

PRAYER, FASTING, AND CONSECRATION | 2022

A series of three nested arches, each slightly smaller than the one before it, creating a sense of depth. The arches are rendered in a light, warm yellow color. At the end of the innermost arch, a bright sun with rays is visible, partially obscured by soft, white clouds. The background is a gradient of warm orange and yellow tones.

Abide

The Power and Beauty
of God's Word

Abide

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of God's Word

Family Devotional

PRAYER, FASTING, AND CONSECRATION 2022



EVERY NATION

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**This family devotional is designed to be used
by parents with children from the ages of
four to twelve.**

Fasting 101

Connect

All of us have needs and wants. Needs are things that we cannot live without. Wants are things we would like to have. What are some of your needs? What are some of your wants? There are many things we need and want. But sometimes, we focus so much on our needs and wants that we forget our relationship with God. Fasting lets us focus more on God by setting aside our needs and wants.

What is fasting?

When we fast, we stop doing an activity (usually eating) for a period of time to focus more on God. We can also fast from different media (TV, video games) and technology (gadgets, lowercase internet) if we cannot fast from food. Instead of eating or using our gadgets, we spend time with God. This means praying, worshiping, and reading the Bible. These activities help us grow in our relationship with God.

When our parents speak to us, we should pay attention and listen to them. Fasting helps us pay attention and listen to God. It helps remove distractions. We say to God, "I am going to listen to you because you are my Father. I trust you!"

Jesus gave us an example of fasting in Matthew 4. Jesus knew that he would need strength and power to do his work. He prepared by fasting for forty days in the desert. During this time, the Enemy named Satan tried to tempt Jesus by telling him to do some things. What Jesus told the Enemy is the truth that can give us strength when we fast:

"People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

MATTHEW 4:4 (NLT)

Before Fasting

1. Pray

Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. Write down specific prayer requests for your family, friends, church, and nation.

2. Commit

Pray about the kind of fast that you will do and commit to it ahead of time. Ask God for grace to help you follow through with your decision. Also, ask your parents and maybe even your doctor if you are allowed to do a specific type of food fast.

3. Act

If you will be fasting from food, start eating smaller portions a few days before the start of your fast. Avoid sugary and fatty food. Ask someone to be your prayer partner throughout the fast.

While Fasting

1. Focus

Set aside time to read God's Word and pray. This devotional will help you as you go through your fast. Be ready to listen to God's voice and do what the Holy Spirit is telling you.

2. Pray

If you can, join at least one prayer meeting in your church. Pray for your family, friends, church, pastors, and nation. Pray also for the work we are doing in the campuses and other countries.

3. Fill Up

If you're fasting from food, read the Bible and pray during mealtimes. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Keep in mind that you may find yourself becoming physically weak, tired, impatient, or irritated. If you're doing a different type of fast, read the Bible and pray during the time you would normally do what you

are fasting from (for example, browsing through social media or playing video games).

After Fasting

1. Eat

If you fasted from food, reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, and salad, then add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day. It may be tempting, but try not to eat junk food and sweets right away. If you've finished a different type of fast, remember what God showed you as you spent time with him. Apply what you learned from the fast to your everyday life.

2. Pray

Don't stop praying! Trust that God knows what he's doing and will keep his promises. Don't stop believing in God and listening to his voice all year. Be in faith and expect God to answer your prayers!

Our Plan

Day 1

FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

FAMILY MEMBERS

Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.

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Day 2

FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

FAMILY MEMBERS

Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.

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Day 3

FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

FAMILY MEMBERS

Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.

Day 4

FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

FAMILY MEMBERS

Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.

Day 5

FASTING OPTIONS

Social media fast

Gadget fast

Skip one meal

Other

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

FAMILY MEMBERS

Write down the names of the parents and kids who will do this type of fast for today.

We Are Thankful to God for . . .

How did God answer your prayers in 2021?

For 2022, I Will Seek God and Trust Him in These Areas . . .

What are your prayer requests for the year?

My Family (e.g., good health for parents and siblings)

My School (e.g., good grades)

My Friends (e.g., for friends to know Jesus)

Others (e.g., for more people to know Christ)

“Again, here is what I tell you. Suppose two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for. My Father in heaven will do it for you.”

MATTHEW 18:19 (NIRV)

Pray in Pairs

Each family member will pray with a relative or friend. Write down the prayer partner's name after each family member's name.

