

♥ Faith & Family

TOGETHER Time!

Gather in the family room and talk about why and where you can sing songs about Jesus. Name songs you know that tell about Jesus' birth and about Jesus' love and care for each of us. Is there someone you can sing these songs to? A neighbor? Relatives? Friends? Practice singing some of the songs you have named.



CARE & SHARE

Name people you know who are too far away or too sick to visit. Plan to send a family greeting to one or more of these individuals. Determine what is the most appropriate way to communicate your love for them—an e-mail, homemade cards, a voice recording, or a video. Have each family member write or record a special greeting. Be sure to include a message about Jesus' love.



LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 1:26-40, 46-55.
Remember, **God sent His Son, Jesus.**

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FAMILY OUTING

As a family, experience the difference between where most babies are born and where Jesus was born. First, visit a farm or go to the library and look at picture books about farms. Talk about the smells, sights, and sounds. Next, arrange to visit in the home of a newborn. Talk about the smells, sights, and sounds. Which place was more like the place where Jesus was born?



TOGETHER TIME!



One way to remember Jesus' birth is to act out the story together. Choose roles for each family member to play. Then use robes, sheets, and towels to dress in Bible-times clothes. As one person reads the story from Luke 2, have the performers act out their parts. Or if everyone is familiar enough with the story, encourage family members to say their own words. Finish the play by interviewing family members to talk about how they felt playing their roles.

LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 2:1-7.
Remember, **God's Son, Jesus, was born.**

Faith & Family

TOGETHER Time!

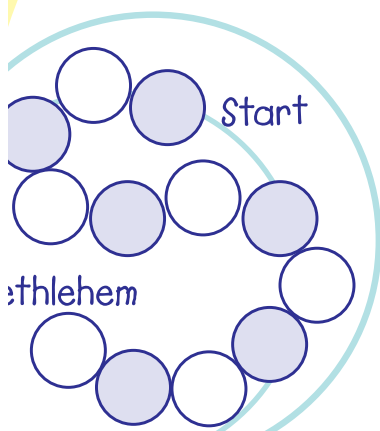
Gather some newspapers and news magazines. Look at the pictures and headlines. How many articles tell good news? How many tell bad or sad news? Thank God for the good news the angels shared with the shepherds. Ask God to help your family be excited like the shepherds and tell the good news of Jesus to everyone you see.



GAME Time!

Make a family game that will help you remember Jesus' birth. On a poster board, draw a path of connected shapes (squares, rectangles, and circles). Choose some places along the path to draw pictures that will remind you of facts from the story of Jesus' birth—an angel, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, a manger, a shepherd. Mark a "Start" and finish—"Bethlehem."

Take turns tossing a coin. If the coin lands heads up, the player can move two spaces. If the coin lands tails up, move one space. If a player lands on a picture space, he must tell something about Jesus' birth. Then that player gets to take an extra turn. See who can reach Bethlehem first!



LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 2:8-20.
Remember, **We should tell others that Jesus is God's Son.**

♥ FAiTh & FAMiLy

TOGETHER TIME!

Gather as a family and talk about what it means to worship. Make a list of people and things that could be worshipped, such as celebrities, sports stars, and money. Decide which things should not be worshipped and cross them off the list. Next, make a list of reasons why Jesus should be worshipped. Read your list and worship Jesus together.



CARE & SHARE

One way to worship Jesus is to give Him gifts like the wise men did. Talk about how giving gifts and sharing with others is a way to worship Jesus. Through your congregation or a local charity, identify a child, the approximate age of your child, who is in need. Find a jar or container to place money in and label it "Our gift to Jesus." Encourage your child to earn money by doing chores. Collect spare change. After a couple of weeks, go shopping as a family to buy a gift for the child you have identified. Wrap the gift and deliver it together. Remember to pray for the receiver of the gift.



LOOK iN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Matthew 2:1-12.
Remember, **We can worship God's Son, Jesus.**

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FAMILY CREATIONS

Purchase a small poster board for each member of your family. Provide pencils, rulers, markers, and stickers. Have each family member create a personal Obedience Chart. Discuss reasonable chores and tasks each person can be responsible for in the coming week. Write these on the appropriate charts. Making Obedience Charts for the adults in the family can help children understand that everyone needs to grow like Jesus, God's Son. Throughout the week, pray for one another as you learn to become more like Jesus. At the end of the week, recognize acts of obedience achieved.

