



for the

MISSION



FAMILIES ON MISSION

THE TRAILS CHURCH
WWW.THETRAILS.ORG



for the
MISSION



FAMILIES ON MISSION

Disciple-making
involves the entire
process of preaching,
teaching, and helping
people worship God
in every area of life.

Your Home: An Incubator for Discipleship

Before his ascension into Heaven, Jesus gave his disciples some final instructions, saying,

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20).

As we see, disciple-making involves the entire process of preaching, teaching, and helping people worship God in every area of life. This robust view of disciple-making reminds us that nothing is left untouched by the glorious command to worship God by making disciples of all nations.

One of the most significant settings for this type of holistic disciple-making is the Christian home. Within each Christian home, God has chosen and called ambassadors for Christ (spouses/parents) and given them a unique mission: go and make disciples of the people group that you have the most access to; your family.

Within each family relationship, resides a unique opportunity for gospel ministry that cannot be replicated. No one else is called to minister to your spouse like God has called you to. Similarly, no one else has been given the responsibility to disciple your unique children. Rather, God has entrusted you with these opportunities and ministries. God has given each husband and wife, father and mother, brother and sister, unique and personal opportunities for ministry that no one else will ever get to share! In the most beautiful of ways, God has created the family unit to be an incubator for discipleship. During our For the Mission campaign, we hope that your family will rediscover the purpose, calling, and opportunity that family discipleship presents for fulfilling the Great Commission.

By the end of this series, we hope that every family in The Trails Church will see family discipleship as one of their primary responsibilities and a beautiful expression of fulfilling the Great Commission. As you seek to dis-

ciple your family, may it be done in the security of Christ's love for his people, in zealous obedience to Christ's command to make disciples, and in the enduring hope that Christ is "with you always, to the end of the age."

Josh Stewart
Director of Discipleship

By the end of this series, we hope that every family will see family discipleship as one of their primary responsibilities and a beautiful expression of fulfilling the Great Commission.

How to Use This Resource

This family worship guide is designed to help you shape your family culture in tandem with the church's For the Mission series. It is primarily written for parents with children in the home. Yet, we have also incorporated a discussion guide to help spouses grow together in Christ. We recognize that each family looks different, and we hope this guide will provide general direction and instructions to help you lead your family throughout the series. Please feel free to change and tailor the instructions as needed to best help your family grow in Christ!

This resource should be simple and easy to use, featuring six easy exercises of family worship that correspond to each week of the For the Mission series. Each week, we have included a one or two-page guide for leading your family in worship. We encourage you to set aside one night of the week to lead your family through these special family worship exercises. Each exercise should take 10-15 minutes and should require little to no preparation. It would be wise to read this guide before-

hand for best results, but if you don't have time, it's designed so that you can simply read the guide

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It would be wise to read this guide beforehand for best results, but if you don't have time, it's designed so that you can simply read the guide and lead your family in reflecting on God's Word.

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Where fathers are present in the home, we encourage them to lead their families in this exercise of family worship. Additionally, we encourage spouses to set time aside, once a week, to talk through the discussion questions or weave them through your conversations throughout the week. Lastly, if you've never done this before, that's okay! There are some special instructions we've written for you located in the next section. Take a moment to read them before moving forward! Overall, we hope God will use this worship guide to root your family in Christ, create a culture of discipleship within your home, and spark a greater zeal for discipling your children.

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What If I've Never Done This Before?

If you've never led your family in studying the Scriptures, praying together, singing songs to Christ, discussing how to respond to the gospel, or thinking through how to make disciples, then this guide is for you! By following this guide, you can begin leading your family and creating a culture of discipleship within your home. Here are a few steps you should take to help build this rhythm into your life:

1. Watch this short video from Don Whitney that explains family worship: WWW.THETRAILS.ORG/FAMILIES-ONMISSION.

2. Discuss your desire for family worship with your spouse (if applicable). Ideally, both husband and wife should be committed to building a culture of family discipleship. This starts with both spouses committing to a rhythm of family worship. The Christian husband, as the spiritual leader of his home, should initiate and lead this time of family worship, but all members of the family should be considered, and everyone should be encouraged to engage. Before

starting, talk with your spouse to make sure that you're on the same page about making this a rhythm in your life. If you're a wife wanting to implement this in your home, ask your Christian husband to lead your family in family worship. If you're a husband desiring to initiate this in your home, share your desire and plan with your wife and ask her to follow your lead as you seek to serve the family by pointing them to Christ. If you're a single parent, lead your children in the truths of God's Word and orchestrate family worship in the way that makes the most sense for your family.

