? (because we have been forgiven) It is because we have been forgiven SO MUCH already by the Heavenly Father through Christ’s sacrifice for us that we can forgive others who have sinned against us. In fact the “little” things others do to us are nothing in comparison to what we have done to God. It takes humility to see this. In our pride we think we deserve to be treated with respect and have a trouble-free life. We deserve to burn in hell, actually. Yet Christ took on our sin and freely forgave us. How dare we not forgive others? Take time together to see if there is unforgiveness in your family’s life. Point out that forgiveness is a choice and not a process. Just as Jesus forgave us in a point in time (His death on the cross), so must we forgive in a point in time. Forgiving must be the life-style of the Christian and it is a matter of obedience to His will. The passage indicates in fact that those who do not have a life-style of forgiveness towards those who hurt them are not believers in Christ. Identify people (family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors) that have sinned against you and then forgive them. Pray, “Lord, I forgive _____ for _____”. Be specific and thorough. End by praising God for His love, grace, mercy and forgiveness toward us!

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Many Christians misinterpret Matthew 18:18-20. Study the passage for yourself and then research reference materials. List some interpretations and then write out how you think this passage is to be correctly applied in your life.
 - b. Read “Like Lambs Among Wolves” on page 149-150, study it carefully and then do an inductive study on the passage. Use the following outline as your guide, writing down your findings in each of the five sections:
 - I. Content** – who, what, when, where (write down what you observe from the passage – make no conclusions) Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.
 - II. Compare** – are there any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one? Look them up and write how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
 - III. Concept** – What do you think the passage is teaching? What is the core idea?

IV. Commentaries – You may now go and jot down what you can glean from other people’s ideas on this passage. Do not skip to this step before you complete I II and III!

V. Connection – What can you learn from this passage? What will you take away from your study? Is there an example to follow? Something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid? In what significant way did this passage affect you?

Lesson 165 – Who Is My Neighbor?
Page 151; Lk 10:25-37

1. Discussion for all ages – This is the familiar story of the Good Samaritan. This also would be a good story to act out. What was the lawyer’s reason for coming to Jesus? (To test Him.) What question does he ask? (How to inherit eternal life.) Does Jesus answer him? (No.) Instead he asks him a question in turn – What does the Law say? The lawyer told Jesus the Law said one must love the Lord with all one’s heart, soul and mind and to love his neighbor as himself. Jesus says, “Act accordingly and you will live. There’s the problem! Act accordingly! The lawyer, knowing full well that he could not do this, tried to justify himself by asking, “Who is my neighbor?” The Jews defined “neighbor” very narrowly. It certainly did not include Gentiles or Samaritans. Jesus in best “lawyer” style accepts this challenge and gives a case history of who was his neighbor. Read the story together and discuss why the priest and the Levite would not help the wounded man (They did not want to associate with “unclean” people like the Samaritans, who were only half Jewish and did not worship God the way it instructed in the Law.) How did the Samaritan react to the wounded man? (He took pity on him.) List all the things the Samaritan did for the wounded man. (pitied him, dressed his wounds, put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, took care of him there overnight, left money for the innkeeper to care of the man after the Samaritan left, offered to pay for any more costs the injured man incurred) Jesus ends by asking which of the three was a neighbor to the man. The lawyer replied that the one who had mercy was the neighbor. Jesus told him to go and act the same way.
2. Application for all ages – The lawyer came to test Jesus and ended up being tested (and failing) instead. Who is the Good Samaritan in this story? It is Jesus Himself. The Law cannot save people (typified by the priest and the Levite), but Jesus can. Who is the wounded man, the one left for dead? It is you and I. We desperately need someone to have mercy on us, heal our wounds and take away our sin. Jesus was looked down on and rejected just as the Samaritans were, yet He chose to love and sacrifice His life for us. Since Jesus has done this for us, we in turn are to help and care for the needy, both in material ways and in sharing the Gospel. List ways you have done this as a family. Think of ways you could be a Good Samaritan this week. Make a plan to share Christ with someone or meet a material need of someone and not just those who are our friends but those who are rejected by most (homeless, prisoners, etc.). If you are interested in helping people materially but don’t know where to start, check out Samaritan’s Purse (<http://www.samaritanspurse.org/>)
3. Digging Deeper - Research ways that you as a student can be a Good Samaritan in your community. Look up two organizations or ministries in the community (or in your church) that help the down and out. Call them and get a list of some of their most pressing needs. Write down the ministries, the telephone number and the ways that you could help. Choose one and do it. Tell about how it went.

Lesson 166 –The Good Part
Pages 152 – 158; Lk 10:38-42

1. Discussion– In this story Jesus came to the house of Martha, where she lived with her sister Mary. They have a brother we will learn more about later, Lazarus. They are some of Jesus’ most precious friends and He stayed with them in Bethany where they lived many times. What did each sister do when Jesus came to visit? (Mary sat at Jesus’ feet listening to what he said, Martha was working on the details of serving her guests) What does Martha ask Jesus after a while? (Doesn’t it bother you that my sister isn’t helping me? Tell her to get up and help!) How did Martha feel about her sister right then and why? (She was angry with her for leaving her to do all the work my herself) How does Martha feel about Jesus right then? (Angry with Jesus as well! She said, “Doesn’t it bother you....” indicating that it *should* bother him!) Jesus’ answer to her is radically different from what she probably expected. Did he reprimand Mary for being lazy and sitting around when there was work to do? No! What did he say? (That Martha was anxious and worried about many things, but only one thing was necessary and Mary was doing it and it wouldn’t be taken away from her)
2. Application– These two sisters both loved Jesus very much. They were disciples of Jesus themselves. Each however had a different perspective. List what each thought was important. (Martha – making everything “perfect” for Jesus, working hard and serving others and expecting others to do the same, being worried about everything going just right. Mary – listening to and understanding what Jesus said, having a relationship with Jesus, talking to Him, being with Him) What do you think Jesus is really trying to tell Martha? Is it wrong to serve others? Of course not. He just got done telling the disciples that in order to be great in God’s kingdom, one must be a servant. So what was the problem? Martha’s focus. It was on her and the things she did. It was on how she thought others should act as well. Jesus points out that Martha’s focus was on her elaborate preparations and not on what was really important – a relationship with Him, because true service for God flows from this. “The good part” means that what Martha was doing wasn’t wrong, it just wasn’t the best thing she could have been doing then. The wording indicates that Martha was going “all out” in her preparations and was worrying and being extremely anxious about them as well. Jesus just wanted her to sit and listen to Him. All of our service for Christ is meaningless if we don’t first listen to Him and find out what He wants of us and what He wants us to know. Mary’s time of fellowship with Jesus would never be taken from her, but Martha’s service would sometime end. Serving is good, but the best thing is knowing Christ. Not knowing *about* Him – but knowing Him personally. That can only be done by spending time alone with Him as Mary did. This is a great time to talk to your family members about their “quiet time” with the Lord. Help them carve out time each day to read God’s Word and pray. Hold them accountable to do it. One of your responsibilities as a parent is to teach them to discipline themselves each day to spend time with the Lord. We teach them to brush their teeth everyday; how much more should we train them to go to Him each day! Remember that you must model this yourself as well!

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read “Demons and the Kingdom of God” on page 153. Write down at least five principles or truths that Jesus taught in this passage. Take one or more of these truths and tell how you have or are applying it in your own life.
- b. Read “Nothing Can Be Hidden”, 157-158. This section contains Luke 12:10 which reads; While there is forgiveness for everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, he that blasphemes the Holy Spirit shall never be forgiven.” Using the context, other verses and commentaries on the passage, write a detailed explanation of what this verse means. Cite resources.

Lesson 167 – On Guard Against Greed

Pages 158-165; Mk 12:13-21

1. Discussion– What does the man in the crowd ask Jesus to do? (Make his brother divide their inheritance with him.) What subject did Jesus start to talk about after that? (greed) Why? (He knew the man’s heart was greedy. The problem wasn’t his brother; it was his attitude about riches.) What important principle did Jesus give? (A person’s life is not the sum total of his possessions.) Jesus tells a parable about a rich man. What is the man’s problem? (too much stuff and no place to put it.) What does he decide to do? (build more storage) How did he think this would help? (He could be secure knowing about all his possessions and he could eat, drink and be merry) What does God say to the rich man? (He was a fool because that night he would die and all his things would do him no good. Someone else would get all his stuff.) With what principle does Jesus end? (We should not hoard treasure, but we should be rich toward God.

2. Application– Is it wrong to be wealthy? What was the real problem of the rich man? (his riches were the sum total of his life; it was all that he cared about.) Read I Tim. 6:10. Note that it is not money itself that is the problem; it is the *love* of money. This man’s life, his security, his identity were in what he owned and hoarded. Unfortunately for him, those things could not help him after he died! What he had neglected was a relationship with God! What is our attitude toward our possessions? Do we keep wanting more and more? Or is our focus on God and relationship with Him? Jesus said that we are to be rich toward God. How can we be rich toward God? (possible answers: Love Him, obey Him, study and meditate on His Word, love and serve others, keep focused on what is pleasing to Him and then do it, pray and then listen to Him.) List ways you and your family are rich towards God today. How could you improve? Pray together and ask God to help you keep your focus on Him and not things.

3. Digging Deeper - Read “Much Will Be Required” on page 160, study it carefully and then do an inductive study on the passage. Use the following outline as your guide, writing down your findings in each of the five sections:
 - I. **Content** – who, what, when, where (write down what you observe from the passage – make no conclusions) Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.
 - II. **Compare** – are there any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one? Look them up and write how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
 - III. **Concept** – What do you think the passage is teaching? What is the core idea?
 - IV. **Commentaries** – You may now go and jot down what you can glean from other people’s ideas on this passage. Do not skip to this step before you complete I II and III!
 - V. **Connection** – What can you learn from this passage? What will you take away from your study? Is there an example to follow? Something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid? In what significant way did this passage affect you?

Memorization for 168-175

I John 4:7-11

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Lesson 168 – Lost Sheep, Coin, Son
Pages 166-169; Lk 15:1-32.

