

Family Bible Study Series

Dear Family,

As you know, Satan has a strong foothold on our society. He is attacking from all angles in all types of ways. His arsenal is heavily equipped with alcohol, drugs, violence, TV, negative peer pressure, complacency, busy-ness and many other tools he has at his disposal.

The only way we can truly overcome Satan and the arsenal that he uses is faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) Romans 10:17 states it like this, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the Word of God." If we want our family to withstand the pressures of the world, we must be in the Word.

Unfortunately, many families are too busy and have decided to put spiritual development low on the priority list. We spend quality time in activities such as work, sports, school, and recreation, but have little or no time to spend developing our relationship with God. Some families have left it to the church to provide their only spiritual food on Sundays and Wednesdays. Because of that, many of us are spiritually malnourished. We need to be in God's word more! We need to teach our children the importance of Bible study!

That is the reason we have put together the "Family Bible Study Series." These lessons are designed to be very simple, basic and applicable to the entire family. They are written so that someone unfamiliar with the Bible could use these outlines. They can also be used as a starting point for a family that may be older. Just take these lessons and add more depth to them. The most important thing is for us to begin to open the Word of God as a family. This is where we can develop a spiritual life that can withstand the storms of Satan! How is your family spiritually?

You can NEVER start too young or too old!

May God bless your efforts to develop a strong God-centered home.

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Youth & Family Minister

Table of Contents

Keys to Having a Good Home Bible Study	pg. 3
Lesson for Week One – “The Sower”	pg. 4
Lesson for Week Two – “The Wheat and the Tares”	pg. 5
Lesson for Week Three – “The Unmerciful Servant”	pg. 6
Lesson for Week Four – “The Laborers in the Vineyard”	pg. 7
Lesson for Week Five – “The Wise and Foolish Builders”	pg. 8
Lesson for Week Six – “The Talents”	pg. 9
Lesson for Week Seven – “The Good Samaritan”	pg. 10
Lesson for Week Eight – “The Friend at Midnight”	pg. 11
Lesson for Week Nine – “The Rich Fool”	pg. 12
Lesson for Week Ten – “The Great Supper”	pg. 13
Lesson for Week Eleven – “The Lost Sheep / The Lost Coin”	pg. 14
Lesson for Week Twelve – “The Prodigal Son”	pg. 15
Lesson for Week Thirteen – “The Pharisee & Tax Collector”	pg. 16
Suggestions for Family Projects	pg. 17

Keys to Having a Good Home Bible Study

- ?? Have a family meeting and discuss what night and time of the week would be best to have the study.
- ?? Stick to the time that is agreed upon and start and finish on time!
- ?? Make a decision that this will be a family priority.
- ?? Start with a prayer.
- ?? Give each family member time to discuss what has happened during their day.
- ?? Do not allow the discussion time to become a place for family gripes and arguments.
- ?? Give each family member an opportunity to share how he or she was able to work on last week's lesson.
- ?? Always remember what the purpose of this study is...
 - To develop a closer relationship with God.
 - To develop a closer relationship with each other.
 - To unite as a Godly family.
- ?? Take time to work on your family project. (*See back page for a list of suggested projects.*)
- ?? End with a prayer.

The Parable of the Sower

Week # 1

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Sower and its application to us today - our responsibility to teach the gospel and to know that people will react differently to it.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 8:4-15

Mark 16:15-16

Hebrews 4:12

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Family Discussion:

In the parable of the sower, what does the seed represent?

What does the soil along the path represent? The rocky soil? The soil with thorns? What does the good soil represent?

What kind of soil were you when you heard the good news? What kind of soil are you now? What kind of soil should you be? Are you ready to be a sower? Why do you think Jesus told this parable?

Read the Great Commission in Mark 16:15-16. Was Jesus talking only to his apostles, or to you too?

Some people say that the Bible is just an ancient book. What does the Bible say about itself in Hebrews 4:12?

Some people say that only some parts of the Bible are God's Word, and some parts are just literature. What does the Bible say about that in 2Timothy 3:16-17?

Challenge:

It is important to know that God wants you to plant the seed of the Word of God in the hearts of others. How can you do that? You cannot force others to obey God's Word. It is our responsibility to teach them, but it is their responsibility to obey and bear good fruit. Talk about whom your family could share the good news with. Invite someone to church this week.

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Weeds)

Week # 2

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Wheat and the Tares and its application to us today - reward or punishment at the Judgment Day.

Feasting on the Word:

Matthew 13:24-30

Matthew 13:36-43

1 John 3:7-10

Acts 2:38

2 Corinthians 5:21

Family Discussion:

In the parable of the Wheat and the Tares, what did the enemy do after the man had finished sowing good seed in his field? How did the owner tell the servants to solve the problem?

