

## Your Best Self

### Kids Weekly Activity Guides (Oct 3 – Nov 6)

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#### **Introduction:**

We are so thankful that you are choosing to invest spiritually in your child! If you are reading this right now, we can assume that you want your child to have lifelong faith in Jesus. The best way for kids to understand a God that they cannot see is to tangible examples of how God changes our lives. A key factor in young adults with vibrant and personal faith is a home where a relationship with Jesus is demonstrated daily.

Often, we compartmentalize our spiritual growth from that of our children, and our goal for this *Groups Series* is that you would guide your kids through activities and conversations out of the overflow of what you are learning as an adult. You will have a chance to hear a weekly message, meet with your life group to discussion a section of the Bible, and then interact with your kids around the same ideas or topics with the provided questions and activities.

We hope you will learn verses, apply scripture, and grow deeper in your relationships with God and one another, and not to mention have fun!

Each week we will pass out the supplies that you need for all of the activities in these lessons. You can set aside 15 – 20 minutes to do these activities at home, or with the other families' children in your Life Group if appropriate.

Here is the order of activities that will happen each week:

1. **Weekly Memory Verses:** Memorizing scripture is a powerful way to grow spiritually, and God will use the verses we've memorized to speak to us throughout our lives. We will provide a simple memorization activity for you to practice the verse throughout the week.
2. **Share Your Story:** This section includes a simple activity or questions to get your kids talking. The questions may be silly or intriguing, but they are designed to help you learn more about one another and get your minds thinking about what is to come.
3. **Hear God's Story:** During this section, you will read the passage of scripture that you have been learning from the Life Group Guide.
4. **Create a New Story:** In this section you will find a hands-on activity, game, or craft that will give your kids the opportunity to further apply the lesson.
5. **Daily Devotions:** These are designed for you and found in the Your Best Self Group material. Try including your kids in these verses and questions, and make sure to share with them what God is teaching you.

**Week 1:** Jesus can change my life, and I can tell others about him.

**Introduction:** Today there are two activities to help you talk about how Jesus can change our lives and transform us into something new! This is such amazing news that we should tell others about Jesus.

Here are some parent helps for these activities:

-If your child expresses fear or questions about this story, let them know that it's okay to be afraid sometimes. Today's story includes a frightening thing called evil spirits, or demons. Demons are Satan's helpers, and enemies of God. But guess what? They are scared of Jesus! They want nothing to do with Christians because they know we have Jesus inside of us! In the Bible story, though, there was a man who had demons in him. We aren't sure exactly how they got there, but they were certainly no match for Jesus (You can assure kids that when Christ is in their hearts, they will NOT randomly get demons in their bodies!)

-Transform means to make a thorough or dramatic change in the form, appearance, or character of.

-At the end of these activities, you child may want to decide to follow Jesus. [Here](#) is a great resource to guide them through that conversation.

**Share Your Story:** Say, here we have a couple of wiki sticks. Can you take these wiki sticks and transform them into something new? Spend some time creating together. Then ask, "What did you make and how is it different than before?"

Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible where a man was completely changed by interacting with Jesus.

**Hear God's Story:** Luke 8: 26 – 39, Paraphrased for simplicity.

Jesus and His disciples crossed the sea of Galilee. They met a man with evil spirits, who lived in a cemetery. He screamed constantly and hurt himself with stones. Jesus told the spirits to leave. "Don't hurt us Jesus!" The spirits cried. "My name is Lots," said the man. "There are lots of evil spirits in me."

"Well you have to leave him," said Jesus. "You have no choice." The evil spirits were scared. They were a large heard of pigs nearby. "Then send us into the pigs!"

Jesus let the evil spirits enter the pig. The whole heard rushed down a steep bank into the lake and drowned! The people who took care of the pigs told every in town what happened. They townspeople came to the cemetery. They saw that Jesus had made the man well. Frightened, the people begged Jesus to leave.

The man asked to go with Jesus. Jesus replied, "stay here. Tell everyone what I've done.: The man did, and everyone was amazed!"

**Create a New Story:** Today we will make a bracelet (or keychain) that will explain the greatest way that Jesus can change our lives - by forgiving our sins and making a way for us to live with him forever. You will find the instructions and materials in your child's supply bag. Read through the meaning of each bead as your child makes the bracelet.

