



DEEPER  

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W I D E R

**FAMILY DEVOTIONALS**

## **Week 1: October 1-7**

**Read:** Matthew 1:1-17 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Draw a family tree on a large sheet of paper. Invite each family member to draw a picture of him/herself. Let kids draw parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. If available, share family photos or stories about the people in your family tree. Remind kids that Jesus is God's Son, but He had an earthly family too—Mary and Joseph, David, Abraham, ... all the way back to Adam and Eve!

### **Family Discussion Starters:**

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
  - What does this story teach me about myself?
  - Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
  - Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
  - How does this story help me to live on mission better?
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## **Week 2: October 8-14**

**Read:** Matthew 5-7 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Prompt kids to draw a picture of something they remember from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Review Matthew 5–7 in the Bible if kids need help. Remind them that Jesus taught how believers should live. Following Jesus doesn't mean just doing good things on the outside like the religious leaders did; people who know and love Jesus have changed hearts that want to honor Him.

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## **Week 3: October 15-21**

**Read:** Matthew 8:14-17 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Focus this week on being thankful. Set a container somewhere in a central area of the home. Place several pennies beside it. Each time a family member shows thankfulness, he or she should place a penny in the container. At the end of the week, count the number of pennies in the container. Peter's mother-in-law was thankful for how Jesus healed her. Allow each person to share something he or she is thankful for.

**Family Discussion Starters:**

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## **Week 4: October 22-28**

**Read:** Matthew 12:9-14 as a Family

**Family Activity:** It's always the right time to do something good! Assemble together and assign a family member a task to help another family member. For example, instruct siblings to help each other with chores. As a family, you may also volunteer at a soup kitchen. Talk about how God wants us to do good things each day because we love Him and want to obey Him. Write below the task each family member performed and the date he or she completed it.

**Family Discussion Starters:**

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## **Week 5: October 29-November 4**

**Read:** Matthew 13:1-23 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Review the four types of soil from the parable of the sower. Encourage your kids to think about how they have responded to the gospel—the good news about

Jesus. Lead them to write which type of soil shows how they have responded. Pray together, asking God to help kids believe the truth about Jesus and share the gospel with others.

### **Family Discussion Starters:**

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## **Week 6: November 5-11**

**Read:** Matthew 14:13-21 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Set a cracker on the table. Ask your kids if the cracker would be enough to feed your family. Review the Bible story in Matthew 14:13-21. Allow kids to list some things your family needs on a regular basis. Lead your family in a time of prayer, thanking God for His provision and asking Him to continue to provide for your family's needs.

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## **Week 7: November 12-18**

**Read:** Matthew 18:1-14 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Watch [London 2012: Gabby Douglas receives all-around gold medal](#) or another Olympic Medal Ceremony on YouTube.com. Ask the question: "What does it mean to be great?"

In the Olympics, each athlete strived to prove how “great” he or she was in comparison to the others. In that sense, greatness has something to do with being the best, but as you know, the greatest athlete does not always win every contest.

The sense of being great goes beyond just physical ability, but also must encompass something of the person’s character and spirit as well.

The main problem with a person striving for greatness is that it feeds one of mankind’s chief problems: pride. As pride rises and is displayed, true greatness diminishes.

Jesus answers the disciples question about who will be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven directly in [Matthew 18:4](#). *“Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”* The greatest in the kingdom is the one who is the humblest. What is humility? The word means to “make low.” What are somethings you can do to practice humility? Paul described it in [Philippians 2:3,4](#) saying, *“do nothing from selfish or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interest, but also for the interest of others.”* Take this week to practice humility in your family.

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## **Week 8: November 19-25**

**Read:** Matthew 20:1-16 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Give kids grapes to eat as a snack. Explain that grapes grow on vines in a vineyard. Review the Bible story. The landowner hired men to work his fields. At the end of the day, the landowner paid all the workers what was fair or more than they deserved. List below ways God has been generous to your family.

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## Week 9: November 26-December 2

**Read:** Matthew 23:1-12 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Play a variation of Simon Says, don't give in-depth instructions. In this version Simon will give a simple instruction verbally (ex. pat your head) but act out something completely different (ex. touch your nose). After each instruction, those who followed the visual demonstration are out, while those that followed the verbal instructions stay in the game for the next round. Mix it up after a few rounds, making your instructions and demonstration match to see if there is hesitation. Ask: Who was confused about the rules of the game? Jesus told the crowds to do what the Pharisee's told them to do, but not what they saw them do. I bet that was confusing for them!

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## Week 10: December 3-9

**Read:** Matthew 24:45-51 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Invite kids to write about or draw a picture of what they do to get ready to go somewhere. Talk about what happens if it's time to go and someone isn't ready. Prompt kids to explain the difference between a faithful servant and a lazy servant. Talk about ways your family can live that would make Jesus happy if He were to come back right at any moment.

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## **Week 11: December 10-16**

**Read:** Matthew 26:36-28:10 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Look at a cross on a necklace or other item found in your home. Ask kids to tell you in their own words why the cross is used as a decoration today. Remind kids that the cross is a reminder of what Jesus did for us by dying on the cross and rising again three days later. Review Matthew 26:36-28:10. We deserved to die for our sin, but Jesus died in our place so that our sins might be forgiven, and we may have new life through His power to conquer sin and death. That's what makes Christmas: Jesus Birth all that more special. It's the fulfillment of the promise God made!

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## **Week 12: December 17-23**

**Read:** Matthew 28:16-20 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Make a list as a family of all the things you like to talk about with family or friends. Beside that list, make a list of the people you see often that you talk with or could talk with. Remind kids that Jesus asked His disciples to tell others about Him and help them become followers of Jesus. Discuss how you might talk about Jesus with the people on your list.

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## **Week 13: December 24-30**

**Read:** Mark 2:1-12 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Create get-well packs for a hospital or church ministry. Include a travel-size tissue pack, travel-size hand sanitizer or lotion, a few cough drops or peppermint candies, and some adhesive bandages. Place the items in a ziplock bag. Write on an adhesive label This may help you feel better, but only Jesus heals! We are praying for you. Pray over the bags for the people who will use them. Share below something about your experience of making or delivering the get-well packs.

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## **Week 14: December 31- January 6**

**Read:** Mark 4:26-34 as a Family

**Family Activity:** Ask everyone in the family to take a piece of paper and number it 1-10. Then read each category below and give them 30 seconds to silently think of an answer and write it down. After completing all ten categories go through each category and award a point to anyone with a unique answer, as well as a point to whomever chose the smallest thing.

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|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Smallest land animal  | 6. Smallest word             |
| 2. Smallest air animal   | 7. Smallest toy              |
| 3. Smallest water animal | 8. Smallest book             |
| 4. Smallest pet          | 9. Smallest item in the room |
| 5. Smallest plant        | 10. Smallest food            |

Jesus talks about the mustard seed because it started out small, but once it was planted it grew very large. Much like our faith, it begins small but grows

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