In Matthew 13:36-43, Jesus' disciples asked him to explain the parable. The man who sowed the seed is who? What does the field represent? Who does the good seed represent? The bad seed? The enemy? What does the harvest represent?

What job will the angels have at the end of the age? What will happen to the righteous? What will happen to the evil ones?

1 John 3:7-10 explains the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil. Read and discuss.

Everyone sins at times. Talk about the difference in saved sinners and lost sinners. (Acts 2:38) What is it that makes a sinner righteous, according to 2 Corinthians 5:21?

God has told us exactly what is going to happen at the end of time. Why is it so important for us to heed the warning in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares?

Challenge:

Imagine this: You find out that the Lord is coming tomorrow night at midnight. Tomorrow will be the last day on earth for all people. How would you spend that day? Discuss it. (Beware! It might come true!)

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

Week # 3

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Unmerciful Servant and its application to us today - showing mercy to others.

Feasting on the Word:

Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 5:7

Luke 6:32-35

Family Discussion:

What did Peter ask Jesus in Matthew 18:21? What did Jesus answer? What do you think that means?

In the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, a man owed the king a thousand talents, which is millions of dollars! What was the king going to do, since the man couldn't pay? (Verse 25) What did the servant ask for? What did the king do?

Then the man demanded payment of a fellow servant who owed him 100 denarii (a few dollars). When the servant begged for mercy, what did the man do? This outraged the king, so what did he do to the man?

The main point of the parable is given in verse 35. Read and discuss it.

Sometimes having mercy on someone means to forgive them. Other times it may require that you just be patient and loving. What did Jesus say will happen if you are merciful to others, according to Matthew 5:7?

Luke 6:32-35 tells us some more ways to be merciful...even to our enemies! Read and discuss.

Challenge:

When you refuse to forgive someone, you are not hurting that person, you are only hurting yourself! The first step in forgiving someone is to pray for them. Ask God to bless them. Ask God to help you forgive. Keep praying until you feel the release of the anger. Right now, is there someone you are angry with, or is there someone who continually gets on your nerves? Pray for that person every day this week. Learn to have mercy on others, like God has mercy on you!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard Week # 4

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable and its application to us today.

?? God is fair.

?? Do not question God's generosity.

?? Do not envy.

Feasting on the Word:

Matthew 20:1-16

Family Discussion:

Who were the key people in this parable?

At what hours did the landowner go out to the market place and find workers? (*Early in the morning, third hour – 9:00 am, sixth hour – noon, ninth hour – 3:00 pm and the eleventh hour – 5:00 pm*)

How many hours were left to work when the landowner invited the last group of workers? (*One hour*)

What did the landowner pay all of the workers?

How did the workers that were hired in the early morning feel about their wage?

Did the early workers show gratitude for the wages they received?

What can we learn from this parable?

?? God is more than fair. (*“Did you not agree with me...?”*)

?? We do not have the right to question God's generosity. (*“Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things?”*)

?? Those who serve God long and hard should not be envious if others receive the same reward. (*“Is your eye evil because I am good?”*)

Challenge:

Take some time as a family to list out all the many blessings that God has given you. Discuss ways in which your family can show their gratitude for those blessings. Also, discuss how we can show gratitude for others who do things to help us.

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders

Week # 5

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders and its application to us today - the importance of a rock-solid faith.

Feasting on the Word:

Matthew 7:24-27

1 Corinthians 3:11

Proverbs 14:16

Family Discussion:

Many of you will be familiar with this parable because of the children's song about it. If you have small children in your family, sing *The Wise Man* song with them now.

In the parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders, on what did the wise man build his house? What happened when the rains came and the wind blew against his house? In verse 24, to whom did Jesus compare the wise man?

On what did the foolish man build his house? What happened when the rains came and the wind blew against his house? In verse 26, to whom did Jesus compare the foolish man?

What is Jesus trying to tell us in this parable? Discuss why it is important - not only to hear the teachings of Jesus, but to obey them as well. If we do that, what will happen to us at the Judgment Day?

According to 1 Corinthians 3:11, who is our foundation, the rock on which wise men should build?

Discuss what Proverbs 14:16 says about wise men and foolish men.

Challenge:

Discuss this: Hard times will come to every family (wind and waves). Be prepared before it happens! Make a spiritual emergency plan for your family about how to handle a crisis. Develop a rock-solid faith. God sends peace and comfort when you pray. No matter what happens, even death, there is a happy ending for every person who is a Christian!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Talents

Week # 6

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Talents and its application to us today - using the gifts God has given you.

Feasting on the Word:

Matthew 25:14-30

Romans 12:4-8

John 15:1-8

Family Discussion:

A talent was a large amount of money. How many talents did the master give to each servant? When the master returned, how much money did each servant return to him?

Why were the servants who were entrusted with ten talents and five talents praised? What words of praise did the master use in verse 21?