1. Discussion– The opening verses of this passage are the explanation of why Jesus told the three parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son. Why were the Pharisees unhappy with Jesus? (He kept associating with outcasts, that is, sinners. Those who openly rebelled against the 10 commandments.) The Pharisees thought a person should stay strictly away from such people. When they saw Jesus with these people, they believed that He was being just as sinful as they were. Jesus told these three stories to illustrate what should have been the Pharisee’s reaction to people who were lost in sin, repented and came to the Father. Really, the three stories could be titled, “The Joy of the Father”, because that is the emphasis in each. What do we learn about the Father or Shepherd in the first parable? (He leaves all the other sheep to find the one lost one, He treats it lovingly when He finds it, He rejoices with His neighbors when it is found.) The parable of the Lost Coin shows the diligence of the Father in looking for the lost. Nothing else got done until the woman found her coin and once again there is rejoicing when it is found. Now read the Lost Son story together. Ask these questions: What did the younger son want? (His inheritance and to leave) What did the Father do? (gave it to him) What did the younger son do? (He spent all the money unwisely and ended up feeding pigs. Since Jews were never to eat pork, this was a very humiliating place for a Jewish man to be. It was the lowest of the low.) What did the young man think as he was eating with the pigs? (He realized even the servants in his father’s house were better off than he was. He decided to go home, not as the favored son any longer, but as a servant as well. He repented.) What is the father’s response? (He sees him a long way off indicating that he had been looking for him! He feels compassion, love and joy. He *runs* to him.) Even though the lost son says he is not worthy anymore the father goes on to kill the fatted calf (reserved for special occasions). What things does he give the son? (a robe, a ring and sandals. Note: servants always went barefoot, so giving him sandals shows that he was being reinstated as a son, not a slave.) What problem did the older brother have with all of this? (He was angry and jealous.) Instead of having the father’s heart of love, compassion and joy, he was peeved because *he* had never had such a party. The father lovingly answers this son as well. This party was not a *reward* for the son; it was for the sake of the Father who was so joyful over the repentance of a lost son. The older son should have felt just as joyful. All of what the Father owned was the older son’s – he already had everything. What was needed was a heart of love.
2. Application– One point of these three parables is that the Pharisees, who said they were God’s children, really were lost themselves. If they truly understood, they would have been glad to see those who had been terrible sinners repent and change. The other point is the faithfulness, compassion, diligence and joy of the Heavenly Father in searching for and rejoicing over sinners that are found. There is rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents. Are we like the lost son? Do we need to humble ourselves and admit our sin and be reconciled to God? Or are we like the older son? Have we lost our joy and are we self-centered instead of reaching out to people who

are lost and in need? Do we have the Father's heart of love? Who do you need to reach out to in love to this week? Pray together and ask for God to show you how to grow in your love towards each other and towards those around you who need Christ. Make a plan to obey God this week in this area.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read "Use Wealth Wisely" on page 168-169. Write down what you believe Christ was teaching in this passage on wealth and stewardship. For those of you who have taken the Crown class, there are some notes on this passage in your material. End your paragraph with telling what God has been teaching you about your own finances.
- b. Write a sequel to the Lost Son story. What happens after the father pleads with the older son? How does the younger son react to everything? You can have a good ending or a bad ending. Just be sure to include a truth about God, forgiveness and reconciliation in your story.

Lesson 169 – To Those Who Loved Money Pages 169-170; Lk. 16:14-31.

1. Discussion– For a correct understanding of this story it is important to understand the view of the Pharisees toward riches and health. They believed that God rewarded the faithful with money and good health. Those who were sinners and rebellious were given poverty and sickness. They saw their situation in life as a reward for their good behavior and looked down in scorn on those in need. Jesus points out this erroneous belief in his recounting the story of the rich man and Lazarus. What was the relationship between these two before they died? (Lazarus, a miserable poor beggar, ate crumbs from the table of the rich man.) After death? (The rich man in torment begs Abraham to have Lazarus give him a drink. What a contrast to how he viewed Lazarus before!) How does Abraham respond? (It is impossible.) The rich man then asks that Lazarus be sent to warn his brothers of the place of torture. Abraham replies that they had Moses and the prophets. What does that mean? (They had the Old Testament.) God has given man the Bible. It states clearly the way to God and the way to eternal life. What Jesus was saying was that if a person rejects the Word of God he would also reject a miracle, such as a man rising from the dead to tell them about God.

2. Application– This is a tremendous passage of Scripture and one of my favorites as there is so much here to learn. First, we see that after death there is a *real* place of torment for the unsaved. (There is a lot to study here about Hades and Hell that is pretty complicated, but since this is a children’s study with an emphasis on application for right now I have chosen not to include that information. If you would like to look into that for yourself, start with a Bible dictionary and look up the definitions of each. A book on basic Bible doctrines that teaches about hell would be helpful as well.) We also see that there are no second chances. After we die our chance to be with God or not is over. Abraham says there is a great chasm (gulf) between them and none can cross. Next, look at the request of the rich man to send Lazarus back from the grave to warn his brothers. What is he really saying? He actually is *blaming God* for the fact that he didn’t have enough warning about the after-life and hell! He thinks some more was needed. Abraham replies with a very important truth: if a person does not respond to God’s Word in this life (that’s what he meant by saying the Law and the Prophets,), he will not respond in faith even if he experiences a miracle. This very thing is going to happen in front of the Pharisees soon when Jesus raises his friend, Lazarus (interesting that the names are the same!), who had been dead for *four* days. The Pharisees will still not believe in Jesus. So what can we learn here? Everything we need for faith and belief has been given to us. There are NO excuses. If we don’t respond to the truth of the Bible, there are no circumstances in which we would respond. God’s Word is powerful and a believing response to its message is the central question of each person’s life. Ask each of your family members how they respond to God’s Word. Do they want something more? An experience? A feeling? Or do they respond in belief? Always drive them back to the Bible. Its message and the knowledge it contains of our Savior are all we need. Read together Ps. 19.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. The rich man and Lazarus story shows the after-life as having two parts, one of torment and one of comfort. Do a study on Hades (Sheol), Hell, Paradise and Heaven. Start with the Bible dictionary, talk to your parents, or check out a good Bible doctrine book. Define what each is, its' place in history and the future and which one you will go to! 😊
- b. List at least 4 verses from the Bible that talk about its power and effectiveness. Tell about a time when the Word spoke to you. It could have been while you were reading or listening to a sermon or hearing it in song. What has the Lord been showing you lately from His Word?

Lesson 170 – Ten Lepers
Pages 172-174; Lk 17:11-19

1. Discussion– Once again this story starts with the words, “On His way to Jerusalem.” Remind your family that Jesus’ primary goal in this part of His life is going to Jerusalem to die for the sins of the world. As He passes between Samaria and Galilee and enters a village, who approaches? (10 men who had leprosy) Why did they call Jesus from a distance? (see Lev. 13:45,46) The misery of their disease had brought Jew and Samaritan together and then together they had come to Jesus to ask for healing. Jesus does not tell them they are healed, but just tells them to go the priests. Why? (Persons healed from disease had to go the priest and get their consent to go back to their homes and families.) As they were going they were healed. One person stopped and turned back. What did he do? (He loudly praised God, ran back to Jesus and fell at His feet and thanked Him.) Who was he? (a Samaritan) What does Jesus say? (Were not 10 men healed? Where are the 9?) Once again it is the outcast that has the correct attitude when confronted with Christ. What does Jesus tell the man? (Your faith has healed you.)

2. Application– Jesus said to the man who came back that his faith had healed him. Was this true for the others? How was the thankful Samaritan different from the others? He was thankful and gave God glory for his healing showing his belief in Christ. The others received only physical healing from their disease, but the Samaritan received healing of the spirit as well. We can see from this passage that gratitude and giving glory to God are evidences of a believing heart in God. When we are not thankful for what God has given us, we are saying we know better than God does what is good for us. God is looking for thankful people. He has given us so much and still we complain and grumble. Identify areas of ungratefulness. Confess attitudes of ungratefulness and ask God’s help to be thankful instead. Use a topical Bible or a concordance and together as a family look up several verses on thankfulness. Discuss them and then spend time in prayer specifically to thank Him for what is going on in your life right now. (I Thess 5:18)

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Hebrews 12 says that without faith it is impossible to please God. Gratitude is also an essential attitude of the Christian. Using a concordance or topical Bible, look up passages on thankfulness or gratefulness. Choose 6 of the ones you like best and write down all the principles about thankfulness that you found. Then make a list of the top ten things you are thankful for in your life, even if it is hard to do so sometimes. Tell why you are thankful for them.
 - b. Read “He Will Come Like Lightning” on pages 172-173. Jesus teaches in this passage about the days of the Son of Man. Christians have misinterpreted this passage in many ways. Do some research on the verses. Find other parallel passages and compare them. You may also check several commentaries. Write a paragraph about what you think this passage is talking about and how it applies to you.

Lesson 171 – A Friend is Dead (and Come Out)
Pages 176-179; Jn. 11:1-44.