3. During your first time leading family worship, explain to your children what you're doing. If this is new, then it might take some time to develop this new rhythm. Depending on your children's ages, they may not like adding this rhythm into their lives. They might find it pointless, dull, or a waste of time. To address these concerns, cast vision, and set your family's culture, you should start by explaining your desire for family discipleship and family

worship. A great way to do that is through the “Week One” exercise in this guide. In general, you want to explain the “why,” “what,” and “how” of family worship: why you’re doing what you’re doing, what you’re going to be doing, and how you want your children to participate.

4. Make it a priority, adjust, and don’t give up. In short, once you get started, keep going! The goal is not perfection but progress in pointing your children to Christ. In general, you want to have this rhythm as a consistent part of your children’s regular experience.

If you’re new to this, we encourage you to use this guide as an opportunity to start a new life rhythm that we hope will bless your family. We hope this guide will help you get started, but we also recognize that it might be hard to create and maintain momentum. If at any point you need help, ideas, or encouragement, reach out to someone in your community group or email the Elders for encouragement at ELDERS@THETRAILS.ORG.

In general, you want to explain the “why,” “what,” and “how” of family worship: why you’re doing what you’re doing, what you’re going to be doing, and how you want your children to participate.

WEEK ONE

BIG

WE EXIST TO
GLORIFY GOD
BY LOVING
AND ENJOYING
HIM MORE THAN
ANYTHING ELSE.

IDEA

**A Family Devoted
to God**

Family Worship Exercise

SET-UP

As a part of family worship for the week, do one of your favorite family activities. It might be a fun game, getting ice cream at your favorite place, or enjoying a meal together at your favorite restaurant. Whatever it is, do something together that your family loves to do. Then, lead your family through this discussion. Take this opportunity to share what you want the discipleship culture in your home to look like.

ASK

“What do you love most about (insert whatever you did together)?”

SAY

“This week, we learned that our primary task is to love God completely and glorify Him in all that we do. Let’s read a part of the Bible that describes this.”

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

- DEUTERONOMY 6:5-7

ASK

“What does this say about loving God?”

[Point out how we must love God with all of our person (heart, soul, and might). Explain that this is what worship looks like: loving God more than anything. Explain that this is what you want your family to be about: loving God in all that we do.]

ASK

“What does this text teach parents to do?”

[Point out that God has given parents the privilege and responsibility of teaching their children about God from the Scriptures. More specifically, explain to your children that God has given you the mission of telling your children about God’s design for their life, His character, what He’s done for them in Christ, and how your children should respond to God’s love by trusting in Christ, loving Him, and obeying Him in everything.]

For the Little Ones

Help your youngest kids understand that there is nothing greater than God by giving them something they like to eat or play with and asking why they like it. Then, explain why God is so much better than the snack/toy. Tell them that in the same way their favorite toy, snack, or drink makes them happy, we are most happy when we love God because there is nothing greater than God.

SAY

“Here’s the main thing I want you to see today: God’s Word instructs parents to disciple their children, and that’s exactly what we want to do in our family. We love God, and we want to obey Him, and that’s why we’re having this conversation. We want to disciple you and help you know and love God more than anything else because there’s nothing else better than Him.”

ASK

“So, do you have any questions about why we try to help you love Jesus?” [Allow your children to ask and then answer any questions they have.]

CONCLUDE

“Just like we love to do (insert the activity you did) because of (insert the reasons the family gave), I want us to love God above everything because there is nothing greater than him. Over the next six weeks, I want us to think hard as a family about how we can love God in everything that we do. Now, let me pray that God would help us.”

PRAY

“Father, I thank you for my family. Your Word says that you make every single family, and I’m so thankful for the family you have given us. Would you please help us be a family that is devoted to you? On our own, we are too weak, too sinful, and too consumed with our own desires to worship you as you deserve. But through the blood of your Son, you have offered us forgiveness. I pray that you would please lead my children to trust in your Son, and please help us lead this family in a way that honors you and loves you. In all that we do, help us love you with all that we are, and give us the grace, wisdom, and strength to point our children to you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

SING

Holy, Holy, Holy

Go Deeper

Try to build a culture of discipleship in your home by sharing the following thoughts with your children:

- A** Why you want family worship to be a priority and why it matters for your family.
- B** Why you want your children to know Christ.
- C** How you want to leverage your life to disciple them better.
- D** Your greatest hopes for them in Christ.

