

# Introduction to *Everyday Faith* Discipleship:

## daily sowing the seeds of a spiritually vibrant life and family.

### THE CHALLENGE

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- Daily read the word of God with your family and discuss everyday life in light of God's word.

### THE GOAL

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- To make Jesus and His word a daily part of your family's lives.
- To make conversations about faith a comfortable and regular occurrence in your, and your family's, life.
- To instill a rich theology, understanding of God's word, and trust in the person and work of Jesus leading to a vibrant faith.
- To lead you, your family, to learn how to put your faith into practice in the everyday stuff of life.

### THE PROCESS

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Each week will have an article, a memory verse, 4 Study Days, a Review Day on the key topics of the week, and daily Prayer. Let's look a little closer at each of these.

- **The Article.** Each week we will create an article on the topic for the week to give you a foundation of knowledge for what your family will be learning that week. You, as the parents, might read this alone so that you'll be better prepared to lead your children. Or you may choose to read it with your children.
- **Memory Verse.** Each week you'll introduce to your children a memory verse. Introduce the memory verse to your children on day one. Speak a section of it a few times. Have them say it with you. Then have them say it without you. Once they can do that, have them repeat it four or five times. Then repeat that process with the second section of the verse. Once each section is memorized, repeat the steps with the entire verse. Finally, have them repeat the entire memory verse and the reference (where it is found. Ex: Genesis 1:1). You will probably have to repeat these steps on day 2. Days 3-5 they should be able to rehearse the verse by memory. If they have it memorized by Sunday, they will get a treat in Kid's Corner or Transitions.
- **Study Days.** These days will consist of a short introduction to read with your children, a bible selection to read, and a handful of questions pertaining to, and derived from, the reading.
- **Review Days.** On the review days you will review the key concepts from the week. They are laid out like a classic Catechism page, with questions, answers, and bible references. These are the key ideas that we want our children to learn through the four days of study. Your review days will consist of you quizzing your children on memory and asking them the questions printed. It isn't important that they answer word-for-word, but grasp the general idea of each day.
- **Prayer.** Pray daily for the spiritual well-being of your children. Pray that they learn to love God's word, trust Jesus with their lives, and serve Him with all they have. Bathe your study in prayer. Pray to the Lord when you begin, asking God's Spirit to lead you, and parent His children through you. Make sure you end your session each week with a prayer thanking God and asking Him to help you believe in, and live for, Him

### EVERYDAY FAITH FOR EVERY LITTLE ONE

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Try to do the full daily study with your young ones present, even if they are just playing on the floor. Kids hear and understand more than they let on. Going through the study above as parents alone, or with your older children, in earshot of the younger, will sow seeds of faith in your little one's heart just from overhearing your discussion. Who knows, you may be surprised by your little one jumping in to participate in the dialogue, or them repeating the content of your discussions that they had heard earlier. We are also giving you this added study, *Everyday Faith For Every Little One*, to help specifically shepherd your young ones' hearts to Jesus. It will contain a story from *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, which we provide for free in our lobby.

# Overview For Week 1

**Note:** Before you start your first Family Devotion time for Day 1 of this week's study, read over this overview. Along with Sunday's sermon, it will give you, as a parent/leader a good grasp of the material you will be guiding your family/faith family through this week. You will also want to look over Day 5's content. Day 5 will contain the information that we hope your family/faith family will know and trust by the week's end.

## MEMORY VERSE

**Isaiah 44:6, 8c** This is what the LORD says—Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD of Heaven's Armies:  
"I am the First and the Last; there is no other God....There is no other Rock—not one!"

## FAMILY GOALS FOR THE WEEK

- Have a family meal this week. A family that eats together talks together and ultimately grows together.
- Schedule a time where you will daily gather your family to discuss the Everyday Faith study. Good options for this time would be A) first thing in the morning, B) at dinner time after your meal, C) right before bed.
- Pick a night of the week to unplug, gather together around a game or a task.