1. Discussion– [Note: This event takes place approximately 2 months before Jesus’ own death and resurrection.] Read both “A Friend is Dead” and “Come Out” for this lesson. Who was Lazarus and who were his sisters? (He was one of Jesus’ best friends and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were too. Many times He had stayed and fellowshiped with them in their home. He loved them.) Why didn’t Jesus rush to their home when he heard Lazarus was sick? (He was going to show them the glory of God.) Why didn’t the disciples want Jesus to go? (They were afraid He would be killed.) Jesus explains there is no fear for those who walk in the light.) When Jesus says Lazarus has fallen asleep what does he mean? (Lazarus died.) Do the disciples understand? What is Thomas’ reaction when he hears they are going to Bethany? Why does he say that? (They don’t understand and Thomas thinks they will all die because of the Pharisees.) How long had Lazarus been dead when Jesus and the disciples arrive? (4 days) What does Martha’s greeting tell us about her attitude? (She shows her faith in Him, she believes He has the power to heal him even after 4 days!) When Jesus says that Lazarus will rise again, she makes sure He isn’t talking about the resurrection of all saints in the last days! Then Jesus gives another of His important “I Am” statements. What does He say? (I am the resurrection and the life.) Mary comes to Him as well and states, as does Martha, that if Jesus had been there, Lazarus would not have died. What does Jesus do when he arrives at the tomb? (He weeps.) He asks the people to take away the stone. What does Martha say? (Problem – by now his body stinks!) Jesus nevertheless demands that the stone be taken away. What does He pray and why? (He thanks the Father that He always hears him. He says He is praying so all will know that the Father answers his prayers.) Jesus shouts, “LAZARUS, COME OUT!” What happens? (Lazarus appears at the opening, wrapped in burial clothes.)
2. Application – Before He raised Lazarus, Jesus wept. Why would He cry, when He knew Lazarus would live? (Read Is. 63:4 – Jesus had compassion on these people.) He understood the pain of separation that death brings. That’s why He was there! Can you imagine how the crowd reacted when Lazarus appeared? How would you have felt if you had been there? (afraid, ecstatic, awed, unbelieving?) Why did Jesus perform this miracle? (To show them the glory of God. To show them His power over death. To give them hope for when He Himself would die. To show the people who He really was – God in human form.) How did the delay in healing Lazarus make the miracle even more powerful? (It demonstrated that Lazarus was truly dead and then alive. It strengthened the faith of His followers. It showed the complete lack of belief on the part of the Pharisees; they wouldn’t be convinced even by a miracle. See “To Those Who Love Money”.) What can we learn from this miracle? Is there a lesson for us as well? List some things this story tells us about God. (He is all-powerful. He cares when we grieve. He wants us to have faith and believe in Him. Suffering happens so we can see Gods’ glory and worship Him.) Identify an area in your life in which you need to trust God. How can you demonstrate your faith in His perfect will? (Stop being anxious, complaining; recognize God will use this in your

life for good.) Pray and ask God to build your faith and trust. Commit your life, emotions, thoughts and decisions to Him.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. All of Lazarus' friends and relatives suffered deeply at his death – even Jesus. Tell about suffering in your life and what it has taught you. Or you may write about how you did NOT let God use the suffering in your life to bring you to Him and what you have learned from that. (Many times God shows us even more in our failures!)
- b. Read “Plotting His Death” on page 179 and answer these questions:
 1. Why is there such a negative reaction to this monumental miracle on the part of the Jews?
 2. Explain the twisted logic of the chief priests and Pharisees as they heard of this miracle of resurrection.
 3. What did Caiaphas mean by his words about Jesus? How does John interpret them?

Lesson 172 - Wealthy and Sad
Pages 180-181; Mt. 19:15b-26, Mk. 10:17-27, Lk 18:18-27.

1. Discussion– A certain official comes to Jesus. What does he ask and why? (The man knows Jesus and kneels at His feet. He wants to know how to have eternal life so he can do something to get it.) Jesus tells him to obey the commandments. Why? Is that the way to get eternal life? (No. He wants the man to realize he is a sinner and needs a savior, something he evidently does not see.) The man wants to know which ones to obey and Jesus replies by listing several of them. What does the man say to the list? (He has kept all of the commandments! Not true.) How does Jesus feel about this man? (He loves him.) What else does He say the man needs to do? (Sell all of his possessions and give them to the poor.) How does the man respond? (He leaves, albeit sadly.) How did the disciples feel about this? (They were astonished.) Discuss what Jesus tells them about rich men. They wonder how anyone can be saved. Discuss Jesus’ answer. (Nothing is impossible to God.)

2. Application– The young man in this story (sometimes referred to as the “rich young ruler”) thinks he has it all together: riches – which to the Jews denoted God’s favor in his life - and an attitude of holiness and a belief that he was a pretty good guy. He called Jesus good, but didn’t really realize He was the only Holy One of God. His real heart is seen when Jesus requires that he get rid of his wealth and then come and follow Him. What commandments of the 10 had he disobeyed? (Have no other gods before me and love your neighbor as yourself.) What was his idol? (wealth). He wanted something more than Jesus. He lacked faith and an understanding of His need of a Savior. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Without an understanding of our sin and separation from God we cannot have faith. The disciples were also perplexed. How could anyone be saved if one had to be perfect to be saved? Jesus answered that nothing was impossible with God. What did He mean? (God would make it possible for people to be saved based on NOTHING they did. Jesus would die for their sins and then they could have eternal life.) What is keeping you from trusting God? Is there an idol in your life that you do not wish to give up? What demands is Jesus making in your life and the lives of your family right now? Surrender your demands and answer God’s: give Him everything and give up your own rights to have things and people be the way you want them to be. Pray together asking for a believing heart. Plan steps you can take to get rid of the idols in your life.

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Read “Promised Rewards” on page 181. Write down at least five questions about the passage. Answer them yourself. Be sure to cite any references you use to answer them.
 - b. Find out what happened to each of the 12 disciples after Jesus went to heaven. How did each die? What were their lives on earth like? What did Jesus promise them for the future in this passage? What can you learn from them?

Lesson 173 – Promised Rewards
Pages 181-184; Mt. 19:27-20:16; Mk 10:28-31, Lk 18:28-30.

1. Discussion– This story picks up right after Jesus’ encounter with the rich young ruler in the last assignment. What does Peter ask Jesus as the young man walks away? (We have left everything! What reward will we have?) Jesus tells him first of a special reward for Peter and all the apostles. What is it? (They will sit on 12 thrones and judge the 12 tribes of Israel.) Then Jesus speaks to all followers, to all who have left everything for him. What will they receive? (a 100 times as much, persecution and in the next life: eternal life) Then He says, “Still, many who are first will be last and those who are last will be first.” He illustrates this saying with a parable about a master, a vineyard and his workers. Discuss the story together. What is the main problem in the parable? (The ones who were hired first at a penny received the same amount as who were hired one hour before quitting time.) Note: a denarius was a typical day’s wage. Also, this passage is where we get the term, “the 11th hour”. What did the master point out to the workers? (They were paid what they agreed to, what they agreed to was just! The master had the right to do with his money what he wanted.) Jesus closes again with the statement, “In just this way, the last will be first and first will be last.”
2. Application– This seems to be a difficult story until we look back at Peter’s opening statement and question to Jesus. After the rich man leaves, Peter points out, possibly in pride, that *they* had left everything and followed Jesus. He then asks what their reward would be! Pride and greed seem to his motives. Jesus graciously acknowledges that they had left everything and followed Him and their reward would be magnificent. Then He gets to the heart of the matter: quit trying to be first! Your attitude must be one of humility, trust in God and putting others before yourself. Who is the master? (The Lord.) What is the vineyard? (the world) Who are the workers? (All those who follow Christ.) Peter and the disciples are the ones who are hired first. Then throughout the ages people continue to accept Christ. Some will be saved at the “11th hour” or the last minute. All will receive eternal life regardless of gifts, wisdom, location or length of life. Our focus must not be on what others are doing or what they receive compared to what we get from the Lord. The master in the story asked, “Are you envious because I am generous?” Now comes the application for us: Are we envious when others around us seem more blessed than we? Do we try to bring attention to ourselves when we do well and are disappointed when we are not acknowledged? Do we truly rejoice when others around us receive things that we want for ourselves? The Lord is looking for humble people who consider others before themselves. We are called to trust God completely and know that what He gives us is what is best for us. As a family, discuss times when you have been envious and the struggles each are having in prideful attitudes. Ask for forgiveness and pray to be convicted when tempted to envy.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Look up the words, “reward”, “crown” and “inheritance” in a concordance. List verses that speak specifically of the rewards and inheritance believers will receive from God. After each verse determine what reward is given. Write a summary about the rewards of following Christ. End with an application to your own life.
- b. Tell the story of “Salome’s Request Denied” from the perspective of the mother of James and John. Be sure to give details as to feelings, motives, and reactions. Be sure to end with the lesson that she might have learned from this experience.

Lesson 174 – Jesus’ Visit With Zacchaeus
Pages 184-187; Mk. 10:46a, Lk 19:1-10.

1. Discussion– [This story has been probably been a favorite of your child since they were three. It is a great one to act out at home if you have several children. You can have taller kids be the tree and some can be the doors to Zacchaeus’ home and still someone else can be a table! If you know it, sing “Zacchaeus Was A Wee Little Man” as well!] Where was Jesus at the beginning of the story? (Jericho – find on map) Who was Zacchaeus? (a rich tax collector) What was his problem? (too short to see over people) What was his solution? (climbed a tree to see Him) What happened? (When Jesus got to the tree. He addressed Zacchaeus and told him to come down quickly because He was going to his house that day!) What was the crowd’s reaction? (grumbling – Jesus was associating with a sinner again.) When Jesus got to his house Zacchaeus offered to pay everything back he had stolen from the people and to make reparations up to 4x the amount stolen! What did Jesus say? (Salvation has come to this home today.)

2. Application – At the end of this story Jesus gave a most familiar and important statement. It is; “The Son of Man has come to seek and save those who were lost.” The story of Zacchaeus illustrates this motive. Tax collectors were some of the most hated people in Israel during Jesus’ day. In order to be a tax collector they had to collaborate with the hated Romans and then they not only collected the Roman tax from the people, they extorted much more with which they lined their own pockets. They were the scum of society; something like how a rich drug lord is regarded today. What things show us Zacchaeus’ attitude about Jesus? (He came to see Jesus, he climbed a tree when he couldn’t see Him, he quickly climbed down when Jesus told him to, he offered to pay back all he had stolen and more. The Law required four times the amount stolen as repayment. Ex. 22:1-4) It seems that Zacchaeus was the one seeking, but Jesus tells us He was the One doing the seeking! Zacchaeus responded with eagerness and joy. Why does Jesus say that salvation had come to that home? Had Zacchaeus said he be believed in Jesus? (No, but his offer to pay back those he had stolen from was an indication that he had repented) Why does Jesus say he too was a descendant of Abraham? Wasn’t Zacchaeus already a Jew? (Yes, but Jesus is saying that being a descendant of Abraham was more than having the blood of Abraham in your veins. See Gal. 3:8-11. It was the change of heart that mattered, not his relatives!) How different this rich man’s response was compared to the rich young ruler. Zacchaeus was well aware of his need for a Savior; he knew he was lost. That was just who Jesus was looking for! Pray together as a family for those you know who do not know Jesus as Savior. Pray that they will see their sinful condition and need of a Savior.