Discussion Guide for Spouses

ASK

“In what ways can I help you better treasure God and worship Him in all of life?” [Listen to how your spouse responds and consider ways that you can better help them love Jesus. Listen to understand and seek to implement the things that you hear will be helpful.]

ASK

“When we read Deut. 6:4-9, it’s clear that God wants us to disciple our children to know and love Him and to orient all of life as an opportunity for teaching and worship. Are there any ways that we need to reorient our life to better disciple our children?” [Look at the text again and think through your family rhythms. Are there ways that you can better take advantage of opportunities to teach your children about God? Are there ways to utilize “downtime,” like car rides, to talk about spiritual things? Do you need to make decisions to help increase the frequency and quality of your time together so that you can have deeper relationships within your home? Together, think through ways that you may need to respond to this text to better disciple your children.]

PRAY

Pray together, asking that the Lord would help you both disciple each other to grow in Christ.

DO

Think through the various ways your spouse points you to Christ. Take time this week to thank them for their faithfulness to you and to Christ. Apologize for ways that you have failed to receive the truth of God’s Word well and ask them to continue to gently point you to Christ.

WEEK TWO

BIG

OUR MISSION IS
TO LOVE GOD BY
HELPING OTHERS
LOVE JESUS.
“MISSION” REFERS
TO THE HOLISTIC,
ALL-OF-LIFE
ACTIVITY OF
DISCIPLE-MAKING.

IDEA

A Family On Mission

Family Worship Exercise

ASK

“What comes to mind when you think of the word “mission?”

ASK

“What’s one of the hardest ‘missions’ you’ve ever had to accomplish in a video game, sport, or some other activity?”

SAY

“This week, we learned that God has given us a mission as His people. That mission is to help others see how great God is and to help people love and obey Him with all of their lives. This is called ‘disciple-making,’ and it is the mission of every Christian. Let’s see this from the Bible:

‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”
– MATTHEW 28:19–20

ASK

“Can you think of any examples of how we can help people love Jesus?” [Point out that there are many ways to demonstrate love, but disciple-making requires that we tell people about Jesus through the Scriptures.]

ASK

“How do you think we can help one another in our family love Jesus?” [Point out how being patient with each other, caring for each other, and forgiving one another are examples of love that reflect the love of Christ. These are necessary parts of loving someone. In addition, when we remind one another about Jesus by telling them the truths of the Bible, we encourage each other to trust in Christ more. Think together of how you can disciple each other.]

CONCLUDE

“The mission of the church is to glorify God by making disciples, and I want that to be the mission of our family. I want us to start here, in our home, by helping one another love Jesus. But I also want us to help our friends, family, and neighbors love Jesus. This is the mission God has given us. Sometimes, like missions in games, it will be hard. But, there is no greater joy than to be a part of God’s mission to display His greatness to everyone. Let me pray that God would help us.”

PRAY

“Father, help us to be a family on mission. Help us to develop a culture in our home of disciple-making. Forgive us for the ways that we’ve failed to make disciples. Forgive us for the ways that we’ve failed to love each other and live out of the realities of the gospel. Please help us. We desperately need you to help us treasure you above all else so that we might help others treasure you as well. Let our home become a beacon of gospel activity in our community so that you might be glorified. In Jesus’ name, we ask this. Amen.”

SING

All Creatures of Our God and King

For the Little Ones

Make this week interactive by playing a game that has a clear “mission.” It could be something like “hide-and-seek,” “red light, green light,” or “four corners,” where you have a clear objective to find something, or a race around the yard with an obvious goal. Whatever it is, do something fun and interactive to help your children think about the idea of “completing the mission.” Then explain how God has given us a mission to love Him and love others by helping people love Jesus.

Discussion Guide for Spouses

ASK

“What were your thoughts on the sermon? What most captivates you about The Great Commission?” [Listen to what your spouse shares. Reflect together on the beauty of God’s mission to make disciples. Help each other reflect on the greatness and mercy of God by embracing the fact that He has invited you into the task of glorifying Him through disciple-making.]

