

A vibrant illustration of a red gift box with a yellow ribbon, tilted to show its open top. The box is surrounded by a variety of colorful confetti, including stars, squares, and triangles, along with several streamers in shades of blue, pink, yellow, and purple. The word "RECEIVED!" is written in large, bold, black capital letters across the center of the image.

RECEIVED!

Family Discussion Guides

School Year 2023-2024

6: Family Discussion Guide: Satisfied In Him

Read the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

Eventually Jesus came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food. The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?" Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water." "But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?" Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."

"Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water." "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband—for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!" "Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet. So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?" Jesus replied, "Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus told her, "I am the Messiah!" Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, "What do you want with her?" or "Why are you talking to her?" The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?" So the people came streaming from the village to see him. Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, "Rabbi, eat something." But Jesus replied, "I have a kind of food you know nothing about." "Did someone bring him food while we were gone?" the disciples asked each other. Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work."

John 4:1-34, New Living Translation

To Discuss

- Why was it surprising to the woman that Jesus was talking to her?
- What details in this story show you that the Samaritan woman was thirsty for God? What do you think she was longing for?
- What do you long for?
- Why do you think the woman left her water jar beside the well?
- What does Jesus say gives him nourishment and satisfaction?
- How did the woman respond to hearing that Jesus was the Messiah? How do you think you would have responded?

7: Family Discussion Guide: Salvation For Those Who Believe

Read the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!”

“Build a large boat. . . Leave an 18-inch opening below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper. “Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives. Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them alive during the flood. Pairs of every kind of bird, and every kind of animal, and every kind of small animal that scurries along the ground, will come to you to be kept alive. And be sure to take on board enough food for your family and for all the animals.” So, Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. He went on board the boat to escape the flood—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. After seven days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat.

Genesis 6:9-22, 7:6, 10, 22-23, New Living Translation

To Discuss

- Why is it important to be obedient? What was the result of Noah’s obedience to God to build an ark?
- Parents: How did Noah’s role as a parent/husband impact his family? Children: Why did Noah’s children experience rescue along with their father? What would have happened if they didn’t listen to their father Noah?
- What did Noah’s family experience because of Noah’s obedience to God?
- What are some ways you can be obedient to God as a family?

8: Family Discussion Guide: I Can See!

Read the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. *“Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,” Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned to us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world.” Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes. He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?” Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, “He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.” Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?” So, for a second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.” “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!” “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?” “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?” Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.” When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” The man answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.” “You have seen him,” Jesus said, “and he is speaking to you!” “Yes, Lord, I believe!” the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. Then Jesus told him, “I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind.” Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, “Are you saying we’re blind?” “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.”*

From John 9, New Living Translation

To Discuss

- Is there anyone at home that’s good at seeing or finding things that others cannot?
- Why did Jesus say the man was born blind? What did the disciples suppose was the cause?
- In this passage, what does Jesus say is the reason he came into the world?
- How did Jesus restore the man’s eyesight?
- Who did the Pharisees say Jesus was? Who did Jesus say he was, and who did he say it to?
- Can we see who God truly is and what he is like even if we can’t see with our physical eyes?

9: Family Discussion Guide: No Longer Counting

Read the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

Joseph could stand it no longer. There were many people in the room, and he said to his attendants, "Out, all of you!" So he was alone with his brothers when he told them who he was. Then he broke down and wept. He wept so loudly the Egyptians could hear him, and word of it quickly carried to Pharaoh's palace.

"I am Joseph!" he said to his brothers. "Is my father still alive?" But his brothers were speechless! They were stunned to realize that Joseph was standing there in front of them. "Please, come closer," he said to them. So they came closer. And he said again, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt. But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives. This famine that has ravaged the land for two years will last five more years, and there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. God has sent me ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors. So it was God who sent me here, not you! And he is the one who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt.

"Now hurry back to my father and tell him, "This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me master over all the land of Egypt. So come down to me immediately! You can live in the region of Goshen, where you can be near me with all your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and everything you own. I will take care of you there, for there are still five years of famine ahead of us. Otherwise you, your household, and all your animals will starve." Then Joseph added, "Look! You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that I really am Joseph! Go tell my father of my honored position here in Egypt. Describe for him everything you have seen, and then bring my father here quickly." Weeping with joy, he embraced Benjamin, and Benjamin did the same. Then Joseph kissed each of his brothers and wept over them, and after that they began talking freely with him.

*The news soon reached Pharaoh's palace: "Joseph's brothers have arrived!" Pharaoh and his officials were all delighted to hear this. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, "This is what you must do: Load your pack animals, and hurry back to the land of Canaan. Then get your father and all of your families and return here to me. I will give you the very best land in Egypt, and you will eat from the best that the land produces." **Genesis 45:1-18, New Living Translation***

To Discuss

- Joseph forgave his brothers without them asking for forgiveness. Why do you think it was important for Joseph to forgive his brothers?
- In order to reconcile with his brothers, what did Joseph do?
- God used Jesus to forgive people of their sins. Why do you think God forgives us when we make mistakes? Why do you think Joseph forgave?
- Have you ever forgiven a family member or friend for something they did or said to you? How did you feel after reconciling with and forgiving them?
- Has a family member or friend ever forgiven you for something you did or said to them? How did it make you feel to be forgiven?

10: Family Discussion Guide: A God Who Forgives

Read the Bible passage aloud, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

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.

Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a sleeping mat. They tried to take him inside to Jesus, 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. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven."

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!"

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you question this in your hearts? Is it easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up and walk'? 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!"

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

Luke 5:17-26, New Living Translation

To Discuss

- After forgiving the paralyzed man of his sins, what did Jesus do to show the Pharisees that he had the authority to forgive us of our sins?
- If God kept a record of our sins, do you think anyone would be able to live a Christ-like life? Why or why not?
- God wants us to receive forgiveness for our sins. Are there any mistakes that you've made that you feel God cannot or should not forgive you for?
- As a family, pray and ask God to forgive you and your family members for your sins knowing that God has given us the gift of his forgiveness.