## ARTICLE

What do you think is wrong with the world, with human lives? You may say that our main problem is selfishness or greed. Maybe you could say it is sexism, racism, or some other "ism." One could think gossip, hatred, poverty or violence is the problem. It is really easy to say that our main problem is the government, the other political party, the boss, the bully, or the enemy we think we have. Yet the Bible says that we have one main problem. In fact, it is the problem beneath every other problem. We have built our lives on a bad foundation.

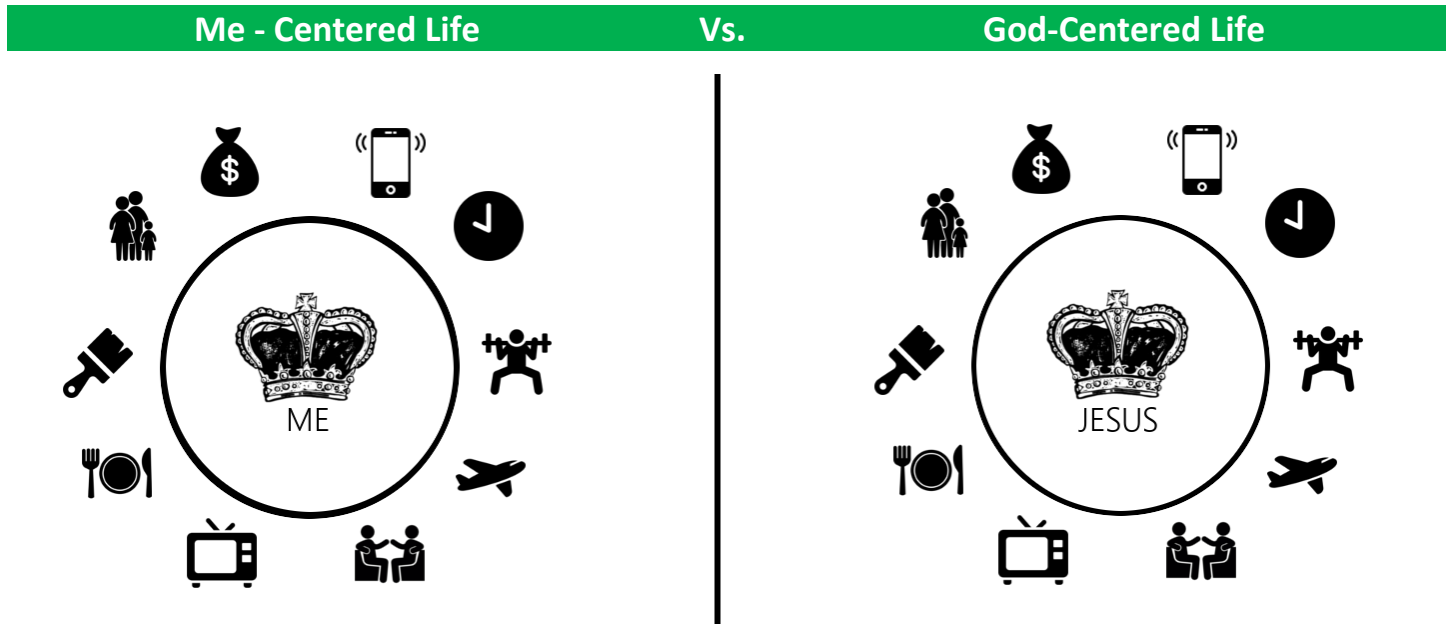
I've lived in houses where there are many problems: doors don't shut right, there are cracks in the wall, the floor slants in some rooms. There were many problems, but the problem beneath the problem was a bad foundation. When your foundation is bad, all sorts of other problems will appear. Those problems will never fully be solved either, or will keep coming back until the foundation issue is addressed. This week's theme is *Laying the Right Foundation*.

In Matthew 7:24-27 Jesus says,

<sup>24</sup>"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. <sup>25</sup>Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. <sup>26</sup>But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. <sup>27</sup>When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

If there is a Creator God as the Bible claims, then that same God must be our foundation if we wish to live a full life. If He created us, then He knows how we work best and what we need to have life to the full. If God created us, then He created us for a specific plan and purpose, anything outside of which would bring brokenness, death and a general lack of fulfillment in our lives. The famous Westminster Catechism touches upon this when it says that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." It is through trusting God and His word that we glorify God and enjoy His goodness. It is through listening to the words of our King, and building our lives upon them, that we find the stability, hope, joy, and love of God. It's how we find our lives in God. The Foundation that we need for our lives is Jesus as King.