Why did the one talent man hide his talent? What criticism did the master have for him in verses 26 and 27? What was the servant's punishment? (Verse 30)

Even though the word "talent" in this parable means money, it can have a deeper meaning for us. God gives each of us talents, or abilities. From what you've read in the parable, what does God expect us to do with our talents?

We all have different talents. Read and discuss Romans 12:4-8.

The lesson of this parable is to be productive for the Lord. Read John 15:1-8. What does it mean to bear fruit? Discuss some ways you can grow as Christians and bear fruit.

Challenge:

One of the best ways to bear fruit for the Lord is to tell others the good news of salvation. Discuss this: If your family found the cure for cancer, what would you do? Would you keep the news to yourselves and let others go on suffering and dying? Now relate that principle to the importance of teaching others about salvation. It's an emergency! What will you do?

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Week # 7

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Good Samaritan and its application to us today: kindness to others

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 10:25-37

1 John 3:18

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

1 John 4:20-21

Family Discussion:

Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan in answer to a question. What question did the man ask in verse 29?

In the parable, what happened to the man who was traveling?

When the priest saw the wounded man, what did he do? What did the Levite do? What did the Samaritan do?

Which man showed brotherly love?

How do you think the wounded man felt about the Samaritan who helped him? Put yourself in his place.

What did Jesus say in verse 37 that makes this parable apply to us today?

That parable illustrates that love is more than just a feeling. It is action. Discuss 1 John 3:18.

What does love do? Discuss 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7.

Can you love God and hate your brother at the same time? Discuss 1 John 4:20-21.

Challenge:

What can you do, as a family, to show brotherly love to someone who is in the hospital, ill at home, or an elderly person who lives in a nursing home?

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

Two Parables: The Friend at Midnight and the Persistent Widow

Week # 8

OBJECTIVE: To discuss these two parables and their application to us today - persistence in prayer.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 11:5-13

Luke 18:1-8

1 Thessalonians 5:17,18

Philippians 4:6,7

Family Discussion:

In the parable of the Friend at Midnight, what did the friend (the one knocking on the door) ask for? Why?

What did the one inside answer? For what reason does Jesus say that the man will change his mind and give the friend what he asked for? So what is the meaning of the parable as it pertains to prayer?

In verses 9 and 10, what will happen to those who ask, seek, and knock?

In verses 11-13, Jesus uses two more examples that God will answer prayer. What are they?

In the parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18:1-8), what was the widow asking for? Why did the judge finally grant her request? Read verse 1 to find out why Jesus told this parable!

How often does 1 Thessalonians 5:17 say to pray?

Challenge:

Conclude your devotional by reading Philippians 4:6,7. God invites us to come to him with our requests, boldly and with persistence! Make a prayer list of people or situations that your family wants to pray about. Pray for each one right now and continue to pray for those on the list each day. Watch for answers...and remember to be thankful!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Rich Fool

Week # 9

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the rich fool and its application to us today - the foolishness of materialism.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 12:13-21

1Timothy 6:6-10

Matthew 6:19-21, 24, and 31-33

Family Discussion:

In Luke 12:15, what did Jesus say to be on guard against? What does he say a person's life does NOT consist of? To illustrate his point, Jesus told a parable about a rich man.

In the parable of the rich man, the man had so much wealth that he had to keep building bigger barns to hold it all. Was it a sin to be wealthy? What was the sin? (See verse 21.)

Finish this saying from the verses in 1 Timothy listed above: We brought nothing into this world and _____. Discuss how that makes materialism such a foolish thing to care about.

Does the Bible say that money is the root of all evil? (No) What is the root of all kinds of evil? (Verse 10) What is another word for "the love of money?"

According to the verses in Matthew 6, where should we store up our treasures? Wherever your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Where is your heart - in the things of this world, or in heaven?

What should have first place in our lives?(Verse 33)

Challenge:

Test yourself: If everyone in the whole world was blind except you, would it really matter what brand of clothes you wore? Would it really matter what how fancy your house was? Would it really matter if you had a diamond ring or not? Would it matter what kind of car you had? So what can you conclude, if those things DO matter to you right now? Think about it!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Great Supper

Week # 10

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Great Supper and its application to us today - Removing excuses that keep us from responding to God's invitation.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 14:15-24

Family Discussion:

What were the excuses given by the first group of people invited?
(Luke 14:18-20)

How did the Master feel about these excuses?

Who did the Master tell the servant to invite next? (Verse 21)

Did the people who made excuses ever get to come and eat the great supper? (No)

In this parable whom does the Master represent? (God/Jesus)

In this parable, whom do the people being invited to the supper represent? (Us)

What has God invited us to be a part of? (His family, church, heaven, Christianity, etc.)

What are some excuses that we use when it comes to the following invitations?