GAME TIME!

Choose a favorite family game to play. After you have played, talk about the importance of obeying the rules of the game. What would have happened if no one had obeyed the rules? Then talk about the importance of obeying God's rules. Pray and ask God to help each member of your family learn to become more like Jesus, who obeyed both His heavenly Father and earthly parents.



LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 2:41-52.
Remember, **We should want to grow like God's Son, Jesus.**

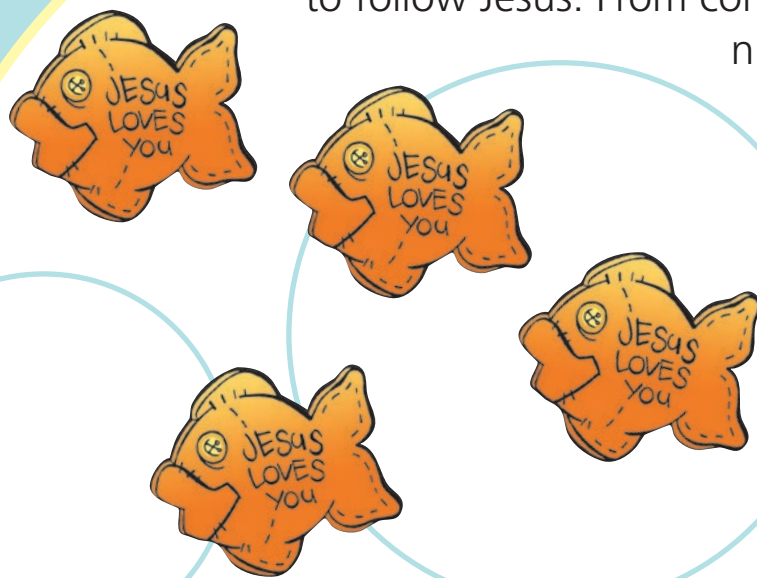
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FAMILY OUTING

Plan a family trip to a local aquarium or a pet store that has fish. Before you go, do some research about the kinds of fish you might see. What kind of water do various fish live in? What do they eat? What special care do they require? Enjoy looking at the fish and comparing their sizes and shapes. Talk about the fishermen who followed Jesus. What kind of fish might they have caught? (Some believe that the most common fish were a type of sardine.) Thank God for the fishermen who left their nets to follow Jesus and tell others about Him.

CARE & SHARE

Make some fish treats to share with others as you learn to follow Jesus. From construction paper, cut out a number of fun fish shapes. On each fish, write "Jesus loves you." Prepare snack bags filled with fish-shaped crackers. Attach a fish message tag to each bag. Share the snacks with friends and neighbors. Have fun following and telling about Jesus.



LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11.
Remember, **We should choose to follow Jesus.**

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GAME TIME!

Fill a large paper bag with several of the following items: toys, books, sponge, garbage bag, greeting card, can of food, and so forth. Have family members gather around the paper bag. Tell them that the items inside the bag could be used to show Jesus' love to others. Have family members take turns pulling items from the bag and acting out how a specific item could be used to show Jesus' love to someone. Other family members can call out the names of people they know who could be shown love in that way. See how many people you can name for each act of love.

TOGETHER TIME!



From Mark 10:13-16, read the Bible story of Jesus and the children. Substitute the names of children in your family in place of the word "child" or "children." Talk about what it would have been like to be one of the children brought to Jesus. Pray and thank God for His love for each of us.

LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Mark 10:13-16.
Remember, **We know Jesus loves us.**

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FAMILY OUTING

Our world is full of powerful things and people that can impress us. Take time to think about the power Jesus has, a power that never runs out or changes. Take a family “power walk” and identify things that have power: power lines, vehicles, weather conditions, and so on. Talk about how these things and their powers can change but that Jesus is always the same.



TOGETHER TIME!



When has your family experienced a death? Maybe your child has already lost a grandparent or a pet. Don't avoid the subject. Look at family photographs or visit a grave site together. Talk about how sad the loss from death can make us feel. Be honest and encourage questions—even if you don't have all the answers. Remind your child that Jesus has power over death. Not only did He raise Lazarus from the dead, but Jesus rose again too!

LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-45.
Remember, **We know Jesus is all-powerful.**

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FAMILY CREATIONS

Write "Thank You, Jesus" at the top of a whiteboard or poster board displayed in your home. Provide dry-erase markers or self-stick notes. As family members recognize or think of great things Jesus does, have them add those things to the board. At the end of the week, have a family praise time to thank Jesus for all the great things He does.



GAME TIME!

Play a family thank-you game. Cut pieces of colorful construction paper into small rectangles, approximately 2½" x 4". Mix up the papers and begin to pass them around the circle. Have one person name a color and then say "Stop and be thankful!" At that point, everyone should stop passing the papers. Anyone holding a paper the color that was called should name something to be thankful for that is that color. For example, if someone is holding a red paper, he might name an apple, a rose, or a red bird. When everyone has had a turn choosing a color, stop and thank Jesus for all He has done for us.



LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 17:11-19.
Remember, **Jesus can do great things.**

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TOGETHER Time!

The best way to be friends to others is to tell them about Jesus. Try role-playing being friends. Let one person pretend to be a new child at school, while another person pretends to be a good friend. Switch roles and let someone pretend to be mean to other kids, while someone else pretends to be a good friend to that person. What can be told about Jesus in each situation?



CARE & SHARE



Sit at the table with small pieces of paper, pencils, and a bowl. Write down the names of people you know and put these into the bowl. Then take turns drawing names from the bowl and telling ways to be a friend to each person. Choose one person to be a friend to in a specific way this week. Will you bake and deliver cookies to someone? Can you send a “thinking of you” card? Be sure to make this a family project.

LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together portions of this week’s Bible story from John 4:3-30, 39-42.
Remember, **We should tell others about Jesus.**

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TOGETHER Time!

As a family, act out the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus. If the weather permits and you have a usable tree in your yard, do the skit outside. Otherwise, be creative and turn a sofa or a chair into a "tree." Be sure to help Zacchaeus serve a meal (a snack) to everyone and tell how he is going to obey God by repaying people even more money than he had taken from them.



FAMILY CREATIONS

Gather markers, stickers, colored paper, scissors, and paper lunch bags. Encourage each person to decorate a friendship bag. The bag can either be for someone who is already a friend or for someone who needs a friend. After the bags are decorated, fill each bag with simple gifts appropriate to the person receiving the bag—candy or snack items, happy face stickers, a homemade card, a paper or artificial flower, and so on. Thank God for friends and for helping you be a friend. Deliver the bags sometime in the next few days.



LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together this week's Bible story from Luke 19:1-10.
Remember, **We should be a friend like Jesus.**

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TOGETHER Time!

Fill a large jar full of jelly beans. Have each family member guess how many beans are in the jar, and then count them together. Discuss all the ways Jesus forgives us over and over again, more times than we can even count. Talk about people whose actions you need to forgive. Pray and ask God to help each member of your family learn to be a forgiving friend.



GAME Time!



Play a Finish the Story game. Start making up a story about one person doing something wrong to another. Stop before the end, letting someone else in the family finish the story. Let another person start a new story for family members to finish. Talk about how difficult forgiveness can be.

LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together portions of this week's Bible story from Luke 7:36-50.
Remember, **We should forgive others like Jesus.**

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GAME TIME!

Play the Telephone game. Have family members sit in a circle. One person will think up a message that tells something about Jesus. The message should be passed around the circle by whispering it in the next person's ear. When the message has gone around the whole circle, the last person should say the message out loud. Did the original message get passed through to the end? Talk about how important it is to listen carefully when we learn about Jesus so that we can share the story of Jesus with others.

CARE & SHARE



Have family members choose friends they want to help know Jesus better. Pray for those individuals together. Plan things you can do to help friends learn about Jesus. Fix a snack for a neighbor and attach a note that says "Jesus loves you!" Invite friends over for a movie night. Serve popcorn and show a video that tells about Jesus. Send a card to someone who lives far away. Include in the card a picture you have drawn or colored that shows Jesus.

LOOK IN THE BOOK

Read together portions of this week's Bible story from Mark 2:1-12.
Remember, **We should help others know about Jesus.**