3. Digging Deeper - Compare and contrast the two stories of blind men being healed in the “Waiting to See” story and the “Light Out of Darkness” story. Be sure to talk about how they address Him. Use Is. 35:4-5 in your interpretation. Also you may refer to Mt. 21:9 and Matt. 22:42. What can you apply to your life from these two healings of Jesus?

Lesson 175– Anointed for Burial
Pages 191-192; Mt. 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9, Jn. 11:55-12:11.

1. Discussion– We have finally reached the last week of Jesus’ earthly ministry. The most stories told about Jesus in the world today are about His final days here on earth. I will endeavor to indicate on what day each event occurs. You may want to make a chart of the last week and write all of the events under each day. This story takes place on Friday night (the start of the Sabbath) at the house of Simon the leper in Bethany where Jesus is taking Sabbath rest with his friends. Who is there? (Martha – serving of course! And Lazarus as well) What does Mary, their sister, do when she comes in? (Pours an expensive ointment on Jesus’ head and feet. She wipes His feet with her hair.) Nard is an aromatic oil that comes from a plant in Eastern India. The cost of this perfume was probably her life’s savings – the equivalent of a year’s wages. What are the disciples’ reactions to Mary’s act? (They are indignant.) What does Judas say? (The ointment should have been sold and the money given to the poor!) Why did he say this? Was he a person who took care of the poor? (No, he was in charge of all of their money and he had been stealing from it!) Did Jesus know that that had been happening? (Yes) What does Jesus say about what she was doing? (She had done a good thing. She was looking ahead to his burial) Jesus predicts that in the future wherever the gospel is preached people will tell this story and remember her. (Hey – we’re a part of that prophecy right now!) At the end of this story it is noted that the Jews hanging around Bethany at that time had come to kill not only Jesus but Lazarus as well. Why? (Too many people believed in Jesus.)
2. Application – Is this story telling us we shouldn’t help the poor? That we should be extravagant with our resources? Of course not. Then what is it teaching? Apparently the only one who understood that Jesus was going to die was Mary. Her act of love was the last one Jesus would receive before going to the cross. She was worshipping and giving all that she had. The money spent might have been her dowry, which was to be given to her future husband. She even spent her “future” on an act of utmost worship. This was the point that Jesus had been making before with the rich young ruler. Are we ready to surrender everything for Christ? Compare her act to Judas’ selfishness. He wasn’t really motivated by compassion for the poor, but greed for himself. Why didn’t Jesus unmask him there that night? One, Jesus in His mercy is giving Judas more time to respond to Him. Two, there is a plan and Judas’ betrayal is part of it. Once again we see that our focus is to be a relationship with Christ, which is reflected in the things we do that reveal our heart. Mary gave all to Him. We can give to the poor, which is good, but that does not necessarily mean we worship the Lord of Lords. What is Jesus asking of us right now? Is there something, someone, you are holding on to? Who is your first love? Yourself? Pray and ask the Lord to be first in every area of your life. Identify things or people that you are hanging onto in some way. Confess your fears to the Lord and accept Him alone as your security. You will be free!

3. Digging Deeper - You have been drafted to tell the anointing of Jesus by Mary to the kindergarten Sunday School class. Illustrate the story "Jesus Anointed for Burial" in a story board. A story board is series of pictures (like a cartoon) that tells a story. On the back of each panel write down your narrative (the facts, points and application of the story to the children in the class that you would present).

Memorization for 176-181

Luke 9:23-26

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."

Lesson 176 – Messiah Enters Jerusalem
Pages 192-194; Mt. 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11, Lk. 19:29-44, Jn. 12:12-19.

1. Discussion– [Note: Jesus on Palm Sunday reaches His destination: Jerusalem. For the last year He has steadily and inexorably made His way to free mankind from their sins, not to free the Jews from the Romans. Palm Sunday marks the beginning of what is called the Passion Week, that is, the week that culminates in the resurrection.] The day after Jesus’ feet are anointed by Mary, Jesus leaves Bethany and goes to Bethphage, which is on the side of the Mount of Olives. (Find it on your map.) What does he ask two disciples to do? (To go ahead into a village, find a donkey tied up with a colt. They were to untie them and bring them to Jesus.) What happened? (They did what he said, found the donkey and colt and after telling the owners that Jesus needed them and getting their permission, they took them to Jesus. After the disciples had thrown clothing on the donkey and the colt, Jesus rode the colt into town.) Why did Jesus want a colt to ride? (To fulfill prophecy. See Zech. 9:9) As Jesus rode down the hill from Bethphage into Jerusalem, what happened? (people put their clothing down on the road, some began to shout for joy, praising God loudly.) There was a huge crowd going to Jerusalem that day. Why? (It was the beginning of Passover.) What did the people do? (Cut down palm branches and spread them out on the road.) Why would they spread palm branches? (Lev. 23:40; Neh. 8:15; Rev. 7:9) What are some of the names they call Jesus? (the King, Son of David, King of Israel – see Ps 118:22-29) The text indicates that the disciples at this time did not understand what Jesus was doing, but later on they saw that He was fulfilling prophecy. Why were all the people coming to Jesus? (They had all heard about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.) How did the Pharisees who witnessed this event react? (They asked Jesus to make the people stop worshipping Him.) What was Jesus’ response? (He said if they kept silent, even the rocks would cry out.) When Jesus got to the city what did He do? (He cried over it.) What prediction did He make? (That the city would be encircled and destroyed because they had rejected Him. This came true when the Roman General Titus leveled the city in 70AD.) As Jesus entered the city, more and more people came to see Him and inquire about His identity. The Pharisees were quite upset and realized that their plots to discredit Him had come to nothing and to them it seemed like the whole world was going after Him. It was just as they had feared after Lazarus’ reviving. Jesus entered the temple and spent the day there. Then He went back to Bethany that night with the 12.
2. Application – The day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem was the first day of the Passover, the 10th of Nissan. What was the Passover feast about? (It commemorated the day when the people of Israel in bondage in Egypt killed a lamb, put its blood on their doorposts and escaped death. If you have time read Exodus 11 & 12.) This was the day the people of Israel were to choose the Passover Lamb that would be slain. It had to be perfect and without blemish. Was it a coincidence that this was the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem? No indeed. Normally Jesus came quietly and unobtrusively into the cities He was visiting. Not this time. He came publicly to be seen so the people could make their choice of the Passover Lamb. It was to be Jesus. {Use this information if you have older children: There was even more fulfillment of

prophecy on this day. Daniel 9:25-26 predicts that the anointed One would be “cut off” after 69 weeks of years – 483 years. Bible scholars have calculated the dates and believe that the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem was an exact fulfillment to the day, March 29, 32AD, when the Jewish leaders officially rejected Jesus as Messiah. Jesus Himself refers to this in Luke 19:42 when He refers to “this special day”.} The people over and over called “Hosanna” as Jesus came into Jerusalem. What does “hosanna” mean? (Save now.) From what did they want to be saved? (Roman occupation.) What greater significance do the words have? (Jesus would save them from their sins.) Jesus, the Passover Lamb, humbly rides into town on the colt of a donkey. Not as a conquering hero, but the One who will die for the sins of the world in our place. Spend time in prayer thanking the Lord for His willingness to undergo rejection and humiliation for us. Praise Him as did His followers that day.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Look up the prophecy in Dan. 9:24-25. Look into the fulfillment of this prophecy and the dates indicated. What is the beginning date? How do scholars determine what these dates are? How does fulfilled prophecy affect you and your faith? Cite references.
- b. Tell the story of Palm Sunday from the perspective of a Pharisee as a journal entry. Use good descriptive language and be sure to include the emotions and motives the character.

Lesson 177 – Leaves but Not Fruit
Pages 194-196; Mt. 21:12-19, Mk. 11:12-19, Lk. 19:45-46.

1. Discussion– This story takes place the following day, Monday. What does Jesus do when He becomes hungry? (approaches a fig tree beside the road) What does He find? (Nothing – there are only leaves on the tree.) What does Jesus do? (He curses the tree.) What happened to the tree? (It immediately withered.) Jesus comes to Jerusalem again this day and goes to the temple. What does He do there? (He chases out the moneychangers. He would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple.) Why does He do this? (He quotes Jer. 7:12-15. The temple was to be a place to come and worship God and to pray. Instead, the Jews had made it a marketplace and a place of personal profit. Poor people and Jews from another country coming into Jerusalem would have to buy the appropriate sacrifice but they would not have the correct money to buy the animal. The moneychangers would exchange their money for the sacrificial animal but would charge the poor people a huge fee to do so. This money made the high priests' family wealthy; they were making money on the sacrifices for sin.) Jesus cleansed the temple once before at the beginning of His ministry as well. (Jn. 2) This is a direct challenge to the leaders of the Jewish people. Jesus is claiming His right to rule over them and judge their deeds. What do His enemies do? (Look for ways to kill Him.) Why are they afraid of Jesus? (All the people like Him and they would be unpopular if they got rid of Jesus.) What did the children in the temple say to Jesus? (Hosanna to the Son of David!) Why does this anger the leaders? (They want Jesus to make them stop. They don't believe He is the Son of David, the Messiah.) Jesus again quotes Scripture to them. (Ps. 8:2) The children fulfilled this prophecy when they praised Jesus! Monday evening He again leaves Jerusalem and goes to Bethany.
2. Application– The fig tree here represents the nation of Israel. They have produced no fruit. They are barren and have rejected Jesus as Lord and Savior. Jesus curses the tree and seals its unproductiveness. Fig trees produce fruit before they produce leaves, so a tree with leaves will usually be full of fruit as well. Israel, like the tree, looked good on the outside. People were going to the Temple, sacrifices were being made, and the Pharisees were examples of following the instructions of their laws to a "t". However, on the inside they were prideful, greedy and without faith - unfruitful. The gospel in the person of Jesus Christ is rejected by the very people that God used to bring it to pass. What a tragedy. There is a real lesson here for us as well. In the 1950's a favorite hymn sung in churches was "Nothing But Leaves". The hymn pointed out that many Christians today have "nothing but leaves for the Master". They may claim Christ as Savior, but they do not love and serve Him as the Master and Ruler of their life. Is that true of you? Your family? Are you doing things on the outside that look good and inside you are angry, impatient, unloving and ever bitter? Christ calls us to follow Him with our whole heart and produce fruit. What fruit? Check out the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22,23. Spend time once again confessing wrong attitudes. Be thankful for all Christ has done for us. Determine to be fruitful for the Lord in displaying love, joy, peace, etc. this week. Encourage and affirm those in your family who are exhibiting these characteristics.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read “Whatever You Ask in Faith” on page 195. In answer to the question of how the fig tree dried up so quickly, what practical application did the Lord make? What conditions must be met in order to receive Jesus’ promise, “Whatever you ask for in prayer, as long as you truly believe, you will receive it?” (Ck out: John 9:31; 14:13,14; 15:16,17; Rom. 10:17; James 1:5,6) How does this teaching affect you and your life today?
- b. Read “A Rejected Stone.” To whom was the parable directed? Who does each son represent? What main point did Jesus make in His parable of the two sons working in the vineyard? Which son are you like? What is Jesus calling you to do today? Why? How can you obey Him in this?