There are two main ways to view the World: One where the individual is at the center of their outlook on life. The other is where God is at the center of their lives. Look at the figure below. Who is on the throne of your life? Who wears the crown? Does your money, time, skill, relationships, etc. center around you and your desire or God and his desires?



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If we view ourselves as the center of our lives, then we see everything else in our lives as people and things to serve us. This is the inevitable end of living with a humanistic worldview where man is seen as the highest being and therefore the “measure of all things.” This is the predominant worldview here in America and the west. Most everything in our music, media, and culture is interpreted through a humanistic worldview. We are bombarded with the refrains, “Whatever makes you happy,” “You take care of you,” “Follow your heart,” “If it feels good it can’t be bad,” etc. Such a life, though in pursuit of life and happiness, will lead to much brokenness and death. Where everyone is trying to be king, there will always be war and competition. Happiness will always come at the expense of others. There can be only one king.

If, however, God is at the center, then everything in our lives is meant to be a vehicle to serve Him. This is a biblical worldview. A biblical worldview is grounded in the Bible, in the Kingship of God, in our dependence and need of Him, and in the message and person of Jesus Christ. In a biblical worldview, God is on the throne and we find our joy and life when we find our proper place before Him, as His people, trusting in His goodness and love, and then living our lives for Him.

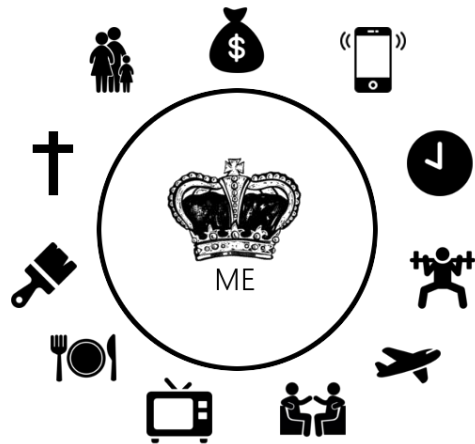
You could say that conversion is what happens as we come to know Jesus as our good king. Where we recognize him as our savior and in response desire to allow Him back on the throne of our lives. This is what we, as followers of Jesus, want for our lives above all things, that our children get to know Jesus, trust Jesus, and then serve Him with their lives. Our chief end as parents is to teach our kids to glorify God and enjoy Him forever in His Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Icons made by <https://smashicons.com/> , Chanut, <http://www.freepik.com> from [www.flaticon.com](http://www.flaticon.com)

## A Me-Centered Life With God In It

Now the scary thing is that we can come to know the true God and King, and He can become just another one of those things orbiting around us. We treat Him as a wonder worker, like Merlin in Camelot, meant to secure our kingdom. We can go to Him when we need to be served, when those other subjects around us don't deliver like they're supposed to. We can go to God only when someone or something else threatens our kingdom. Then once our kingdom is secure, we send him back to his study until the next time we, the king, need our magician.

Do you treat God that way? I'm sure you do, in some area of your life or another. Most Americans don't outright reject God. As a whole, we like the idea of God in our me-centered existence. Yet we cling to our throne. All of us, struggle with this, even dedicated Christians. That is because the heart of sin is curved in upon itself.



After we come to know Jesus as our saving king, our response is a lifelong journey of discipleship where we joyfully learn to trust Jesus in every area of life. In every area where we trust Jesus, we will begin to give back the crown. As we do so, we will find the grand significance and joy of seeing God take mundane and small things and use them for great joy in our lives and the lives of others.

The purpose of this week, and then ultimately the whole of the *Everyday Faith* study, is to help you build the right foundation for life, faith, and godliness for both you and your family, to lead your kids to honor God as King no matter their age. Part of the way to put Jesus back on the throne of your life is to give Him some time daily to teach and lead you and your family. Dedicate yourself to this work and you, and your children, and your children's children will find themselves standing on the strong foundation of Jesus, though rains, winds, and floodwaters come, your house will stand.

