

Capturing Faith Memories

Week **1**

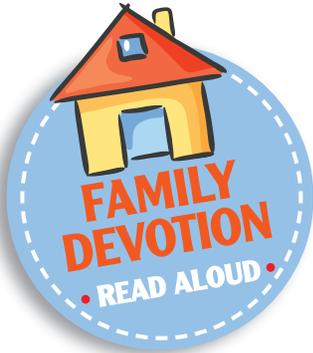
Family Beatitude: Happy is the family who captures memories, for they will build lasting bonds.

Focus: Building a legacy through captured memories

Weekly Bible Verse: *When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it. I will remember that my covenant will last forever. It is a covenant between me and every kind of living creature on earth.* Genesis 9:16

Activity Options

- Start a family faith album to capture the memories of your faith journey. Use the ideas at the end of each unit to inspire you with what to draw or write. Snap photos and add those, too.
- God made a promise or special commitment with his people, called a covenant. He made one with Noah and Noah's family. Read about it in Genesis chapter nine. As a family make a commitment to God to follow him. Write it out and hang it up. Paint a watercolor rainbow over the words. Watercolor allows the words to show through.
- Plan a family project that connects with your faith. Examples: help at a church function, shop together to donate canned goods to a food pantry or pick up litter at church after a service.



God's Art 2 minutes

"Look, Mom. God painted three rainbows in the big blue sky." Rebecca pointed. "I like to paint rainbows."

"Yes, you make beautiful rainbows with lots of colors."

"You read about when God painted the first rainbow. God promised Noah he wouldn't flood the whole earth again. That's in the Bible."

"Yes, rainbows remind us that God cares for all the people and creatures he made."

"I can paint big rainbows on my easel or use my colored pencils to color tiny ones on a little pad of paper. I can keep the little ones in my scrapbook."

During a two-year Coast Guard duty tour in Hawaii, Rebecca and her family watched many rainbows fill the sky with layered arcs of color. Double rainbows reversed the colors of the first one. Triple rainbows amazed them more. The third one's color order matched the first, with a bottom arch of red.

Rebecca's mom helped her make a scrapbook. She wrote in words and drew on the pages to reflect what she wanted to remember that she learned about God each day.

Bible Story Connection 3-4 minutes

Read about the rainbow in Genesis 9:13-17. Discuss how God's rainbow reminds us that God cares about us and how we should care about following God.



Chat Prompts

- *The one who sat there shone like jasper and ruby. Around the throne was a rainbow shining like an emerald.* Revelation 4:3 (emphasis added)

There's a rainbow in heaven around God's throne. That's a reminder that God always recalls the promise made to Noah. How do rainbows make you feel?

- *Remember the wonderful things he has done. Remember his miracles and how he judged our enemies.* Psalm 105:5

This verse is from a Psalm that recalls Abraham, Jacob, and Moses. It's a reminder of important Bible stories that really happened long ago. Chat about favorite Bible verses or stories and what the story means to each family member.

- *What I'm about to tell you is true. What she has done will be told anywhere the good news is preached all over the world. It will be told in memory of her.* Mark 14:9

Jesus praised a woman that others teased for being a sinner. They thought Jesus should avoid her and not let her touch him. She washed the feet of Jesus and anointed them with perfume. Jesus praised her and said she would be remembered. She did such a small task in washing the feet of Jesus.

Why are small tasks important to God? What little things can you do to help others?

- *Read from Genesis 1 and celebrate new beginnings. Chat about this new book of family do-votions and how you hope it will help you grow together in faith as a family.*

MORE TIME?



Scrapbook/Prayer Journal Options

Make a memory about what you read, did, and learned this week.

- Write dates and words related to memories, like birthdates and favorite times or places.
- Add the colors of the rainbow with watercolor. Write how a rainbow reminds you of God.
- Draw or trace hands of family members to commit to holding on to God and one another.