Family Member

Prayer Partner

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The Word Is Like Bread



Connect

What is the staple food in your home? Staple food is the main food crop that is eaten and the main source of energy in a diet. It sustains us every day. People in different parts of the world have different staple food.

Here is a list of common staple food around the world:

- Corn or maize
- Rice
- Wheat, which is mostly made into bread and pasta
- Root crops, like potatoes and cassava
- Soybeans



Do a little investigative work and see the different places in the world where the food on our list is considered as staple food.



Staple Food

Where in the world is this the main food crop?

Corn

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Rice

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Wheat

.....

Root crops

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Soybeans

.....



Read the Word

Our devotions this week will encourage us to read the Word of God. Be excited to discover the meanings behind the interesting symbols used by Jesus to teach us some very important lessons and truths.

Read Deuteronomy 8:1–20

²Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. ³He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

DEUTERONOMY 8:2–3 (NIV)

When the Israelites were traveling in the desert for forty years on their way to the Promised Land, they did not go hungry because God sent food that fell from heaven, which they called manna. These were thin flakes like frost and sweet like honey, which they boiled, ground into flour, and made into bread and cakes. That was how God provided food for them. They had more than enough for each day so they never became hungry in the desert.

Yet God also told the Israelites that *man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD*. There is physical bread (like manna) for the body, and there is the bread that is for the spirit.

Who is this true bread? As we read about Jesus' life in the book of John in the Bible, we learn that Jesus is the *Word of God*. He also called himself *the bread of life* (John 6:35).

Every person was created by God with a body and spirit. While our bodies will survive with physical bread, we need Jesus—*the bread of life*—for our spirits to live. Whoever goes to Jesus will never be hungry, and whoever believes in him will never be thirsty.

So when God said, *man does not live on bread alone*, he did not want the Israelites to focus only on the manna (or the provision), but to trust and obey him who provides for everything they need.

Just like the Israelites, God is teaching us to **depend only on him**. We learn God's ways through the Bible. It does not only feed, strengthen, encourage, comfort, and satisfy us, but it gives us life!

Gather

Parents to Kids

4-6 years old

- ▶ Do you like to eat? How many days do you think you can live without food? Why do you think we need to eat food?
- ▶ Tell me what your favorite food is, and I'll tell you if that is good for your body.

7-12 years old

- ▶ What is one food you definitely have to eat every day? Why?
- ▶ What is one thing you cannot get through your day without (e.g., your mobile phone, your camera, your toys)? In reality, this is your "bread," but is it right?

Kids to Parents

- ▶ What is one thing (such as an item or a habit) you cannot live without? Why?
- ▶ Does the Bible really satisfy us spiritually? How?



Knowing that we do need food for our spirit, let us have Jesus as our *bread of life*. He is the Word of God and all truth comes from him. May we be fed not only by natural or physical bread. If we hunger for God and his truth, our lives will be full and satisfied.

Just as you would eat bread every day to be full, starting today, will you make reading the Bible a daily habit? God's Word has the power to transform us so we can be more like him. As we pray and fast this week, ask God to open the eyes of your heart to see the truth that God wants to teach you through his Word, beyond what is obvious or literal. God's Word will sustain you.

Pray

Dear God, thank you for giving us all that we need—food, our family, a home, and all your blessings. Most of all, thank you for giving us Jesus, the bread of life who strengthens, comforts, encourages, and sustains us.

Thank you for your Word that guides us. As we continue to know you and love you more, please teach us to understand what is right and what is wrong. Help us to obey the truth and teach us to trust and obey you more. In Jesus' name, amen.

Discover

Which one is your favorite bread?



It's fascinating to know there are hundreds of kinds of bread that you can make out of simple grains, such as wheat or corn.

Around the world, you will find the crunchy baguette in France, the unleavened roti in India, the spongy injera in Ethiopia, the thin tortilla in Mexico, and the soft pandesal in the Philippines.

You can learn more about different types of bread around the world by searching for "the world's best breads" online.

From now on, as you chew on your favorite bread, always remember there is nothing else that will satisfy you as much as Jesus would because he is our bread of life and only he can sustain you as you chew on (read and meditate) his Word every day. Whoever comes to him will never hunger or thirst. Be hungry for God's Word!



The Word Is a Seed



Connect

Name a Tree in Three!

Parents and kids will take turns to come up with names of trees in alphabetical order. Some of the trees you think of can be names of fruits. Give each other three seconds to answer. If one of you cannot think of an answer in three seconds, another person can try to save the turn instead.