### TIPS ON HOW TO INSTILL AND REMAIN IN A BIBLICAL WORLD VIEW

- **PRAY.** If God is God and you are not then you need His help. Pray in the morning with your kids on the way to school. Ask them what they're worried about and give it to the Lord. Pray at meals thanking God for his provision. Pray in the evening thanking God for the good of the day and entrusting your troubles to Him as your rest.
- **READ THE BIBLE DAILY.** Read it with your kids (with this study). Let them catch you reading the word. Tell them the new things you are discovering about God.
- **HAVE REGULAR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT GOD.** As you encounter life's problems, talk about how Jesus is better than anything you can desire or anything you fear losing. Examine life's problems and joys through the kingship of Jesus.
- **ASSESS YOUR LIFE:** Regularly examine your life to see if you're standing on the foundation of Jesus or something else, if Jesus is the king or you are. Where you are still acting like king repent of it. Help your children do the same thing in your parenting and discipline.
- **POINT TO JESUS IN ALL THINGS.** Remember that if Jesus is King in your life, you are way better off than if you are king. He not only knows what you truly need, but he loves you enough, and is powerful enough to deliver it. Regularly remind yourself and your family of that truth and live in light of it.

# Laying The Right Foundation

Day 1: God The Eternal King

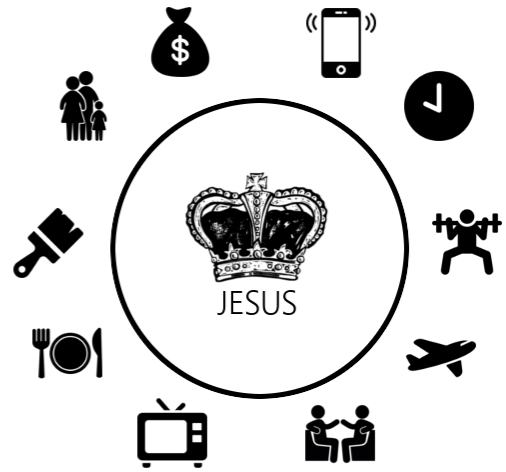
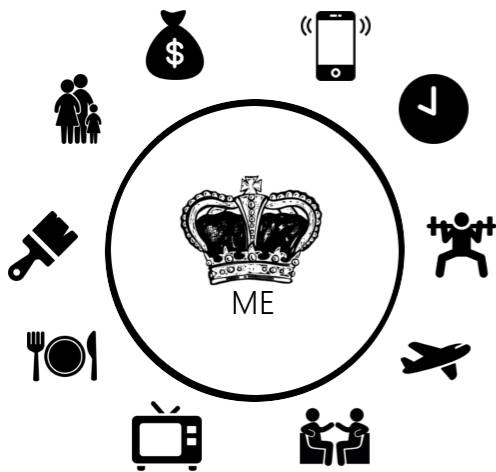
**Before you begin:** Introduce the Memory verse(s) for this week

**Introduction:** The most fundamental and foundational belief found in scripture is that there is a God. Genesis assumes it from the get-go in Genesis 1:1, "In the Beginning, God..." It is the first thing Christians for Millenia have confessed in the Christian Creeds. They all begin with, "I believe in God..." Christianity isn't the only worldview that believes in a god. In fact, there are numerous faiths that believe in at least a god, if not many. Yet Christianity makes some pretty distinct claims about God. Christianity, as well as the scripture that our faith is founded on, claims that there is but one God, and one Lord, who made us along with all things, and gave us life. There is only one worth worshipping and living your life for. A second fundamental assertion made is that if God is God, you and I are not. If one God made everything else, He is both the originator and master of all things. He is the purpose that all things exist. He is totally different from any other spiritual or material being.

## Read Psalm 103

1. **What is God like? What are some of the things he does for humanity?**
2. **In what ways are humans and God different?**
3. **What does verses 1-5 reveal about our need as people?**
4. **What does Verse 19 say about God and our position before him?**

**What do you think happens when someone other than God tries to sit on the throne of their lives?  
What does that lead to?**



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5. What is God's desire for you according to verses 13-18? What's His desire for you and your children, and their children?