- ?? Attending church services or fellowships?
- ?? Becoming a Christian?
- ?? Doing what is right?

What are the dangers of making excuses? (Luke 14:24)

Challenge:

As a family read Revelation 19:9, 22:17. Isn't great to be invited to a party or celebration? Everyone has been invited into God's family, but not all will respond to that invitation. As a family, discuss any excuses that you might be using to avoid God's invitation. What are some ways that your family can overcome those excuses? Close in a prayer asking for strength to overcome any obstacles in your family.

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

Two Parables: The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin

Week # 11

OBJECTIVE: To discuss these two parables and their application to us today - God wants all to come to Him.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 15:1-7

Luke 18:8-10

Family Discussion:

Have you ever lost something of value? What was it? How did it make you feel?

In the parable of the lost sheep, how many sheep were lost?

Do you think the shepherd loved his sheep?

What did the shepherd do to show his love for his sheep?

In the parable of the lost coin, how many coins were lost?

Do you think that the owner of the coin valued that coin?

What did the owner of the coin do to show that she valued that coin?

Why did they have a celebration?

How do these parables relate to God and His love for us?

Whom did God send to find the lost? (Luke 19:10)

Do you realize how much God loves you?

Challenge:

Conclude your devotional by reading John 3:16. Allow each family member to share some ways God has demonstrated His love for us. (*Sending Jesus, giving us the Bible, giving us a caring family, etc.*) Use this time as an encouraging time to share things about each family member that you value! Close with a prayer of thanksgiving for the love that God has for you!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Prodigal Son Week # 12

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Prodigal Son and its application to us today - forgive like God forgives.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 15:11-32

Acts 3:19 and Luke 13:3

Matthew 6:14-15

Family Discussion:

What did the younger son do that was wrong? When did he realize that living in sin was disgusting?

What did he decide to do about his situation? Did he deserve to be forgiven? Did the father forgive him anyway?

What did the father do that proved his forgiveness?

Why was it hard for the older son to forgive his brother?

In this parable, whom does the sinful son represent? Whom does the father represent? Whom does the older brother represent? What do you think this parable means to us today?

When we realize we are living in sin, we must repent. What does *repent* mean? Discuss Acts 3:19 and Luke 13:3.

When someone sins against us, we must forgive them. Why? Discuss Matthew 6:14-15.

Challenge:

Is there some sin in your own life of which you need to repent? You can never get so far away from God that you can't "come home." Say a prayer asking God to forgive you of your sins. Picture God, like the father in this story, running to meet you and throwing his arms around you in a great big hug. That's how God forgives!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Week # 13

OBJECTIVE: To discuss the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector and its application to us today – humility.

Feasting on the Word:

Luke 18:9-14

Romans 12:3 and 16

1 Peter 5:5-6

Ephesians 4:2

Family Discussion:

To whom did Jesus tell this parable? (Verse 9) What clue does this give us about the meaning of the parable!

In verse 11, what was the Pharisee doing as he was praying?
What did the Pharisee say in his prayer?

In verse 13, what was the tax collector doing as he was praying? What did the tax collector say in his prayer?

Jesus said that the tax collector went home justified before God and the Pharisee didn't. Discuss what Jesus said about the difference in verse 14. Was there an attitude problem?

Discuss what it means to be humble. (admitting your faults, being modest, accepting yourself as you really are) Discuss what it means to be proud. (conceited, bragging, thinking too highly of yourself, thinking you're better than others)

How can we be humble as God expects us to be? Read Romans 12:3,16.

Discuss what God says about being humble in 1 Peter 5:5-6 and in Ephesians 4:2.

Challenge:

King David sinned by taking another man's wife and having her husband killed. Eventually, he realized he was guilty. He confessed his sin and prayed humbly for God to forgive him, and God did. Read and discuss David's humble prayer in Psalms 51. A good example for us!

Family Project: Take time to work on your family project. (Refer to list.)

Suggestions for Family Projects

?? Memorize the books of the New Testament.

?? Memorize the books of the Old Testament.

?? Develop an outreach of service that you and your family can do.

- Write cards to the missionaries.
- Write cards to the shut-ins, widows or widowers.
- Write notes of appreciation to your Bible class teachers.
- Rake someone's yard.
- Put together a care package for someone in need.
- Go visit the nursing home.
- Sponsor an orphan in our outreach in China. (See Greg Taylor on how to reach Ron Brown, the missionary for China.)

?? Memorize I Corinthians 13.

?? Memorize the 12 Apostles.

?? Memorize the 23rd Psalm.

?? Memorize the 12 sons of Jacob.

?? Memorize the verses that teach us the plan of salvation.

As you can see, there are unlimited opportunities to develop your family. Take time to come up with some of your own ideas to put Christianity to work in your family! I know God will bless you!