ASK

“I know that the Great Commission is supposed to be the guiding mission of our life, but it can often get lost in all the busy-ness of what we do. Is there any way that I might be wasting my time, attention, and pursuits because I’m focused on worldly things instead of on the primary task of making disciples? Do you have any thoughts on how we can better leverage our lives together for the sake of disciple-making?” [Allow your spouse to give you honest feedback. Don’t be defensive. Instead, realize that we all have weaknesses and tendencies to drift from the mission of making disciples. Think together about how you can integrate disciple-making into your current rhythms. Are there ways that you can begin discipling people in your workplace, school setting, or neighborhood? Are there ways that the two of you can leverage your time for discipling your kids and other people in your life?]

PRAY

Pray together, asking God to help you have a holistic life of disciple-making. Pray that he would help you disciple your family. Pray for the salvation and sanctification of the people in your life.

DO

Think through how your spouse currently seeks to obey Christ by fulfilling the Great Commission. Encourage them by specifically pointing out the ways the Lord is using them to make disciples, and thank God, and your spouse, for their faithfulness.

WEEK THREE

BIG

THE GOSPEL FUELS
DISCIPLE-MAKING
BECAUSE IT
PRODUCES WORSHIP
AND LOVE FOR GOD.
THE GOSPEL IS THE
GOOD NEWS OF
JESUS CHRIST AND
THE POWER OF GOD
THAT SAVES AND
TRANSFORMS US.

IDEA

**A Family Rooted in
the Gospel**

Family Worship Exercise

SAY

“Today, I want us to think about the gospel. Does anyone know what that word means? Can anyone explain this message to me?” *[If no one knows, explain the gospel to your family. For a clear explanation, watch the short 3-2-1 gospel video accessible at: WWW.THETRAILS.ORG/FAMILIESONMISSION.]*

SAY

“The gospel is the good news that God has sent the Son to live a perfect life and die in our place so that we can be forgiven for all of the ways we sin and reject God in our life. The gospel is the message we share with people so that they might be saved and it’s also the fuel for our love for Jesus, reminding us what He’s accomplished on our behalf. In other words, the gospel fuels our disciple-making because it produces worship and love for God!”

DO

Show your kids the map below.

SAY

“There are people all throughout the world who do not believe in Jesus.”

Then, point to the colored areas on the map and ask your kids if they know where the country/continent is. Then, read the blurb about each major world religion. Read through all the blurbs on the map with your family.

For the Little Ones

For the Little Ones: Find a globe or a map and explain to them that there are people made by God living all over the world. Explain that every one of these people has rejected God, and many believe things that aren’t true. Explain that the only way these people can be forgiven of their sin is to hear about Jesus so that they might believe in Him. Then, pray for your children, asking the Lord to give them a heart that rests in the gospel and that they will be devoted to advancing the gospel throughout the world.

ASK

“Do you notice any differences between what these people believe and what the gospel says? What aspects of the gospel message sound greater than these other beliefs?” *[Point out that all other attempts to save ourselves are doomed to fail, and they cannot solve the problem. They are all man-centered attempts to fix ourselves. However, in the gospel, God has come to save us and has done the work for us. The major religions of the world have us try to fix ourselves, but fail. The gospel tells us that God*

has fixed the problem for us and invites us into receiving the benefits of His victory.]

ASK

“How does it make you feel, knowing that so many people do not know the gospel and so many people reject God?” [Point out that it should make us sad that God is rejected and dishonored across the globe and in our community. It should give us a desire to help them.]

CONCLUDE

“There are many false gospels that try to tell people how they can know God or be better. But the one true gospel of God tells us that Christ lived a perfect life in our place, died to pay for the guilt and penalty of our sin, and rose again, proving that He is God and securing our salvation. The Bible says that anyone who trusts in Christ will be saved and made a child of God. We can only help people love Jesus if we first embrace Jesus ourselves. It’s like telling someone how great pizza is. You can’t tell someone unless you first love pizza and know how great it tastes. In a far greater way, the gospel is the fuel for our love for Jesus, reminding us of what He’s done, and it is also the message that we share with people so that they might be saved. Let’s pray for ourselves and some non-Christians in our lives who do not know Jesus.”