What hope do we have, for us and our children, without God?

6. Look at verses 20-22. What is our proper response to God in light of all that He is and all that He has done?

### Everyday Faith For Every Little One

Read, with your little ones, *The Story and the Song* (pg. 12) from *The Jesus Storybook Bible*.

Ask the Following Questions:

- What did you learn about God? What's He like? What has He done?
- What did you learn about people? About us?
- What did you learn about how we should live?

Along with the above questions, come up with your own based off of the fuller study above. Bring in important truths that you learned this day. Make Sure you thank God in prayer when you're done.

<sup>2</sup> Icons made by <https://smashicons.com/>, Chanut, <http://www.freepik.com> from [www.flaticon.com](http://www.flaticon.com)



4. **Discuss together: How has your experiences in life shown Solomon's assessment of life to be true?**  
(Parents give an example of what you used to sacrifice and live for but now you see how meaningless it was. Then ask your children how they see this same principle working out in their, and their friends, lives.)

**Psalm 144:3-4**

O LORD, what are human beings that you should notice them,  
mere mortals that you should think about them?

<sup>4</sup>For they are like a breath of air;  
their days are like a passing shadow.

5. **What does Psalm 144:3-4 reveal about the length of our lives?**
6. **If our days are short, and if everything is a smoke, what should we live for?**
7. In verses 24-26, Solomon confesses that the best thing to do is to eat and drink and to enjoy one's labor and its fruit (implied is that this is done with family, friends, and neighbors), all to the glory and pleasure of God who is the giver of all these good gifts. **How can you use food and drink, the fruit of your labor, to the glory of God in today's world?**

**Everyday Faith For Every Little One**

Read, with your little ones, ***A Little Girl and a Poor Frail Lady*** (pg. 214) from ***The Jesus Storybook Bible***.

*Ask the Following Questions:*

- *What did you learn about God? What's He like? What has He done?*
- *What did you learn about people? About us?*
- *What did you learn about how we should live?*

*Along with the above questions, come up with your own based off of the fuller study above. Bring in important truths that you learned this day. Make Sure you thank God in prayer when you're done.*



# Laying The Right Foundation

Day 3: Building Life On The Rock

**Before you begin:** Review the Memory verse(s) for this week

**Introduction:** Yesterday we heard Solomon's lament that "everything is meaningless, a chasing after the wind." Our lives are like smoke or a vapor. We see it, but when we try to get our hands round it, it escapes our grasp. We spend our time here under the sun desperate to grab ahold of life and enjoy it, improve it, and secure it for ourselves and for those we love. Yet, the wise teacher's conclusion was that no matter how hard we try, and how much we think we have secured our lives, we can't change our ultimate fate. If all is "meaningless" under our own endeavors, we need God's direction in our lives. We need Him to build for us a life that is secure and enduring – a life that matters.

## Read Matthew 7: 7-27

1. Parents often struggle with teaching their kids. **Parents, share for a moment what you desire for you kids ultimately when it comes to life and their faith?**

**Kids, what do you need from your parents? How can they help you learn about God and learn to walk in his ways?**

2. **If we are really struggling with teaching our kids, how does verses 7-11 address struggle? What do you think it means to ask, seek, knock?**
3. **What is God's heart for us and our Children (v11)?**

4. **Discuss: What do you think most people are building their lives upon?**

5. **What does Jesus say is essential for a lasting and significant life (v24)?**

**Note:** In the parallel passage in Luke 6:46-48, Jesus teaches this same truth in a slightly different way. He asks the people,

*“<sup>46</sup>“So why do you keep calling me ‘Lord, Lord!’ when you don’t do what I say? <sup>47</sup>I will show you what it’s like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. <sup>48</sup>It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock.”*

Jesus says we shouldn’t call Him, Lord, and then go live without care of our Lord’s desires for our lives. Rather, If He is Lord then we ought to trust him and do what he says. Turning from trusting other things to trusting God is what we call repentance. Every Christian trusts in the foundation of Jesus, yet also finds themselves trusting in other things as well. The whole of our Christian life is digging through all the other stuff we trust in and getting down to the foundation of Jesus in every area of life.