Lesson 178 – A Son is Killed
Pages 197-199; Mt. 21:33-46, Mk. 12:1b-12, Lk. 20:9-19.

1. Discussion – This story picks up from where the fig tree story leaves off (sorry about the pun). It is even a more dramatic depiction of the nation of Israel and their rejection of Jesus Christ. On Tuesday Jesus once again enters Jerusalem, makes His way to the temple and teaches. He tells a parable about a man that planted a vineyard, put up a fence and dug out a winepress. What does the master of the vineyard do next? (He leases out the vineyard and leaves the country.) What does he do when harvest time comes? (He sends a servant to collect the fruit.) What happens to the servant? (The lessors beat the man and send him away with nothing.) The owner sends two more servants. What happens to them? (They are beaten, tormented and wounded. They are sent away with nothing as well.) The owner sent many servants, but they were all treated the same way. Some were even killed. As a last resort the owner sends his only son to the men tending his vineyard. What is his reasoning? (Surely they will respect my only Son that I love so dearly.) What do the workers do? (They reason among themselves that since this son is the heir they can kill him and claim the vineyard as their own. That’s exactly what they did.) Now that the son is dead the owner comes. What does Jesus ask the crowd? (What will the owner do the vine growers?) They answer that the owner will put the wicked vine growers to a terrible death and give the vineyard to those who will pay him his share. Jesus has the people just where He wants them, because He now makes His point. What does He tell the Jews? (That the kingdom of God will be taken from them and given to others who will produce fruit.) The crowd says, “May it never happen!”, but Jesus quotes Ps. 118:22, 23, which is a prophecy about their rejection of Him. The Pharisees wanted to arrest Jesus immediately. Why didn’t they? (They were afraid of the crowd’s reaction.)
2. Application – In Isaiah 5 the prophet Isaiah called Judah a fruitless vineyard. Jesus in this story was referring to that passage. The owner of the vineyard is the Lord. The vineyard is God’s people. The vineyard workers are the leaders, elders, priests, scribes and Pharisees. Who are the first servants that the owner sent? (the prophets of the Old Testament and John the Baptist) Who was the only son? (Jesus Christ) By telling them this story He is letting them know He is aware of their plots to have him killed. The judgment on these people who had failed to care for the people of God was severe. Their kingdom would be taken from them and given to another. This refers to the coming church that would start with Jewish disciples but then go on to be made up of mostly Gentile believers. They would do the work of spreading the gospel to the world. The other judgment was the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the nation of Israel by the Romans. Quoting Ps 118 was quite apropos as well because it is a part of the Great Hallel (Ps 113-118) which was to be sung by the Jews during Passover celebrations! The capstone Jesus mentions is the top, triangular stone that is placed in an arch to keep it up and secure. Without it there would be no arch. He also refers to Dan. 2:34, 35 which mentions that the stone of God would grind His enemies to powder. You can see how this story inflames His enemies. Jesus is in the face of His accusers. He tells them He knows what they are doing,

how God views them and what their fate would be. All of this came to pass exactly as the Lord predicted. How sad that after so many evidences of His power, compassion and His authoritative teaching the people He came to save will reject Him! Yet many today are doing the same thing. Unbelief and pride stand in the way of accepting Christ just as much today and they did in Jesus' day. Ask family members if they have accepted Christ as Savior. Pray for loved ones and neighbors who have not accepted Christ. Plan for ways to share the love of the Lord with them realizing that the Lord must open their hearts to the truth before they will believe.

3. Digging Deeper - Read "A Prince's Wedding Banquet" on page 199, which is another of the parables Jesus told on Tuesday. The Messiah's coming was predicted in the Old Testament as a lavish banquet and as the marriage of a king's son. (Is. 25:6; Ps. 45; Song of Solomon) What truth about the kingdom does Jesus teach in this "Parable of the Wedding Banquet" as an addition to that taught in the previous parable? What further truth is emphasized in the wedding guest without proper wedding clothes being ousted? How does His closing statement, "many are called, but few are chosen," apply?

Lesson 179 – Give God What is God’s
Pages 200-205; Mt. 22:15-22, Mk. 12:13-17, Lk. 20:20-26.

1. Discussion– This lesson is from Jesus’ teaching on Tuesday during the Passion Week. What are the Pharisees trying to do? (plotting how to trap Jesus into making a criminal statement so they could have Him arrested) What statement did their spy make to Jesus at first? (We know you are truthful and You speak and teach rightly and are not partial to anyone.) Was he sincere? Then why would he say such a thing? (No. Possibly to flatter Jesus and get Him off guard). What was the question he asked? (In your opinion is it legal for us to give tribute to Caesar or not? Should we give it or not?) A yes or no to this question could get Jesus in trouble. A no answer would mean that Jesus was encouraging His followers to disobey the Roman law of taxation and could potentially have Him arrested. However, a yes answer would have been very unpopular with most of the crowd. The Jews hated the Romans for the most part and wanted to be a sovereign nation again. Did the spy fool Jesus? No, instead how beautifully Jesus answers the man! What does He ask for? (a denarius – which was the tribute money) He asked whose image was on the coin. It was Caesar’s. What did He tell them? (to give to Caesar what was Caesar’s and give to God what was God’s) How did this answer embarrass the leaders rather than Jesus? (The leaders were failing in their religious and civil responsibilities. They looked bad because they were not being faithful in following God or in obeying the governing authorities over them.) How did they respond to His answer? (They were stunned and kept silent and they went away.)

2. Application – When the spy tried to trap Jesus, Jesus took the opportunity to teach all of us a very important lesson. There is a central truth for living here that goes way beyond the problem of the Romans and Jews at that time. What is the application today for the things that “belong to Caesar”? (We are to pay taxes owed to the state and federal government; we are responsible to take part in the civil responsibilities of every citizen of the US – to vote, to serve on juries, to support and obey law enforcement, etc.) What is meant by give to “God what is God’s”? (We are to give everything to the Lord and hold nothing back.) He is also talking about formal religious authority. In His day that was the Law and the priests. Today we are to support and take part in a local church, which includes giving a tithe, obeying the elders and using your gifts for the body. Jesus could pack so much into such a few potent phrases! How are you and your family doing in these areas? This is a great opportunity to speak to your children about the responsibilities of being an American citizen and how important it is to promote Christian values in our governmental system. Also point out how important it is for each of them to become part of a local church and to minister to the body. Ask them what areas they might be interested in serving someday. Ask them how they can serve God and others right now. End your time with praying for the president, the governor and the elders and leaders at church. They all need God’s guidance!

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Jesus told the crowd to give to Caesar what is Caesars. One way you can do this is to lobby for causes that promote Biblical values. Look up what bills are being considered this week at the state or federal legislatures. If there is a bill that you feel is either against or for the truths of Scripture, write a letter to your senator or representative urging them to vote the way you want. The Center for Arizona Policy's website is a good place to start: www.azpolicy.org.
- b. Read "Blind Guides" on pages 203-205. Make a list of all the charges made against the Pharisees. What central truth or truths is Jesus teaching in this section? What hope does Jesus refer to at the end? What application do you make to your life from this passage?

Lesson 180 – A Poor Widow’s Gift
Pages 206-208; Mk. 12:41-44, Lk. 21:1-4.

1. Discussion– This is very short but powerful story that occurs on Tuesday. Where is Jesus when this story takes place? (by the treasury where people put their offerings to the temple – this money went towards the maintenance of the temple) What do the rich people put in? (large amounts of money) Who comes up next and what does she put in? (a poor widow, she puts in two tiny copper coins – they amount to less than a cent!) What does Jesus say about this woman? (She gave more than anyone did. She gave all she had.)

2. Application– On what basis was Jesus judging the offerings people put in the treasury? (Not on the amount, but the amount that was left after they gave) The rich could put in great amounts, but it impacted their lives very little. The widow, who had less than a cent to her name, gladly gave all of her money to God. Look up II Samuel 24:24 and read it together. What does David say? (He will not give to God that which costs him nothing.) What does that mean? God does not look at the *amount* of giving of any individual. He is looking at the heart. Do we truly trust God with our finances? Are we giving generously and cheerfully? Do we give until it is a sacrifice as David suggests? Look up II Cor. 9:6-15 and discuss how God wants us to give to Him. Do you think the widow went hungry that night? What does Paul say about provision in this passage? (He will provide and care for our needs.) Tell your children times when you had little, but chose to give to God anyway and how He provided for you. Encourage your children to start right now with the money they receive to set aside a portion for God’s work. Make them accountable to do so.

3. Digging Deeper - Read “Seeing God” on page 207 & 208 and answer the following questions, fully explaining each answer.
 1. How is God’s judgment of blindness on Israel justified if He is the One who blinded them? (Is. 6:10)
 2. Was Jesus’ hiding from them a result of His fear of arrest or a judgment against them? Explain your answer.
 3. What had the Jews rejected, causing their hearts to be hardened? (Heb. 3-4)
 4. Make a list of the reminders Jesus gave in His final words to the world.
 5. What application are you making to your life from this passage?