PRAY

“Father, thank you for Christ who lived for us, died for us, and rose again so that we can be reconciled to you. I pray for my children; please save them and help them to trust in you. We also pray for (insert non-Christian’s name(s)) who do not love you. We pray that you would save them through faith in Christ. You tell us to pray for workers to go into the world and spread the gospel. You tell us to pray that the gospel would advance. And that’s exactly what we ask you to do. Please take the gospel and let it penetrate these areas of the world so that your people would be saved. Lastly, help us, as a family, be rooted in the hope of the gospel and help us eagerly share your gospel with the people in our lives.”

SING

Christ Our Hope in Life and Death

MORMONISM

This is Utah, a state in the United States where many people believe in Mormonism. Mormons may sound like Christians because they say they believe in Jesus. However, they do not believe in the biblical triune God.¹⁹ They do not think that people are naturally sinful.²⁰ and do not believe in the true gospel. They believe that through obeying Mormon teachings, they can become gods.²¹ Mormonism is a dangerous belief because it confuses people about God, claiming to be an offshoot of Christianity, and it teaches people to “be good” rather than to trust in Christ.

HINDUISM

This is India, where there are 1.3 billion people who do not know about Jesus.¹ Most people in India believe in Hinduism,² an ancient religion that “recognize(s) up to 333 million gods, but many Hindus believe this vast number represents the infinite forms of god—god is in everyone, god is in everything.”³ Hindus think that every good and bad thing we do impacts whether we will experience suffering in the next life.⁴ Hindus believe that when you die, you are reborn into another life, and your goodness or badness in a previous life impacts how you are reborn in your next life.⁵ There is no ability to be forgiven for your bad behavior; rather, you must die and be reborn, being progressively better in each life, until you die and become one with the “universal power, Brahman.”⁶

FALSE GOSPELS

This is Texas, where we live, and there are many people in our culture who embrace a lot of false gospels. Some people believe in being true to yourself, others believe in being a good person, and others think that if you believe in God, He will keep you from suffering and give you a healthy and wealthy life. There are many false gospels in our culture, all of them promising life, but none of them capable of delivering us from sin.



ISLAM

This is Iran, where there are 83 million people who do not know about Jesus.¹² Most of the people in Iran are Muslims¹³, meaning they practice the religion of Islam. Islam was founded by a man named Muhammad, who believed that he had received a revelation from God.¹⁴ Muslims believe in a personal God named Allah¹⁵, and they believe some people in the Bible to be real, including Jesus. However, instead of the Bible, they believe a book called the Qur'an¹⁶, which teaches them that Jesus was not God, but rather a prophet and a good man. They do not believe that Jesus died to pay for our sin, and they think it is wrong to say Jesus is God. Muslims believe that they go to Heaven by "pleas[ing] Allah through their submission and faith,"¹⁷ which includes obeying the Five Pillars of Islam: reciting a creed to become a Muslim, reciting prayers five times a day, giving to charity, fasting during Ramadan, and traveling to Mecca to worship Allah.¹⁸

BUDDHISM

This is Thailand, where there are 61 million people who do not know about Jesus.⁷ Most people in Thailand believe in Buddhism,⁸ a religion founded by a man a long time ago. This man wanted to escape the suffering and cycle of rebirth that is found in Hinduism.⁹ This man, known as the Buddha, believed that the way to break the cycle of suffering was to follow the "Eightfold Path," a series of rules that would help people live better to get good karma, and escape the cycle of rebirth.¹⁰ By escaping rebirth, one reaches "nirvana" which is an eternal state of happiness and peace.¹¹

Discussion Guide for Spouses

ASK

“In what ways are you most prone to forget the gospel or fail to live out of the realities of the gospel? How can I best remind you of the truths of the gospel in a way that would best point you to Christ?” *[Listen to what your spouse shares and then encourage them with the hope of Christ. Remind them of their security in Him, His love for your spouse, and gently encourage your spouse to entrust themselves to our King.]*

ASK

“In what ways do you notice that I fail to live out of the realities of the gospel? How can I better embrace the redemptive realities of the gospel?” *[Allow your spouse to help you identify ways that you struggle with unbelief. Do not be discouraged by whatever they share. Instead, recognize this as needed and helpful counsel from a loving friend who is trying to help you trust the Lord. Respond by receiving what you hear and asking the Lord for help.]*

ASK

“What are you most struggling with, burdened by, or anxious about right now? How can I help you trust in the Lord during this time?” *[Listen to what your spouse shares and encourage them with appropriate counsel from God’s Word.]*

PRAY

Pray together, asking God to help you both with your unbelief. Repent of unbelief and cling to Christ, asking the Lord to give you the faith to trust Him more.