Once you are finished, your child may want to make a decision to follow Jesus and ask him into their lives. Here is a sample prayer of salvation:

Dear Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I want to stop sinning and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and **follow You as my Lord and Savior**. In your name I pray, Amen.

If they make a decision for Jesus please let us know by emailing [journeykids@journeyoffaith.com](mailto:journeykids@journeyoffaith.com)! We want to celebrate this with you and have some resources that will help you walk alongside them as their relationship with Jesus grows.

If your child has already decided to follow Jesus, they can use this bracelet to tell others about who Jesus is and how he has/can change their life. If they are not ready to make a decision, their bracelet can serve as a reminder that Jesus loves them!

**Weekly Memory Verse Game:** *Luke 8:39 "Go back to your family, and tell them everything God has done for you."*

**Pass It Along:**

Have kids sit or stand in a circle. Give them a soft object to pass around the circle. When kids get the object, they say the next word of the memory verse. Or they could bop a balloon around the circle while saying the memory verse.

**Week 2:** Jesus has a plan and I can follow him.

**Introduction:** Today you will talk more with your child about following Jesus in our daily living. The best way for us to know and understand Jesus's plans are to read the Bible. Even if his plans are not entirely clear to us, we can obey his words as we seek to understand them. Even though kids may not have a lot of opportunities to big make decisions, each day is full of little chances to show love, respect their parents and teachers, share with friends or siblings, demonstrate care about those around them, etc. Today your kids will have a chance to think through ways they can follow Jesus every day.

Here is the link to a song you will use to play freeze dance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQIQ7I9nrRA>

**Share Your Story:** Say, Today we are going to play Freeze Dance. When I press play on the song everyone needs to dance as much as they can! When the music stop freeze in place. You will stay frozen until the music comes on again. Are you ready?

After you play, tell them, The words in this song remind us that Jesus has a really awesome plan for us. They lyrics in the song said that we can trust him because his plans are for a reason! Even if we don't understand it, we can know that God's love for us will never change and that makes his plans best! Can you think of a time that you or your family followed God's plan?

Now, let's listen to a story where Jesus had a good plan to care for the people who are following him.

**Hear God's Story:** Luke 9:12-17 (New Living Translation)

12 Late in the afternoon the twelve disciples came to him and said, "Send the crowds away to the nearby villages and farms, so they can find food and lodging for the night. There is nothing to eat here in this remote place."

13 But Jesus said, "You feed them."

"But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Or are you expecting us to go and buy enough food for this whole crowd?" 14 For there were about 5,000 men there.

Jesus replied, "Tell them to sit down in groups of about fifty each." 15 So the people all sat down. 16 Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread and fish to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. 17 They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers!

**Create a New Story:** Inside your child's bag you will find 5 foot cutouts. Before this activity, chose different words from the following list and write one on each the foot: Care, forgive, friend, giving, good, grateful, happy, honest, kind, love, obey, patient, pray, trusting, tell the truth, share, study God's words, etc. (If you have more than one child in your group, use as many of the feet as you want for this game) Hide the feet around the room so that your child will be able to find them.

Say, We can follow Jesus's plan by following his example in the Bible. Following his example means to be like Him, to act like Him, or do what he has done. Hidden around the room are feet and I have written different words on them to help us think through ways we can follow Jesus. When I say go, look for the feet and bring them back to the middle.

Once the game is over, gather the group and pass out a foot to each child. One by one, have them share their word and then ask the child if he or she can think of a way they can do whatever is written on the foot. For instance, if the word is kind, ask the child if he can think of a way, he can be kind. Allow anyone else in the group to think through and say ways to follow Jesus. Play as many times as you want. (You can write new words on the feet and hide them again if you child thought that was a fun part of the activity.)

After the activity, encourage the kids to put one of these feet somewhere they will see it as a reminder to follow Jesus's plan this week.

**Weekly Memory Verse Game:** *Luke 9:17 They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers!*

Say What?

Have kids say the memory verse creatively—loudly, softly, with lots of emotion, in a robot or animal voice, and so forth.