Frontline Tip

A covenant is a commitment. Write a covenant that expresses loyalty and love between the members of your family. Post it so you can remember that whether you are together or apart.

Prayer

Dear Father, thank you for putting each of us into this family. Thank you for loving us. Help our whole family stay close to you this year. In Jesus' name, amen.



Separation Preparations

Family Beatitude: Happy is the family that prepares for separations and reunions, for they will be hopeful.

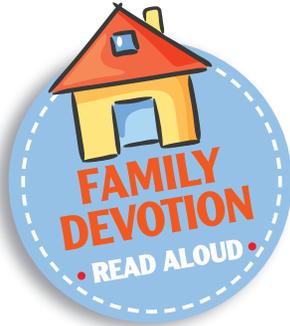
Focus: Preparing for a family member to leave on a trip

Weekly Bible Verse: *So be very careful how you live. Do not live like people who aren't wise. Live like people who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity.* Ephesians 5:15–16

Activity Options

- Talk about being prepared for lonely days. Make a second separation preparedness box for the traveling family member. Fill a box with notes and cards from family members to read when the traveling family member feels lonely.
- Make a second separation preparedness box for the family at home. Put in photos, little games that are reminders of activities enjoyed with the absent family member, supplies to make cards, and tiny surprises.
- Spend time writing love notes for the traveling family member to take and have that person leave notes for each family member. These can be tucked in a lunch box, backpack, brief case, or purse.





Balloon Race 2 minutes

Jim told his family, “I’ll be leaving tomorrow. You can watch the ship leave. I have a goodbye surprise so watch what happens after the ship is out in the water. When you hear the whistle blow, look at the top of the ship.”

Jim had prepared a special surprise for when the ship departed. It was for his family, but also all the families who were at the departure to say good-bye to someone they love.

The morning of the ship’s departure, Rebecca and Michael kissed and hugged their father, and then watched him board the ship and disappear below deck.

Rebecca asked, “Where’s Daddy? I don’t see him anymore.”

Mommy said, “As the engineering officer, he works in the engine room below the deck.”

When the ship’s loud whistle blew, they looked up and saw a huge bunch of balloons rise out of one of the smoke stacks. The wind blew the balloons to shore and all the children raced to get one. Rebecca grabbed two, kept the red one, and gave the blue one to Michael as he sat in his stroller. They kept the balloons long after the air escaped.

Rebecca laughed, “Daddy filled the stack with balloons for us. It made me so happy.”

Mommy smiled, “They inflated hundreds of balloons to spread joy to their families and make a special memory.”



Bible Story Connection 3–4 minutes

Read. 2 Samuel 6:12–15. When David returned from his military service the people celebrated with a parade and shouting. They won a big battle and recovered the Ark of the Covenant. That's a special box of gold built to hold the Ten Commandments, a jar of manna, and Aaron's rod (Hebrews 9:4). Talk about how you celebrate reunions.

Chat Prompts

- *Don't hold back good from those who are worthy of it. Don't hold it back when you can help.* Proverbs 3:27

Proverbs are wise thoughts of good choices. This verse comes from a section on kindness. Kindness shows you care. Kind words help a person feel valued (worthy). Talk about how to be kind to one another in words and actions.

- *Scripture says, "Honor your father and mother." That is the first commandment that has a promise.* Ephesians 6:2

The next verse in Ephesians (verse 3) is a reminder that things will go well for those who keep the command to obey their parents. Chat about how life is easier when rules are followed.

Chat about obeying the parent at home and how the absence of a family member will go more smoothly as everyone is supportive and follows the rules.

- *We are God's creation. He created us to belong to Christ Jesus. Now we can do good works. Long ago God prepared these works for us to do.* Ephesians 2:10

Chat about the importance of the work of the family member who serves and the need to make the world a better place. What good things can other family members do to help others?

MORE TIME?



Scrapbook/Prayer Journal Options

Fill the page with love notes and reminders to review during the days spent apart.