DO

This week, write a note of encouragement to your spouse. In your message, express the ways that you see them growing in Christ. Share the various ways that you see evidence of God’s grace in their life. Remind them of the truths of the gospel that you think would most encourage them today. Then, share one way that you’re praying for them, and commit to praying for them throughout the week.

WEEK FOUR

BIG

GOD USES THE
PEOPLE OF GOD
(THE CHURCH)
TO DISCIPLE
AND CARE FOR
EACH OTHER,
FULFILLING
THE GREAT
COMMISSION.

IDEA

**A Family Committed
to Community**

Family Worship Exercise

SET-UP

This week, invite a family from the church to your home for a meal (or go out together). During the meal, talk about life, church, disciple-making, and the joy of being one in Christ. After the meal, use the discussion guide below to explain to your children why you love your friends and how they help you love Jesus more.

ASK

“Did you have fun hanging out with the (insert family name) family? Do you know why we love this family so much?”

SHARE

Share with your children all the ways you love this family and how they help you love Jesus. Here are some things to share with your children:

- How these friends point you to Christ
- How these friends love you, encourage you, and bear your burdens
- How you can be honest with these friends and how they care for your fears, pains, and burdens
- How these friends encourage you to love Christ and others
- How you help these friends grow in Christ

Consider sharing about a specific time that your friends did something from the list above so that your kids can see a clear example of tangible, Christ-centered love within the church. Then, explain what you want your children to learn about disciple-making from your relationship with these friends.

For the Little Ones

Tell your children that you have friends, much like they do. Explain that in the same way your kids like to play toys with their friends because it makes them happy, you want to spend time with friends who point you to Christ, and you like to point your friends to Christ, because it increases your joy in Jesus. Explain that God has given us a family in the church where we can always help one another love Jesus. Then, pray for your kids to have a heart that loves the church.

CONCLUDE

“The church is the people of God, and one way we fulfill the Great Commission is by helping His people grow in loving and obeying Him. We do this by continually pointing our Christian friends to Christ and helping them grow as disciples. We’re so thankful for these friends, and we want to pray for them. Do you have any friends like this that we can pray for?”

PRAY

Explain that you’re going to pray through the truths of Scripture. Then, read Philippians 1:3–11 and pray:

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

“Father, we thank you so much for the friends you’ve given us and for the way they point us to you. I thank you for the ways that they remind us of the gospel, care for our family, and are a gift to us. Thank you for their lives and friendship! Please continue to help these friends grow in Christ. We know that you will finish the work you’ve started in them, and we pray that you would help them grow in the knowledge of your word and discernment to know how to live in a way that most glorifies you. Please help them grow, most importantly, in a deeper awareness of your great love for them, and help them to trust in you. Please protect and bless their home, rooting them in the hope of Christ. Help us to care for them well. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

SING

O Church of Christ Invincible

Discussion Guide for Spouses

ASK

“Who would you consider some of your best friends? What do you love about that friendship? How can I help you spend some meaningful time with them this month?” [Listen to your spouse as they share what they love about their friendships. Praise God together for the gift of these godly friendships! Do your best to organize a time for your spouse to spend some meaningful time with a friend this month.]

ASK

“In what ways can I be a better friend to you? How can I better help you connect with others at the church?” [This is a two-part question. First, our spouse should be our best friends, and we should be wonderful friends to our spouse. We should care for them, have fun with them, encourage them, and point them to Christ frequently. However, our sin causes us to fail at this. Receive what your spouse says and try to respond by loving your spouse as a better friend. Then, think through how you can help your spouse better connect at the church. Perhaps, talk through ways that you can help your spouse connect with people in your Community Group, or discuss ways that you can help eliminate obstacles that might keep your spouse from connecting with others.]

PRAY

Pray together for your friends, asking that God would help them grow in Christ.

DO

If you're not in a Community Group yet, visit WWW.THETRAILS.ORG/COMMUNITY and click the link to join a group. If you are in a group, schedule another opportunity to hang out with some friends from your group!

WEEK FIVE

BIG

THE LOVE OF CHRIST
MOTIVATES US TO LOVE
OTHERS AND SHARE THE
GOSPEL WITH THE LOST.