6. **In what ways do we need to change our thinking and our lives to listen to and follow the teaching of Jesus both as a Family and as individuals? Spend some time discussing, repenting, and pointing each other to how Jesus is sufficient in each of those areas of life.**

#### Everyday Faith For Every Little One

Read, with your little ones, **A New Way To See** (pg. 334) from **The Jesus Storybook Bible**.

Ask the Following Questions:

- *What did you learn about God? What’s He like? What has He done?*
- *What did you learn about people? About us?*
- *What did you learn about how we should live?*

*Along with the above questions, come up with your own based off of the fuller study above. Bring in important truths that you learned this day. Make Sure you thank God in prayer when you’re done.*

# Laying The Right Foundation

Day 4: Building A Lasting Legacy

**Before you begin:** Review the Memory verse(s) for this week

**Introduction:** Yesterday we talked about laying the right foundation. It is only through trusting in Jesus, the author of our lives, and living our lives out in faith in Him, that we find a life that is good, meaningful, and lasting. Yet it doesn't end there, God's desire for us to hear the word of God and keep it isn't for our benefit alone. He desires to give a great and lasting legacy to us and our children.

In this passage, God reveals his name, Yahweh, to Moses. Your translation quite likely has the name "LORD" in its place. The name, Yahweh, is usually translated as Lord with all capital letters in most English translations. This can cause confusion because there is another title for God which has the meaning of "Master" which we also translate as Lord. Here's how you tell them apart. **Lord = Master. LORD = Yahweh.** The name, Yahweh, was held in such reverence and honor by late Jewish scribes, that they made a similar switch in the way that they read the Hebrew bible. They were so concerned that they might misuse the name of God that they wouldn't even use it, but would say "Lord" instead while reading scriptures. This tradition has followed over in most of our English translations as well.

Yet, God gave us the beautiful name, Yahweh. It's meaning is "I am." It was first revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14 when God spoke to Moses through the burning bush. **Pause for a second. Ask your family why they think God's name means, "I am." What does that tell us about God?**

God is the only God that exists. He is completely unique from all other beings. He is set apart. He is different. There is no thing and no one that can compare. This is what the bible calls, Holy. He is the *only* Creator God. His name reflects that. He is the God who is, and there is no other. Yet the beautiful thing is, as Holy and different as He is, He wants a relationship with us and our children.

## Parent Tip

Keep your ears open this week. How do you and your family use the Name of God? How often do you hear or use "OMG" or "Oh my God?" If you're not talking to God or about him, should you really use his Holy Name! How can you take steps to bring reverence to His Name in your Family?

## Read Exodus 34:1-9

1. **What does this passage tell us about God and his Character?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. **When Moses sees the glory, power, and love of God, what does it lead him to do (v8)?**

3. Verses 6-9 show that you will leave a legacy for your children whether you want to or not. The question is, what will that be? **What two legacies could you leave for your children and their children?**

**With this in mind, what is the most important role of a Parent? For Children, what is your main role?**

4. **What are the consequences if we fail in our calling to pass on a legacy of faith (v 7)?**
5. We often think of parenting as helping our kids be “good kids.” Yet in reality, good parenting prepares our children to be responsible and God-honoring adults, spouses, and parents someday. Help them to start thinking of that day. **Ask your kids: Someday, God willing, you will have children of your own, what do you want for them? What does God want for them?**

**How can you invest in the Lord now so that you can bless them then?**

6. Read back over Moses’ prayer in Verse 9. **As a family, write out this prayer in your own words, asking for God to be with you, to forgive you, and to make your family His own special possession.**

### Everyday Faith For Every Little One

Read, with your little ones, ***Son of Laughter*** (pg. 56) from ***The Jesus Storybook Bible***.

