

IDEAS FOR FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP*

Lent is a season of turning from the lesser, temporary things of the world to remember the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross that purchased forgiveness for our sins. During Lent, we remember the temptation of Jesus by Satan in the wilderness. Jesus resisted sin by using the Bible—God’s true Word. Jesus lived a perfect life so that His death could pay the punishment for sin that we all deserve. The temptation, pain and death that Jesus endured is the reason we have hope and joy today. Without it, we would still be slaves to sin and separated from God. Instead, those who love and trust Jesus are forgiven and enjoy a relationship with our loving Father.

DECORATIONS

The goal of Lent is to remember the temptation and death of Jesus. To help your family remember the temptation narrative, use a large rock and the Bible as a centerpiece on a table. As we get close to Palm Sunday, using rocks and palm leaves is a simple way to remember the praise due to our Savior. Luke 19:40 says, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.” Write Scripture from these Lent readings on chalkboards or mirrors in your home.

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP TIME

The Temptation of Jesus

The temptation of Jesus is a powerful and helpful example of our Savior fighting temptation with the Bible—God’s true Word. Read the story of Jesus’ temptation in Matthew 4:1-11 with your family. If you have preschoolers, *The Jesus Storybook Bible* is a great resource to read together, specifically “Let’s Go!” (p. 208). If you have older children, reading the account directly from the Bible can be a sweet time to grow together as a family. Help your kids find the story in their Bible using the table of contents and the chapter and verse numbers.

After reading the account of Jesus’ temptation, talk through the ways you are feeling tempted in your family. What lies are you tempted to believe? Do you know how to use the Bible to fight sin? Do you trust God to care for you in the hard moments of life? Find a verse that will help you fight a current temptation to sin that you are facing. Write it down on a note card that you can keep with you. Memorize

it this week. Take time to pray for courage and strength to fight temptation. When you fail, confess (tell the truth about) your sin to God and ask for forgiveness.

The Triumphal Entry

Jesus was betrayed and crucified on a Friday. Just five days before crowds would shout, "Crucify Him!" they were shouting something very different. The Sunday before Jesus was killed, He entered the city of Jerusalem riding on a donkey. As He rode through the city, the people lined the streets, covering the road with their cloaks and waving palm branches at Jesus. They shouted, "Hosanna!" and "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" The people were praising Jesus. When the religious leaders became upset about Jesus being praised, He told them that if the people didn't praise Him, the rocks on the ground would cry out praises to Him. Jesus deserves our worship and praise.

Take some time to write a poem or song, draw a picture or create some artwork that tells the story of the triumphal entry. As you share what you have created with your family, praise God for being willing to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

The Death of Jesus

The day that Jesus was crucified was the worst moment in all of time. The Son of God, who left heaven to live among us and reconcile us to God, was arrested, lied about, beaten, spit upon and sentenced to die. He could have stopped what was happening to Him at any moment, but He did not because of His great love for us. Read "The Sun Stops Shining" from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* (p. 302).

As a family, remember the stories we read about during the season of Epiphany about the miracles Jesus performed. He had the power to do anything. Why did He stay on the cross? What happened to the sky when Jesus died? What did Jesus take from us on the cross? Did Jesus deserve to die? Spend time in prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to die on the cross. Parents, pray for your child's salvation out loud over them.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday Service

Attend Sojourn Spring Branch's Ash Wednesday and Good Friday services together as a family. After the service, ask your child what they thought about the service and

if they have any questions.

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP MOMENTS

Discipline Conversations

Discipline conversations are one of the hardest aspects of parenting, but they are one of our greatest opportunities to have gospel conversations with our children. During the season of Lent, capture opportunities to point your children to their need for a Savior when disciplining them. Ask questions about their behavior instead of making accusations (like God did with Adam and Eve in Genesis 3). When they sin, give them the opportunity to confess. Encourage them to not only seek forgiveness from you or the person they sinned against, but also from God. When there are consequences for their behavior, remind them that Jesus paid the consequence for our sin—He died the death we deserved so we could be reconciled to God. Help them look for verses in the Bible to help them fight their sin the next time they are tempted.

Activity: Rocks

As you are outside playing or walking, take time to point out the rocks that you see. How crazy would it be if the rocks started singing and shouting out praises to God? Imagine together what the rocks might say. Remind your child that Jesus once said that if the people didn't praise Him, the rocks would. Jesus deserves all of our love and praise. Take a moment to praise God out loud with your family.

Activity: Remembering Jesus Is Better (Fasting)

Jesus is better than everything! He's better than our favorite foods and activities. He's better than anything we have or could ever have. But often, everything else distracts us from Jesus. As a family, choose something to "give up" for the season of Lent. It could be an activity or type of food. It could be something related to physical comfort. But don't just give up something; every time you would do or consume or use whatever you have given up, capture the opportunity to remember that Jesus is better than anything we might give up temporarily. Say a quick prayer, thanking God for how good He is.

**This document has been adapted from The Village Church's book "Seasons: Enter the Story of Jesus"*