IDEA

**A Family Focused on
Reaching the Nations**



**GO AND MAKE
DISCIPLES OF
ALL NATIONS**

*“Therefore go and make
disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the
name of the Father and
of the Son and of the
Holy Spirit, and teaching
them to obey everything
I have commanded you.
And surely I am with you
always, to the very end
of the age.”*

MATTHEW 28:19-20

Family Worship Exercise

SET-UP

This week, participate in a missional activity with your Community Group. Then, lead your family in a discussion about the experience using these questions.

ASK

“What was your favorite part of the missional activity?”

ASK

“Was there anything difficult about the missional activity?”

ASK

“Why do you think we did this today? Why do you think this is important?”

For the Little Ones

Grab paper and crayons and have your child draw a picture of the world (or you can do it). If there are multiple kids, have each kid draw the world. Then, on your picture, draw a crown hovering over the world. Explain to your kids that Jesus is in charge of the world. Tell them that there are people who live all throughout this world, who Jesus has called to live with Him. Then, tell them that God wants to use us, including them one day, to help those people from every nation learn about Jesus so that they might believe in Him and live with Him forever. Then, pray for your children, asking the Lord to save them and give them a heart for reaching the unreached.

SAY

“We participated in this (insert the name of the project) because we wanted to show the love of Christ to our community. Showing this love and caring for people can look like many different things, but we best show Christ’s love by compassionately communicating the gospel. In Matthew 28, we see that Jesus calls us to reach all nations with the gospel of Christ. Let’s read that from the Bible:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- MATTHEW 28:19

We participate in this mission by sharing the gospel with people locally (in this nation) and by investing in the spread of the gospel across the world (to other nations).”

ASK

“Do you remember the map we looked at a few weeks ago with all the countries?”

SAY

“In those countries, God has people who He has chosen to worship Him for all eternity. The way that God saves them through faith in Christ is by sending us, people in His church from all parts of the world, into those places to share the gospel with them. One day, in Heaven, people from all countries will be gathered to worship Jesus. Listen to how the Bible describes it:

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” – REVELATION 7:9-10

God is making this future reality happen by sending His people all throughout the world to share His message so that people might trust in Jesus and love Him more than anything else.”

ASK

“What does this show you about what Heaven will be like?” [Help your kids see that God is worthy of the worship of all nations and that heaven will be full of people from every tribe and tongue. Explain to your children that God will bring these people to Himself and make this a reality through people like us sharing the gospel with others.]

CONCLUDE

“I hope that we will be a family that cares deeply about making disciples, and I hope that you will also grow up to care about seeing the gospel spread to every nation so that God’s people from every tribe and nation will worship Him rightly. Let’s pray that the gospel would go forth and that God would use our family, and our church, to participate in that mission.”

PRAY

“Father, you are worthy of all honor and praise. You are worthy of the worship of every heart around the world. Every nation should worship you rightly. Yet, we know that, by nature, every person, in every nation, rejects you. Please show them mercy by letting the gospel of Christ reach

Go Deeper

Show your children the Unreached People Group map (downloadable at WWW.THETRAILS.ORG/FAMILIESONMISSION) and help them capture a vision for what parts of the world most need access to the gospel.

them. We pray that you would help give our family direction and an ambition to see the gospel go forth to every nation. Please use Hannah McNeill, the missionary from our church, to advance the gospel in Sierra Leone. Please, even right now, raise up more families and people with a heart for reaching unreached people groups. Give some people in our church the heart and ambition to take the gospel where it has not been named. Please raise up missionaries from our church, both for the immediate need and for the sake of generations in the future. Would you please transform the hearts of some of the people in our youth group and kids' ministry and let them become missionaries who passionately declare your gospel across the world? Let our church participate greatly in the wonderful mission of making disciples of all nations, both locally in our area and across the globe. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen."

SING

Let The Nations Be Glad

Discussion Guide for Spouses

ASK

"What did you learn from the sermon and the missional activity this week? What was most helpful for you?" [Simply listen to your spouse and reflect on the experience you had together.]

ASK

"Who are the main non-Christians in our lives that we can begin praying for?" [If you're not already praying for non-Christians, begin praying for them and pray that God will raise up Christians to minister to them.]

PRAY

Pray together for some non-Christians in your family, work, and in your other spheres of relationships. Pray that God would expose them to the gospel and lead them to Him through faith in Christ.