Lesson 181 – His 2nd Coming and the End of the Age
Pages 209-216; Mt. 24:1-8, Mk. 13:1-8, Lk. 21:5-11.

1. Discussion– [If you have older children feel free to read through all the sections through “Watch and Be Ready”, which will take you through the whole sermon on the Second Coming of Christ. If you have only younger children spend most of your time in the “Watch and Be Ready” section. Emphasize that we don’t know when Jesus will return but we are to live like it could be any day.]

This passage marks the beginning of Jesus’ teaching on Wednesday during the Passion Week and is referred to as the Olivet Discourse. Jesus answers Peter, James, John and Andrew’s questions, “when will these things start to take place” (referring to the stones of the temple being leveled) and “...what sign will proclaim Your coming and the end of the age?” The first question is fulfilled in 70AD when the temple and all of Jerusalem is destroyed by the Roman general, Titus. The second question refers to the *end of the age*, which is not to be confused with the events of 70AD. Jesus is talking about the seventieth week of Daniel 9, or the Tribulation, which is a period of 7 years prior to His return. The tribulation is broken into two halves and Jesus refers to both. The first part is called the beginning of sorrows. (Mt. 24:8 – End of the Age section) and the second the great tribulation (Mt. 24:21 – Days of Vengeance section.) The following chart gives a brief overview of the events in each part.

THE COMING TRIBULATION

FIRST 3 ½ YEARS	SECOND 3 ½ YEARS
Intensification of wars	Abomination of desolation
Famine	Rise of the antichrist and the false prophet
Disease (pestilence)	Armageddon – the last war
Earthquakes	Angelic re-gathering of Israel
Persecution of Israel	At the end – our redemption is nigh – Jesus comes!
Rise of false teachers	

Eventually, you will be studying the book of Revelation and will go into this more deeply.

2. Application - We are looking forward to most of these prophecies. It doesn’t sound like much fun to live through! There is a lot of controversy today about whether Christians will live through the tribulation or whether the rapture spoken of in I & II Thessalonians comes just before or in the middle of the tribulation. You may choose to discuss this at home, but probably the most beneficial discussion with your children should be about their response to the fact that Jesus IS coming. How can we watch and be ready? There is much talk about being prepared for a possible terrorist attack, but as believers we need to be much more prepared to meet our Lord and Savior! Are we living like Jesus could come today? What things would we change if we knew for certain that He was coming today? Encourage each other to live for Christ fully every day, praising Him and obeying Him and loving each other. Pray for unsaved loved ones to come to Him. Take opportunities to share Christ with them.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. What position do you take on the timing of the rapture? Write a paragraph explaining your answer and give at least 3 Bible references for your position. Cite any other references you used.
- b. Read “I Don’t Know You” and do an inductive study on the passage.

- I. Content** – Read the passage to be studied and then write down the “who, what, when and where” of the verses. Make NO conclusions. Write down just the facts. Identify any obvious divisions in the passage.
- II. Context** – Look at the passages just before and after the one you are studying. What information in these verses helps you understand the central passage?
- III. Compare** – Next, check to see if there are any other passages in the Bible that could help explain this one. Some versions list other references to check or you could use a topical Bible or a concordance. Look up the references and write down how they are significant to an understanding of the passage at hand.
- IV. Concept** – This is the time to make conclusions from the facts you listed in the “Content” section. Ask yourself what you think the passage is teaching. What is the core idea(s)? Write a summary of the passage in your own words.
- V. Commentaries** – Research other’s writings on this passage if you have any commentaries. Then write down what you learned from other people’s ideas on this passage. What insights did you gain? Do not skip to this step before you complete steps I - IV!
- VI. Connection** – Lastly, apply the teachings in the passage to your life. Ask yourself the following questions and record your answer(s): What did I learn from this passage? What will I take away from my study? Is there an example to follow? Is there something to learn about God or man? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid? In what significant way(s) did this passage affect me?

Memorization for 182-188

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Lesson 182 – The Traitor Bargains
Pages 217-221; Mt. 26:1-5, 14-16; Mk 14:1-2, 10-11; Lk 22:2-6

1. Discussion – The events of this story take place early on Thursday. The next 36 hours will lead Jesus to the cross. But first, He takes time to observe the Passover Feast with His disciples. What does Jesus tell the disciples will happen in two days? (He will be handed over to be crucified.) This is the seventh time Jesus has told the disciples of His impending death and still they do not understand. Meanwhile what is happening at the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest? (He and the priests, elders and teachers are plotting how to have Jesus arrested secretly and killed.) Why is he keeping them from doing it openly? (They are afraid the crowds will get angry with them.) Who shows up at Caiaphas’ house? (Judas – one of Jesus disciples!) Why is he there? (To find a way to betray Jesus to them.) What does he ask? (How much will you give me if I hand Him over?) What is the response of the priests? (They were delighted and agreed to give him 30 pieces of silver if he would hand Jesus over at an opportune time.) From that point on Judas looked for opportunities to give Jesus’ location to them when He was away from the crowds.
2. Application– The betrayal of Jesus by Judas was no surprise to the Lord. As we saw in the story of Mary washing Jesus’ feet with her hair, Jesus knew that Judas had been stealing from the “purse” and that Judas’ claim to be concerned for the poor was a sham. Jesus knew his heart from the beginning, even calling him a devil in John 6:70. Why might Judas have been a follower of Jesus? Did he really believe in Him like Peter and the other disciples did? Judas probably followed Jesus because he was impressed with the miracles and power He had, but he also saw Jesus as an earthly savior. Someone who would free the Jews from the Romans and then make all His best friends powerful and rich when He took over the nation. It was apparent finally to Judas that this was never going to happen. He decided to cut his losses and go over to the enemy. There might be something in it for him then. The 30 pieces of silver given to him were a fulfillment of prophecy found in Zech. 11:12,13. If you check all the references of Judas talking to Jesus you see that he never addresses Jesus as “Lord” as does Peter and others. He uses instead, “teacher”, “rabbi” and “master”. Judas was not a true believer of Christ. Why would Jesus allow such a man to be one of His followers? Jesus gave up the right to have friends that would be loyal and faithful. Eventually, all the disciples, even though they believe, run away from Him. How do we react when our friends disappoint us or let us down? Do we trust in the Lord? He certainly knows how we feel! God wants us to have our trust in Him not others. Everyone is sinful and will fail. Parents will disappoint their children and children will disappoint their parents. We must forgive one another, recognizing our own need for forgiveness. Jesus will never fail us or forsake us. Read Psalm 121 together and thank the Lord for His love and care.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read “Washing Feet” on page 219. Write a brief paragraph that explains what Jesus was trying to teach His disciples by washing their feet. Then describe a time when a family member or friend “washed your feet”, or a time when you did that for another person. How did that affect you?
- b. Write the story of “Someone Will Betray” from the perspective of Judas.

Lesson 183 – His Body and His Blood

Page 222-224; Mt. 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk. 22:19-34; Jn 13:34–14:31

1. Discussion– The Upper Room Discourse starts on page 222 and goes until 236, quite a large section. I am choosing to discuss mainly 222-224, but you may read and discuss the whole section if you wish. As Jesus went through the Passover meal with His disciples, how did He refer to the bread? (It represented His body, which would be given for them.) How did He refer to the cup of wine? (It was His blood, which would be poured out for the forgiveness of sins.) Once again, the disciples start to argue about whom was the greatest. Jesus had just given them a wonderful example of greatness when He washed all of their feet. They still didn't get it. Greatness is seen in service and humility. What is the new commandment Jesus gives at that point? (Love each other as I have loved you.) Jesus told them they could not go where He was going. What did Peter say? (I'll give up my life for You! I'm ready to go with You even to prison and death!) What prophecy does Jesus make? (That before the cock crows three times [morning] Peter would deny Him three times. He then reassures His disciples that He is going to prepare a place for them in the future. He tells them they know the way there, but they are confused. Thomas asks, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, how can we know the way?" How does Jesus answer? (HE is the way!))
2. Application – The points Jesus makes in these passages are crucial. First of all He starts a tradition of remembering that we still perform today: communion. The bread and the cup that they passed over the years during the feast of the Passover was a picture of the body and blood that would be sacrificed for the forgiveness of the sins of everyone who ever lived or will live. He commands His followers to love one another, as He has loved them. How has Jesus shown us He loves us? (He died on the cross for our sins.) After He dies on the cross He is going to heaven to serve us once again, this time by preparing a special place for us. How do we get to heaven? (Only through Jesus.) Jesus points out that if we have seen Him we have seen the Father. Jesus clearly states here that He is God in the flesh. There is no other way to interpret His words. That is why John 14:6 is such a crucial verse. {see also Acts 4:12} It states absolutely that there is NO OTHER WAY TO GOD than through the blood of Jesus. If there was any other way for man to get to heaven, why would Christ have faced the cross and its agony? Discuss with your children how important it is to understand that other religions cannot save a person. Jesus Himself said He was the only way. The only basis upon which we can approach God is through the Son, Jesus Christ. Discuss why this is so hard for people to understand and accept. (possible answers: they want to earn their way to heaven and not humble themselves and admit sin; they think that Christians are arrogant for saying there is only one way – not realizing that is what God said; they cannot believe that "good" people could be sent to hell, etc) Pray for your friends or family members that don't know Christ. Ask your children if they have trusted in Christ as Savior.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Read “The Vine and the Branches” on page 225 and answer the following questions:
 1. Who or what is the vineyard, the vine, the branches, the fruit?
 2. What does the Father do? What does Jesus do? What do we do?
 3. What does it mean to “abide” in Jesus?
 4. What did Jesus mean in saying that the Father “takes away” unproductive branches and prunes the productive?
 5. What are the results of abiding? Be specific.

- b. Read “A Passionate Prayer” on page 230 – John 17 and make an outline of what He prays for using these three divisions: I. Jesus prays for Himself. II. Jesus prays for His disciples. III. Jesus prays for all believers. Then finish with an overall impression of what the focus of Jesus’ prayer was and what you can apply to your life from it.