- Add hearts with notes in them.
- Draw a clock with arms set to a time when everyone will stop what they are doing to pray for the family.
- Draw a sun to recall that you are under the same sun while apart.

Frontline Tips

- Plan family time before a deployment or other time of separation. Let it include snuggling and sharing memories. Talk about how you'll stay in touch and will think of one another.
- Do a home inspection before the family member leaves on a trip or deployment. This is especially important if the family member is the one who usually completes home repairs. Complete any needed repairs with the help of all family members.
- Stand outside and look at the sun together. Chat about how each day you are under the same sun and share the warmth of the same love. Hold hands and pray together.

Prayer

Lord, help us treasure our time together and prepare our hearts for the days apart. In Jesus' name, amen.



Wrap-Up

Talk about any upcoming days apart and ways to feel connected.

Week 8

Protection

Family Beatitude: Happy is the family who protects their children, for they will feel safe.

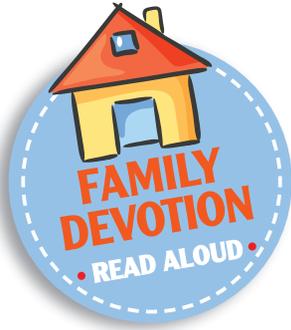
Focus: Providing protection to help family members feel secure

Weekly Bible Verse: *By wisdom a house is built. Through understanding it is made secure.* Proverbs 24:3

Activity Options

- Play I Spy when outside or in unfamiliar surroundings to help children become aware of their environment and possible strangers.
- Use the buddy system when you take walks.
- Practice safe ways to answer the door and phone.





Playing it Safe 2 minutes

Kathy asked Valerie, “How do you protect your children?”

Valerie replied, “With Douglas being a police officer, we set up safety rules. We always lock our doors. If the children play outside, the dog goes out with them. We taught them to look around, notice their surroundings, and come back inside if they see strangers.”

Kathy replied, “I need to do those things, too. What else do you do?”

“Douglas parks his police car in the garage, so we don’t advertise that he’s a police officer. As he drives home he always notices cars he doesn’t recognize, and he looks for anything unusual. However, he calls the local police station to report anything suspicious, rather than take matters into his own hands. With all his training, he’s naturally observant and careful! It took me a while to get used to that.”

Kathy said, “We discuss escape routes at home and school.”

Valerie’s daughter said, “We did that. Dad told us to trust our gut and if I feel worried, I should come inside or call.”

Valerie added, “I never tutor at home. I meet clients in safe places like coffee shops and libraries. We have initials and not our names printed on checks. Our son Larry started driving, so he checks in with us, so we know his plans and location. It’s all normal for us.”

Kathy said, “I know you’re very close. You talk about everything. That’s what I want.”



Bible Story Connection 3–4 minutes

Read Acts 27:39–44 about how a leader realized evil plans to kill Paul and others, so he kept them safe. Discuss how you protect your children from harm.

Chat Prompts

- *[Love] always protects. It always trusts. It always hopes. It never gives up.* 1 Corinthians 13:7

Chat about why parents set rules and how those rules show love.

- *David spoke about him. He said, “I know that the Lord is always with me. Because he is at my right hand, I will always be secure.”* Acts 2:25

Discuss God’s care and how he is always with each person.

- *Wise people see danger and go to a safe place. But childish people keep going and suffer for it.* Proverbs 22:3

Chat about making wise choices to stay safe.

MORE TIME?



Scrapbook/Prayer Journal Options

Create a memory page about protecting one another.

- Draw an eye and write about being observant.
- Draw a key and write about locks and locking doors.
- Draw a heart and write about how your family protects one another.



Frontline Tips

- Discuss how a parent's career might make your family more aware of safety.
- Talk about the difficulties of being part of a police or law enforcement family and how some people don't like police.

Prayer

Father, thank you for protecting us and always watching us.
In Jesus' name, amen.

Wrap-Up

Chat about one safety rule that your family always follows.