For example:

- A: apple tree
- B: baobab tree
- C: calamansi

Try to get to Z in ten minutes or less.

Tips:

- There's a tree that starts with Z! It's the zelkova tree.
- You may want to check tree names online.





A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

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J

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P

Q

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S

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V

W

X

Y

Z

Read the Word

In our game, we learned about the different names of trees. Some of those trees grow so big that they become nesting places for birds and homes for other animals.

Some of these trees, like the mango tree, become very big later on. But trees do not start out that way. They start as seeds planted into the soil.

Today's verses talk about a different type of seed. One which is not seen but bears fruit and grows big. Let's read 1 Peter 1:13–25 to check out this seed!

*¹⁵But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." . . . ²³For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴For, "All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, ²⁵but **the word of the Lord endures forever.**" And this is the word that was preached to you."*

1 PETER 1:15, 23–25 (NIV)

Imperishable means it will last forever. The imperishable seed that Peter was talking about was the Word of God, the Bible. Although the Bible is printed on paper, or nowadays accessible on our digital devices, the written Word of God is still very powerful, even today. It can change us and make our hearts new.

Just like a mango tree that started as a seed and grew, reading the Bible allows God to sow his Word in our hearts so we can grow big in our faith.

Gather

Parents to Kids

4-6 years old

- ▶ Do you have a favorite Bible verse or story? What is it and why do you like it?

7-12 years old

- ▶ What is your favorite Bible verse? Do you want us to read the Bible together daily?
- ▶ Can you share some of your Bible reading habits with us?

Kids to Parents

- ▶ When do you read the Bible?
- ▶ What is a recent verse you read and how did God speak to you through it?

Unlike the things of this world that we hold on to but will fade away, God's Word will endure forever. As a family, let us get into the habit of reading it daily and ask God to plant his Word in our hearts.



Pray

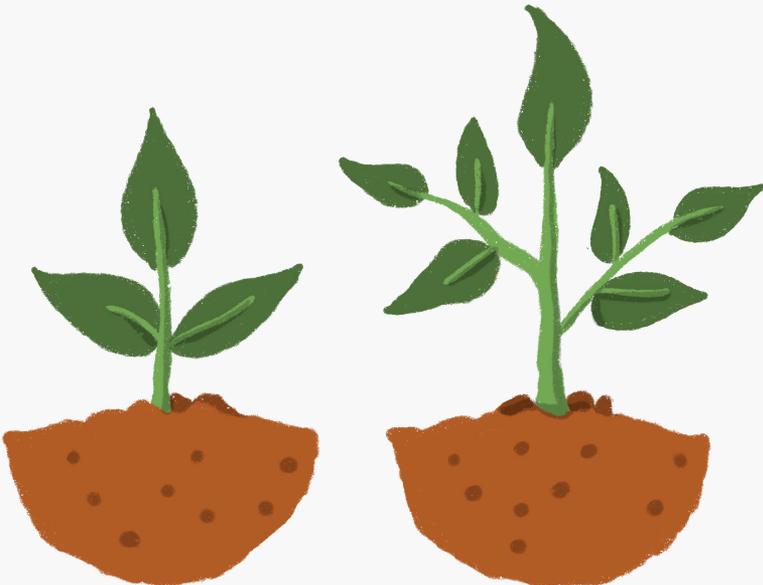
Dear God, we are grateful that you made it possible for us to read your word. We pray that you help us consistently read and meditate on it so it takes root in our lives and in our relationships. In Jesus' name, amen.

Discover

Some of the oldest trees in the world have been around for approximately 5,000 years. One of these is the Great Basin bristlecone pine and is mostly found in California. It is also called Methuselah, which is the name of a man in the Bible who lived the longest—969 years!

This pine tree has cones and seeds. It also started with seeds planted in the soil and then it grew and aged.

So if a perishable seed can do that much, imagine how far the imperishable seed will help us endure eternally. That is beyond this life for sure!



Day
2

The Word Is Light



Connect

Spend some time talking and trying to come up with answers to the following questions. Do not search the internet nor do any research elsewhere. Any answer you come up with is okay.

1. How deep is the ocean?
2. How much money is there in the world?
3. Can a bee fly all the way to space?
4. What is the largest number in the world?
- What happens when you add one to it?
5. Why is water wet?
- If you dry the water, is it still water?