**Week 3:** Jesus wants me to help others and be willing to receive help.

**Introduction:** Today's main idea will be accomplished in two activities with skittles. The first will make your child rely on others for what they want and the second uses the Skittles for some prayer prompts so that you can pray together with your kids for their needs and the needs of those around them.

**Share Your Story:** Have everyone in the group stick out their arms straight in front of them and put a skittle in each hand. Let them know that they can eat the skittles, but the only rule is that they cannot bend their elbows. Give them a chance to try to figure out how they can get the Skittle in their mouth. After several attempts, they may realize that the only way that they can eat a skittle is if they help one another by giving away their skittle into the mouth of their friend. If they have not figured it out yet, give them a few clues so that they each get a bite of Skittle. (But save the rest! You will need them later.)

Ask, Can any of you share a story about a time you needed help from someone? Or gave help to someone else?

Say, today we will read a story from the Bible about a few friends that helped their buddy find Jesus.

**Hear God's Story:** Luke 5:17-26 (New Living Translation)

17 One day while Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of religious law were sitting nearby. (It seemed that these men showed up from every village in all Galilee and Judea, as well as from Jerusalem.) And the Lord's healing power was strongly with Jesus.

18 Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a sleeping mat. They tried to take him inside to Jesus, 19 but they couldn't reach him because of the crowd. So they went up to the roof and took off some tiles. Then they lowered the sick man on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus. 20 Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven."

21 But the Pharisees and teachers of religious law said to themselves, "Who does he think he is? That's blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!"

22 Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you question this in your hearts? 23 Is it easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up and walk'? 24 So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

25 And immediately, as everyone watched, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God. 26 Everyone was gripped with great wonder and awe, and they praised God, exclaiming, "We have seen amazing things today!"

**Create a New Story:** It's pretty amazing that the man in this story could rely on his friends for help. All the time we will have the chance to help others and to get help from others. Today, you will get the chance to pray for the needs of yourself and others in a fun way. Pass out the bags of Skittles and read together what each color of Skittle means. Take turns pulling out a skittle. Based on the color you grab, follow the prompt and pray together.

Red – Pray for someone that you love  
Orange – Pray for a friend in need  
Green – Pray for yourself and something that you need help with  
Purple – Pray for a leader or someone in charge  
Yellow – Thank God for friends that have helped you or your family

**Weekly Memory Verse Game:** *Luke 5:20 - Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven."*

One Letter Clue:

Write the first letter of each word on a sheet of paper. Children then try to say the verse with the first letter clue. Stick the paper someone you can see it throughout the week and practice learning the verse. (STFJSTTMYSAF)

**Week 4:** Jesus teaches me a new way to live.

**Introduction:** Today you will be reading through a list of rules and then talking about how they may relate to ones that you can understand and make sense and others that may seem odd when it comes to scripture.

**Share Your Story:** Let the kids know that you are going to be reading through a list of silly rules. Some of them are real rules and some of them are made up. After you read each rule if they think it is a real rule then they should stand up, but if they think it is a made up rule they should sit on the ground. Play until you read through the whole list, revealing the answers as you go.

In Arkansas, you can't honk your horn near a sandwich shop after 9 p.m. (Real)

In Pennsylvania, it's illegal to feed your cat or dog less than once a day. (Real)

In Colorado, you are not allowed to walk backwards across a street. (Made Up)

In Delaware, it's illegal to whisper in church. (Real)

In Georgia, it's forbidden to eat fried chicken with a knife and fork. (Real)

In Illinois, corn is the only vegetable that you are allowed to grow in the ground. (Made Up)

In Montana, you can't have a pet rat. (Real)

In Texas, fireworks are only allowed to be Red, White, and Blue (Made Up)

In Wisconsin, cheese has to be delicious, or at least "highly pleasing." (Real)

Ask them, if you could make up one rule that everyone had to follow, what would it be and why?

The Bible is full of lessons from Jesus on the right way to live. Some of them we can understand right away, and others may seem like the opposite of what we would want to do. Let's open the Bible and hear one of these lessons from Jesus, that maybe seem odd to us when we first hear it.

**Hear God's Story:** Luke 6:27-31 (New Living Translation)

27 "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. 28 Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. 29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. 30 Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back. 31 Do to others as you would like them to do to you.