WEEK SIX

BIG

REFLECT ON WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED THROUGH THE *FOR THE MISSION* SERIES AND REMIND YOUR CHILDREN THAT WE PURSUE THE MISSION OF DISCIPLE-MAKING IN THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS ALWAYS WITH US BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

IDEA

**A Family Comforted
in Christ**

Family Worship Exercise

ASK

“I have loved getting to lead us through these exercises over the last six weeks. What have been some of the things you’ve learned?”

SAY

“Personally, I hope you’ve learned more about what it means to be a disciple-maker. But I also hope that you’ve seen how this mission should impact our family. I want to do whatever we can to make sure that our family has a culture of disciple-making. In other words, I want us to love God above everything else. I want us to be committed to helping each other love Jesus. I want us to find our hope in Christ and I want the gospel to impact our family life. I want us to be actively involved in the church and participating in caring for one another. And I want us to have a passion for loving the lost and helping the gospel advance to every nation.”

SAY

“The Bible tells us of one important truth that should comfort us as we pursue this task. Let’s read it:

‘And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

- MATTHEW 28:20

This teaches us that God is always with His people, caring for us, securing us, bringing us home, and empowering us to fulfill the mission of making disciples. So, why’s this important for us? Because it reminds us

For the Little Ones

When you put your children down for bed one night, explain to them that while you are not always with them (such as when you drop them off at school, when you tuck them into bed, when you drop them off at Trails Kids, etc.) God is always with them, and He is so much better than we are. Tell them that God is always with us to care for us, comfort us, and help us love Him and bring Him glory. Say that you’ll come and get them in the morning, but in the meantime, God is with them, and they can trust in His comfort and care. Tell them that, just as God is always with them through the night, God is always with His people to help them worship Him and make disciples. Then, pray for them, asking that they would trust in Christ and that they might taste and see the sweet reality of knowing God.

that we are not trying to accomplish this mission on our own strength. It teaches us that Christ is for us and He is with us, and therefore, we must rely on Christ, trust in Christ, and love Christ. As we pursue Christ and the mission of disciple-making, God will be with us, empowering us to obey Him and make disciples.”

CONCLUDE

“We love you so much, and we hope you’ve enjoyed talking about these themes. Let’s pray that God would help us worship Him and rest in His love for us.”

PRAY

“Father, thank you for your Word and thank you for teaching us over the last six weeks. We thank you that you are always with us. We thank you for the comforting words of Christ, that He is with us always by the Spirit, to comfort and empower us for the mission of making disciples. Help us to worship you. Help us to believe your Word. Help us to trust your Son more. Help us to live on mission, love one another, and love you with greater zeal. Most importantly, change our hearts so that we will desire to glorify you in all things. Thank you for this family. Let us be a family on mission for the good of your people and the sake of your glory. In the name of Jesus, we ask this, amen.”

SING

Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me

Go Deeper

Now, since the series is concluding, spend some time sharing what you personally hoped they learned from the series. Also, explain the financial and spiritual commitments you plan to make as a result of our For the Mission campaign. Take this time to explain to your children all the ways you’re excited to participate in the gospel ministry of The Trails Church. End by sharing your dreams for how you hope your family will further live together on mission as a result of what you’ve learned.

Discussion Guide for Spouses

ASK

“What did you learn from the For the Mission series that was most formative for you? How did this series change or challenge your view of the Christian life and mission?” [Allow your spouse to share and praise God for the growth that He created in your spouse. Reflect together on the various things the Lord taught you from his Word.]

ASK

“What evidence of grace did you see in our family over the last 6 weeks? Do you see any ways that our marriage, our children, our parenting, and our family rhythms have been impacted by the truths we’ve studied during this series? [Reflect together on how your family has grown through this series. How did the family worship sessions shape your family culture? How did you see your kids responding to the truths they learned? Rejoice together at any growth you’ve seen and pray together for areas of change that you think are still needed.]

DO

This week, write a letter to each of your children, encouraging them in the various ways that you’ve seen evidences of God’s grace in their life. Describe what you hope they have learned over the last six weeks, and then give them one specific encouragement for how you would love for them to live as disciples of Christ. For some, this might be an appeal to trust in Christ. For others, it might be an appeal to practically make disciples. In whatever way you hope they will respond to the For the Mission series, write it out, and then share this letter with them. If they can read, give it to them. If not, read it to them and tell them how much you love them, reminding them that your love for them is a small picture meant to point them to the great fountain of love that is the triune God.

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