Lesson 184 –Not My Will But Yours and The Betrayal
Pages 237-239; Mt 26:36-56; Mk 14:32-52; Lk 22:40-53; Jn 18:1-11

1. Discussion– After Jesus gets done with His talk in the upper room He takes His disciples with Him to a garden outside of Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley called Gethsemane. (Locate on a map. Note: Gethsemane means “olive press”, which is a good description of what Jesus felt like while He was there that night.) What does He ask them to do? (Sit while He prays.) Who does He call aside? (Peter, James and John.) What does He ask them? (He tells them He is grieved and distressed and asks them to watch and pray with Him.) What does Jesus do then? (He walks a short distance away and falls on His face and asks that He not have to face the coming agony if possible.) How does He show his submission to God’s plan? (He says, “Yet do not do what I will but what You will.” What does he find when he returns to Peter, James and John. (They are asleep.) How many times is this repeated? (Jesus prays three times and each time the disciples fall asleep.) How is Jesus helped during His prayers? (An angel comes and strengthens Him.) Why do the disciples need to be praying right now instead of sleeping? (They need to be strengthened spiritually for what they have to face in the coming days.) Jesus says the betrayer is coming. Who is He talking about? (Judas) How did Judas know where to lead the soldiers? (Jesus had gone to that garden many times in the past.) Who came with Judas? (cohort of soldiers – 300-600 men; officers of the priests, Pharisees, teachers and elders) What was the signal Judas gave to show the soldiers which one was Jesus? (a kiss) What ironic statement does Judas make? (“...lead Him *safely* away.”) As Jesus talks to the crowd all of His disciples run away, frightened that they would be seized as well. It is midnight, the start of Good Friday.

2. Application– What things happen in the garden during Jesus’ arrest that prove that He is in charge, not the soldiers or the Jews?
 1. Jesus knows everything that is going to happen. Jn 18:4
 2. When He says, “I AM”, they all fall down, giving Him a chance to escape if He wants.
 3. He keeps Peter from defending Him when Peter chops off Malchus’ ear. Instead he heals the man.
 4. Jesus explains that if He wanted He could call 12 legions of angels for help. Legion – about 72,000
 5. He points out that they wanted to seize Him many times and every other time He had escaped them.
 6. He says that all of this was happening so that Scripture would be fulfilled and this was their hour of darkness.

Jesus wasn’t trapped; He submitted Himself to the crowd willingly, knowing it would lead to an ugly, tormenting death. The prophecy of Gen. 3:15 where Satan would “bruise the heel” of the savior was beginning. I was told once by what I believe was a demon-possessed man that Jesus dying on the cross was a huge mistake that never was supposed to happen. What a lie from the pit of hell. Without the events of Good Friday and the subsequent Sunday morning we would be utterly without hope in this world. Read Hebrews 9:24-28. Why does the writer of Hebrews call Jesus’ sacrifice

the “consummation of the ages”? (Because He once and for all took care of the problem of sin.) What a blessing to know that Jesus *willingly* did this for us! Spend time thanking Him in prayer today that He chose to die for us.

3. Digging Deeper

- a. Write the arrest of Jesus from the perspective of Peter. Be sure to include his motives and emotions.
- b. Write a poem about the Garden of Gethsemane and what you learned from Jesus’ words and actions. You may use any poetical form you choose.

Lesson 185 – The Trials of Jesus: Why Question Me – Sentenced to Die
Pages 240-249; Mt. 26:57-27:31; Mk 14:-15:20; Lk 22:54-23:25;
Jn 18:12-19:16.

1. Discussion – This lesson goes over a large segment of the book. If you wish, take two sessions to cover this lesson. {See the map of Jerusalem at the end of this lesson to trace the places where Jesus was taken during His trials and execution.} The soldiers and chief priests make their way to Anna’s house after they apprehend Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. They arrive around 1:00AM. As noted in the text, Jesus faced 6 trials, three with the Jewish leaders and three with Roman leaders. These were illegal for several reasons: criminal trials were to meet by day, no formal accusations were made as required by Jewish and Roman law, a guilty verdict could not be declared on the same day as the trial, search for hostile testimony was illegal, the accused could not be convicted on his own testimony, no valid evidence was presented. Here is a brief overview of the trials:

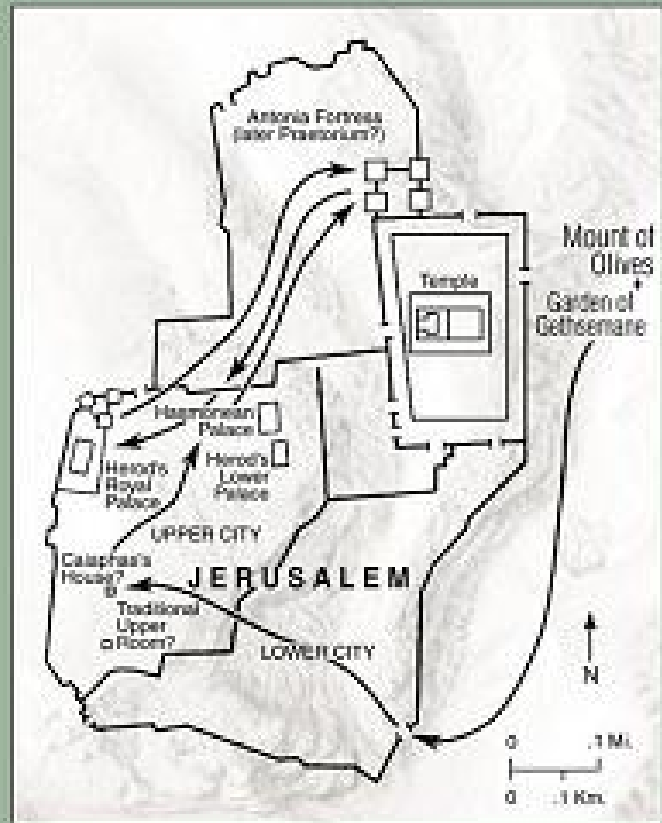
- 1:00 AM** - (not on map) Anna’s house – Jesus questioned, He does not respond, guard strikes Him; Peter denies Jesus in the courtyard
- 3:00 AM** – Caiaphas’ house with the Sanhedrin (70 men, supreme court of the Jews) – false witnesses disagree; Jesus admits He is the Messiah, Caiaphas tears his clothes (which was also illegal - see Lev. 21:10) and declares He spoke blasphemy, they condemn Him to die and treat Him viciously (spitting and hitting and calling him names – Is. 50:6) Peter denies again and again that he was associated with Jesus – a rooster crows and as Jesus turns and looks at Peter, he realizes what he has done and leaves, crying bitterly.
- 6:00 AM** – Before the Sanhedrin – At daylight the Sanhedrin officially convene to sentence Jesus. The Lord clearly tells them He is the Son of God and will be seated at the right hand of God. The Jews did not have the power to execute prisoners, so they led him away to Pontius Pilate, the governor. Judas realizes that Jesus is going to be killed, feels remorse (not repentance!) and kills himself.
- 7:00 AM** – Before Pilate (Tower of Antonia) – The Jews could not use the accusation that Jesus claimed to be God’s Son as a reason for killing Him. That was not illegal by Roman standards. What spin did they give Pilate? (Jesus was a subversive, He forbade paying taxes [untrue!], He claimed to be king) Pilate was astonished when Jesus would not answer the accusations. Jesus testifies that His kingdom was not at present of the world, but that He had come to tell the truth. Pilate answers, “What is truth?”, or “How can anyone really know the truth?” showing his unbelief.
- 8:00 AM** – Before Herod Antipas (ruler of Galilee) at the Palace of Herod – Pilate judges Jesus not guilty. But hearing that He was from Galilee, sends Him to Herod, who was the governor of Galilee. Herod had wanted to see Jesus since he had heard all about Jesus’ miracles. Jesus refused to perform any and Herod and his followers ridiculed and mocked him and sent Him back to Pilate.
- 9:00 AM** – Back before Pilate at the Tower of Antonia - Pilate affirms again that Jesus is innocent and declares that Herod thinks so as well. He asks Jesus if He understands that he, Pilate, has the power of life and death over Jesus. Jesus replies that the power he has has been given to him by God. Pilate endeavors to get out of his sticky situation by proposing to let the crowd decide which prisoner to release – a custom of

Passover. Pilate thinks that the people would not want to let Barabbas go free since he was a murderer and a menace to society. He thinks the crowd will pick Jesus to be released and he, Pilate, will be off the hook. Pilate is also trying to heed his wife's advice to have nothing to do with Jesus. Ask your family to list all the things people in the crowd say about Jesus. (Away with Him, We have no king but Caesar, His blood be on us and on our children, crucify Him, etc.) Pilate releases Jesus to the Praetorian guard (find on map) where He is scourged, crowned with thorns (the thorns were at least 1-2 inches long) and mocked. Scourging was brutal, inflicted with a whip loaded with pieces of bone or metal. Many people died from the whipping alone. Jesus then begins His long walk down the Via Dolorosa (find on map.)

2. Application– It seems at first like God is certainly not in control of the events that surround the trials of Jesus. First the Jews and then the Romans made many illegal decisions. All of His friends desert Him. He is alone and everything He says, which is the truth, is ridiculed. However, God's plan is unfolding in every detail. The Roman government's involvement is necessary because Jesus was not only rejected by the Jews but by the Gentiles as well. All people are guilty before God of the death of Jesus, not just the Jews. The unbelief and pride of man is seen in people's responses. The Jews had all the evidences of Jesus' miracles and sermons; Herod had had the testimony of John the Baptist; Pilate knew He was innocent. For these people Jesus sacrificed His life. However, it is important to realize before we get too condemning that we are the same - prideful and unbelieving. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. The song "How Deep the Father's Love" has a phrase that says, "I hear my voice call out among the mockers". How true. Take time today to thank Jesus for facing these ugly and unfair trials for us. Remind them that God requires that we face unfairness the same way. (see 1 Peter 2:20-25.)
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Write a paragraph contrasting the reactions and motives of Judas and Peter in the circumstances of Jesus' trials. (Mt. 3-10) Each of them experienced grief and regret. Were these different or the same? Be specific and cite examples from the text to back up your opinion. How are you like or unlike each of these men? What can you learn from their examples?
 - b. Research the laws that were broken during the six trials of Jesus. List them and give references from the Old Testament or refer to Roman laws that were also violated.
 - c. Have you ever been unjustly accused? Describe the incident. How did you react? How was your response like or unlike Jesus'? What can you learn from Jesus' reactions? How can you apply this in your life *this week*?