**Create a New Story:** Set up three bucket or baskets at increasing distances from a starting line. Label the first bucket 'Family,' the second bucket, 'Friends,' and the last bucket, 'Enemies.' Take turns throwing the bean bag into each bucket. Explain that it's easy to love our family and friends but a little bit harder to love our enemies.

**Say:** It was pretty easy to get the bean bag in the first two buckets but harder to get it in the last one. It's the same with loving people. It's easy for us to love our friends and family but a little harder to love our enemies but we can still do it. Jesus wants us to do the opposite of what we want to do. When someone is mean to us we want to be mean back but Jesus wants us to love others instead.



Now I know what you might be thinking: Why should I be nice to someone who is mean to me? Well, here's why: Have you ever done anything wrong before? Allow them to share a few times when they have messed up. Even though you have made mistakes before I still love you, your family loves you, and Jesus still loves you. So when someone makes a mistake we should still love them.

What do you think? Can you love your enemies? How can you show love to those who are mean to you?

**Weekly Memory Verse Game:** *Luke 6:27-28 - "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you."*

**Go through the motions:**

Have kids create or learn motions to go along with the verse. You can use the [American Sign Language Dictionary](#) to look up signs for the words in your verse. Don't stop with hand motions, though; encourage kids to involve their whole bodies—stomping, turning, crouching, etc. Let kids be creative!

**Week 5:** Jesus wants me to be committed to him.

**Introduction:** Today, your kids hear the same parable that you have discussed with your life group. A parable is a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels. Jesus tells a story to show the ways that different people respond to hearing God's word.

**Share Your Story:** You will read the scripture below and talk about what a picture would look like for the plants and seeds that fall on the different soils. Talk about how in your life you could look more like the seed that fell on the fertile soil and produced crop that was multiplied.

**Hear God's Story:** Luke 8:4-15 (New Living Translation)

4 One day Jesus told a story in the form of a parable to a large crowd that had gathered from many towns to hear him: 5 "A farmer went out to plant his seed. As he scattered it across his field, some seed fell on a footpath, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it. 6 Other seed fell among rocks. It began to grow, but the plant soon wilted and died for lack of moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorns that grew up with it and choked out the tender plants. 8 Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!" When he had said this, he called out, "Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand."

9 His disciples asked him what this parable meant. 10 He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables to teach the others so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled:

'When they look, they won't really see.  
When they hear, they won't understand.'

11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is God's word. 12 The seeds that fell on the footpath represent those who hear the message, only to have the devil come and take it away from their hearts and prevent them from believing and being saved. 13 The seeds on the rocky soil represent those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But since they don't have deep roots, they believe for a while, then they fall away when they face temptation. 14 The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity. 15 And the seeds that fell on the good soil represent honest, good-hearted people who hear God's word, cling to it, and patiently produce a huge harvest.

**Create a New Story:** Say, just because someone hears the Word of God, it doesn't mean he is going to stick with it, does it? We have the choice to be like the good soil, hearing and taking Jesus' message to heart and living by it. Jesus doesn't want us to just come to church services or just listen to God's Word. Jesus wants us to stick to God's Word and grow. Not only that, Jesus wants us to help one another to stay committed to God and his word.

Today, you will use the provided supplies to decorate the picture frame. After you decorate it, complete the Memory verse activity below. Once you are finished, each child will have a picture that reminds them of this parable and verse. Hang it up somewhere that you will see it this week as a reminder to stay committed to growing your faith and relationship with Jesus.

While you are decorating, get your child talking by asking them the following questions:

“Who can help us stay committed to following Jesus?”

“How can we encourage others that we know to stay committed to following Jesus?”

**Weekly Memory Verse Activity:** *Luke 8:8 - “Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!”*

DRAW IT:

You can really get creative with this memory verse game! Draw the nouns in the verse and show what the verse means. But don't just think paper and pencils—use sidewalk chalk, computer design, or paint. Drawing and expressing creatively is a fabulous way to memorize a verse.

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**CONGRATULATIONS! YOU FINISHED THIS ACTIVITY GUIDE!**

We hope that you have enjoyed the time you have invested in having spiritual conversations and activities with your kids!

Stay up to date with all that is going on for kids through the end of the year at [journeyoffaith.com/kids](http://journeyoffaith.com/kids).