Ask the Following Questions:

- *What did you learn about God? What’s He like? What has He done?*
- *What did you learn about people? About us?*
- *What did you learn about how we should live?*

*Along with the above questions, come up with your own based off of the fuller study above. Bring in important truths that you learned this day. Make Sure you thank God in prayer when you’re done.*

# Key Concepts from Week 1

**Memory Verse.** Quiz your child. Ask them to recite the memory verse. Prepare them to be able to tell two other people at worship on Sunday and they will receive a treat.

**Isaiah 44:6, 8c** This is what the LORD says—Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD of Heaven’s Armies: “I am the First and the Last; there is no other God....There is no other Rock—not one!”

**Review the concepts from this week.** Ask the following questions of your family and discuss the answers. Anywhere there is confusion, you can always go back to previous material, seek counsel from another mature Christian at The Exchange, or ask on the Connections Facebook group. Don’t be afraid to humbly admit, “I don’t know. I’ll check into that and get back to you.” This models humble honesty and a dependence on God and others in His Church.

## Catechism Q & A

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**Q: What is often held up as the most important thing in our lives?**

**A: We humans often hold ourselves up as the most important thing. We live Me-centered lives. The Bible calls this Sin.**

- **James 4:6** God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.
- **Proverbs 16:5** The LORD detests the proud; they will surely be punished.
- **Proverbs 21:4** Haughty eyes, a proud heart, and evil actions are all sin.
- **Psalms 10:4 (NIV)** In his pride the wicked man does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

**Q: Does Man have Everything he needs within himself for life?**

**A: No. Man is frail, weak, and temporary. The works of man’s hand are also temporary. We are incapable of sustaining or prolonging our own lives.**

- **Psalms 103: 13-18** As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; <sup>14</sup> for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. <sup>15</sup> The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; <sup>16</sup> the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. <sup>17</sup> But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children—<sup>18</sup> with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.
- **Psalms 144:3-4** O LORD, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals that you should think about them? <sup>4</sup> For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow.
- **James 4:14** life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone.
- **Ecclesiastes 2:11** Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.

**Q: What should be the most important thing in our lives?**

**A: We were made to trust God as our Good King who alone is worthy and wise enough to sustain and prolong our lives.**

- **1 Timothy 1:17** All honor and glory to God forever and ever! He is the eternal King, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God. Amen.
- **1 Timothy 6:15** For, At just the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.
- **Romans 11:33-36** Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand His decisions and His ways! <sup>34</sup> For who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to give Him advice? <sup>35</sup> And who has given Him so much that He needs to pay it back? <sup>36</sup> For everything comes from Him and exists by His power and is intended for His glory. All glory to Him forever! Amen.

**Q: What is the most important duty a parent or guardian has?**

**A: The Parent's chief duty is to introduce their Children to God and lead them to glorify him and enjoy Him forever through faith in Jesus.**

- **Ephesians 6** Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. <sup>2</sup> "Honor your father and mother." This is the first commandment with a promise: <sup>3</sup> If you honor your father and mother, "things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth." <sup>4</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.
- **Deuteronomy 6:1-2** "These are the commands, decrees, and regulations that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you. You must obey them in the land you are about to enter and occupy, <sup>2</sup> and you and your children and grandchildren must fear the LORD your God as long as you live.

**Q: What is God's promise for those who trust and serve God as King and teach their children to do the same?**

**A: God promises that He will lavish unfailing love upon you, your children, and their children for 1000 generations.**

- **Exodus 34:6-7** "Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. <sup>7</sup> I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations. I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin.

**Q: What is the result of neglecting our duty as parents to teach our children to trust and serve God as king?**

**A: We set a legacy of disobedience and rejection of God. If we neglect seeking God as parents, we will lead our children to do the same.**

- **Exodus 34: 7b** But I do not excuse the guilty. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children and grandchildren; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations."
- **Matthew 18:6** if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.
- **1 Timothy 5:8** (ESV) But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

#### Faith In Motion

If we truly believe that God is the most important thing, that He is King, that He is God and we are not, what needs to change in our lives, & in our family, to live in line with that truth? Spend some time in repentance and prayer, trusting in God's mercy over past failures, and in his Spirit to guide you into obedience to his word.