JESUS' TRIAL

After Judas singled Jesus out for arrest, the mob took Jesus first to Caiaphas, the high priest. This trial, a mockery of justice, ended at daybreak with their decision to kill him; but the Jews needed Rome's permission for the death sentence. Jesus was taken to Pilate (who was probably in the Praetorium), then to Herod (Luke 23:5-12), and back to Pilate, who sentenced him to die.



Lesson 186 – To the Place Called Golgotha
Pages 250-256; Mt. 27:32-66; Mk 15:21-47; Lk 23:36-56; Jn 19:17-42

1. Discussion– The Crucifixion – Jesus is taken to Calvary (the Latin name for Golgotha – place of the skull) and crucified at 9:00AM and he stayed there until 3PM. There is so much here to discuss that I suggest you read the pages together out loud and discuss the passage as you do so. I have included several discussion questions you can use, or you can ask questions of your own.
 - a. Why did Jesus say, “Father forgive them...” (He continued to have mercy on His enemies even as they nailed Him to a cross. See Mt. 5:4)
 - b. Why did the Jews want Pilate to change the sign on the cross? (They were offended that the sign said Jesus *was* the king of the Jews. They wanted it to say He *said* He was king, because they didn’t believe in Him.)
 - c. Why wouldn’t Pilate change it? (First, he did it to anger and shame the Jews. Secondly, it was the only legal accusation the Jews could muster up against Him. Thirdly, it was God’s sovereign will to leave it thus – He really *was* their king!)
 - d. How did most of the crowd treat Jesus while He was on the cross? (They mocked Him and made fun of Him. These included the soldiers, passers-by, chief priests and both robbers initially.)
 - e. How did one thief change while on the cross? (He recognized that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus promised he would be in Paradise with Him that day.)
 - f. Why did Jesus say, “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?” (See 2 Cor. 5:21. Jesus was made to be sin for us. God cannot look at or have anything to do with sin.)
 - g. What were some unusual things that happened while Jesus was on the cross? (the veil of the temple tore from top to bottom, earthquakes, graves opened and people raised from the dead {these were temporary resurrections – like Lazarus’ }, darkness all over the earth for the last three hours)
 - h. What did Jesus mean when He said, “It is finished!” (He had accomplished all that the Father had given Him to do – His sacrifice for our sins was complete. “Finished” in the Bible occurs three times: 1. At creation, Gen. 2:1, 2. By Jesus, Jn. 19:30 and 3. At the end of time, Rev. 10:7, 16:17.)
 - i. Who were the men who asked Herod for Jesus’ body? (Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, Pharisees who evidently had no part in Jesus’ trials. By claiming Jesus’ body they “defiled” themselves and were deprived of taking part in the Passover. Instead they took care of the *real* Passover Lamb!)
 - j. What purpose did the tomb being sealed by the Sanhedrin and the Roman guards serve? (It provided authentic witnesses to the tomb being opened only by supernatural means! It destroys the possibility of the disciples stealing His body.)

2. Application– The crucifixion is the focal point of all history. Before it all people looked forward to it. In Gen. 3:15 God promised Adam and Eve that a savior would come to pay for their sins. We look back at the cross and believe the Jesus did just that. In the future we will be in heaven with Jesus, who will still bear the scars on His hands and feet from the nails. How can Jesus’ death be an adequate payment for the sins of all people? (I John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:19; I Tim. 2:6; It is found in the *quality* of the

sacrifice not the quantity. Jesus was God in the flesh, perfect, sinless and His blood is able to atone for all sin.) The blood of Jesus is “priceless”. We can never fully understand the immense sacrifice He made for us. While we were yet sinners, He died for us. Rom. 5:8. When we are angry over our circumstances or the people or things God has allowed us to suffer, we need only to remember what He did for us. We did not deserve His sacrifice. We actually deserve death in hell. We don’t deserve an easy, comfortable life. Instead we have redemption, justification, reconciliation and a permanent place in heaven with God! Tell your children how Jesus’ death and resurrection have changed you. How were you before you trusted in Him? Afterwards? Take time to thank God for all He did for us on the cross. Ask forgiveness for anger, complaining and exasperation. Since Christ faced the cross for us, we can face our own troubles with hope, joy and peace! Praise the Lord! Amen.

3. Digging Deeper - The veil in the temple that was torn from top to bottom was huge (see above) and probably required many priests to mend the massive rip. Act 6:7 states that many priests became followers of Christ after the events of the crucifixion and resurrection. Write a story about a priest who witnessed the tearing of the curtain, helped repair it and how these events could lead him to believe in Jesus. Be sure to refer to the symbolism and meaning of the tear.
 - a. Make a list of all the Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled during Jesus’ crucifixion. Give both the New Testament and Old Testament references. Then read Ps. 22 as a whole. Then read Is. 53. Write down how these passages better help you understand the crucifixion.
 - b. Make a chart of the seven last sayings of Christ on the cross. Give the references of each and then explain the significance of each saying. Write an explanation at the end of how these things Jesus says reveal His suffering, character and purpose. What is your personal response to these things Jesus said?

Lesson 187 – The Resurrection

Pages 257-261; Mt 28:1-15; Mk 16:1-13; Lk 24:1-25; Jn 20:1-18.

1. Discussion– Read the passages together and answer the following questions:
 - a. What evidences do you see that Jesus really rose from the dead? (the angel, the earthquake, the stone is rolled away, reaction of the guards, empty tomb and folded face cloth, reaction of the women and the disciples)
 - b. Who did Jesus appear to after He arose from the dead? (Mary, the women, the disciples – several times, the people on the Emmaus road)
 - c. How did the disciples respond the women’s testimony that He had risen? (unbelief)
 - d. How does their unbelief help us understand the authenticity of the resurrection? (It shows how impossible it was for the disciples to have made up the story –*they* thought it was unbelievable! It also shows that they are not expecting Jesus to rise again; therefore, they would not have planned a fake resurrection.)
 - e. What is astonishing about the response of the Sanhedrin to the open tomb? (They are oblivious to the truth – He rose from the dead! They resort to criminal bribery to keep the truth from being known. It certainly shows how right Christ was when He said, “If they don’t believe Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if someone rises from the dead”).

2. Application– Here are 7 significant things about the resurrection:
 - a. It radically changed the history of the world. No series of events have ever revolutionized the world like the resurrection has.
 - b. It validated Jesus’ claim to be the Messiah and God in the flesh.
 - c. It is the greatest proof of His deity.
 - d. It demonstrates the greatness of God’s power. (Eph. 1:19-20)
 - e. It guarantees our justification. (Rom. 4:25) His resurrection guarantees that we are saved from the penalty of our sin.
 - f. It guarantees our resurrection in the future. (1 Cor. 15:25)
 - g. It is the central doctrine of Christianity. No other religion has a *living* Savior.

Where would Christians be without the truth of the resurrection? Read I Cor. 15:12-21 to see how important an understanding of the resurrection is to our faith. Take time today to praise God for His love, power and grace in saving us and for the resurrection of Christ that gives us hope.

3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Write a narrative as if you were one of the two people walking on the Emmaus road with Jesus that Sunday afternoon. Include at least 4 Old Testament passages that Jesus might have explained to them.
 - b. Women played an important part at the cross, at the burial and at the empty tomb. List what women the Bible lists, who they were, what they did and how Jesus honored them. Write why this is significant to you and how you can apply these facts to your life.

- c. List all the proofs of the resurrection listed in the Bible. Explain how each is significant. How is this information significant to you? You may want to use other sources for information, such as books by Josh McDowell or others. If you do so, cite references.

Lesson 188 – Behind Locked Doors – That You May Have Life
Pages 262-267; Mt. 28:16-20; Mk 16:14-20; Lk 24:36-53; Jn 20:19-21:25.

1. Discussion–What can we learn from the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus? Specifically, how was Jesus different? The same? (He could appear in a room without going through a door, He could make His appearance different, He ate food, He could be touched and talked to – He was no ghost!) Who did He NOT appear to? (His enemies – the Jews, Sanhedrin, Herod, etc. This was not the time yet for vengeance [Mt. 26:64], but a time of mercy and a time for His followers.) Why do you think the disciples went fishing? (The wait for Jesus in these 40 days was probably difficult. They may have also needed to fish for food and money to live on.) What happened this time when they went fishing? (They again received fish miraculously, but the net did not break.) What main lessons were taught by Jesus at the breakfast and on the mountain as He ascended to heaven? (They need to depend on Him for their daily needs as they serve Him worldwide. He told them of difficult times ahead and of their need to depend on Him. They were to fulfill His commission – be fishers of men throughout the world and make disciples of all nations. They were not only to evangelize, but bring people under the lordship of Christ.) Jesus had to change the disciples’ minds about His coming. They finally understood this was not the coming for political control. This coming was for salvation of souls and the cleansing of sin once and for all. What promise did he give them? (They would have power from on high – the Holy Spirit would come and help them.) What were they to wait for? (the power – the coming of the Holy Spirit – this will be seen in Acts)
2. Application for all ages – According to page 267 in the text (Jn 20:31), why were all these things written? (That we may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing we may have life in His name.) Take time today to review briefly all the time you have spent in studying about Jesus. Do your children believe in Jesus? Do they have the life mentioned in Jn. 20:31? How do they demonstrate this belief in their life? Explain simply the way of salvation, or have them explain it to you, making sure they understand how to become part of God’s family. Have each person share what they have learned this year. Pray for family and friends that do not know Christ. Look forward to the next coming of Christ – for us, His bride, the church!
3. Digging Deeper
 - a. Compare Peter before the cross and resurrection and the Peter of Acts. Give specific references and specific character changes. How do you account for these? How did Jesus’ appearing to him and talking to him in Galilee after the resurrection help Peter? What can you learn from the experiences of Peter?
 - b. How has the study of the life of Jesus Christ impacted you? What have you learned that you did not know before? What convicted you? What blessed you? Write at least three paragraphs explaining how the study of the life of Christ was important to you.