Feel free to add similar questions if you can think of more:

Do you have answers to the questions? Do you think your answers are correct? Or did the questions leave you even more confused than when you started? Sometimes, it is fun coming up with wacky answers to questions that seem to be unanswerable.

You know what? There are also times when we have unanswerable questions in our lives. Like, why do bad things happen to a person? These questions are definitely not fun to answer, but we have a Book that can shed light to some of our questions.

Read the Word

Let's read Psalm 119:105–112:

¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. ¹⁰⁶I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws. ¹⁰⁷I have suffered much; preserve my life, Lord, according to your word. ¹⁰⁸Accept, Lord, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws. ¹⁰⁹Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law. ¹¹⁰The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts. ¹¹¹Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. ¹¹²My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end.

PSALM 119:105–112 (NIV)

In the last few months and years, many of us have experienced trying times and different challenges. Sadly, sometimes, our circumstances have brought us to the end of our wits. With clouds of darkness and uncertainty hanging over us, it seems that there is no end to this tunnel. But as we travel through this dark and unclear path, God's Word can be our light to guide us and to protect us. When we don't know what to do, God's Word can give us wisdom. When we are tempted, it can steer us away from sin's path. When we are in doubt, its truth will help us clear our vision. When we feel hopeless, its promises will point us to the One who is in control of the future. We can trust what it says because it is from God.

Gather

Parents to Kids

4-6 years old

- ▶ What do you do when you are in the dark and you need to look at something?

7-12 years old

- ▶ Do you read the Bible every day? How has it encouraged you and given you wisdom and clarity in the past year? Share a specific situation with your family.

Kids to Parents

- ▶ How did God's Word help you through a difficult time in the past?
- ▶ How do you hide God's Word in your heart?

Just as light keeps us from stumbling in the dark, God's Word also keeps us from stumbling as we go through life. Let's keep reading God's Word. Let's learn to meditate on it and hide it in our hearts. Let's do what it teaches us to do. As we do, God will use it to speak to us, to guide us, and to give us clarity in the midst of our circumstances.

Pray

Dear God, thank you for your Word because it gives us light in these dark times. Thank you because it has the power to guide and protect us. Please help us to come to your Word whenever we feel doubt and uncertainty creeping in our hearts. Help us also to believe and to obey what it teaches. In Jesus' name, amen!



Discover

Today, when we say light, we normally think of the manmade sources of lights that we are so used to, like electric lights, flashlights, and other similar lights. But the first time light appeared was on the first day of creation when God created it. Light is so vital to life that it was the first thing God created! Without it, our world would be plunged in total darkness. Through the centuries, because of advancements in technology, we no longer just rely on natural light, which are the sun and the moon. Man has developed many different kinds of artificial light.

The following is a brief look at the different sources of light that man has used:

- Sun, when God created it
- Candles, around hundreds of years before Christ
- Gas lamps, invented around the 1700s
- Modern lights (light bulbs, fluorescent, etc.), around the 1800s up to the present



Day
3

The Word Is a Mirror



Connect

Let's play a game! Using a pencil, pen, or highlighter, look for the following words in the puzzle below:

ULTRASOUND

MRI

CT SCAN

MIRROR

XRAY

BIBLE

Z	A	X	D	E	W	T	E	X	Z
M	B	F	D	C	M	R	I	P	A
M	I	R	C	D	F	A	A	Y	B
M	B	X	L	T	V	E	C	U	V
U	L	T	R	A	S	O	U	N	D
Z	E	W	X	Q	E	C	I	N	I
U	A	A	R	D	T	Y	A	G	G
M	L	T	A	G	H	Q	L	N	U
B	L	E	Y	A	D	Q	K	G	K
A	Y	R	E	G	H	S	J	M	J
M	I	R	R	O	R	F	R	G	B
O	X	Y	G	E	N	G	S	D	N

BONUS QUESTION:

Do you know what all these things have in common? They all show us a picture of ourselves.

An ultrasound, MRI, CT scan, and x-ray all give us pictures of what the inside of our bodies look like. They show us pictures of our bones, hearts, and other organs, and they help doctors see if there is anything wrong inside of us.

We use mirrors to see how we look. We use it to check if our clothes fit us well or if we need to brush our hair. We also use it to make sure we don't have dirt on our faces. We use mirrors to check if we look good and clean for other people to see.

What about the Bible? The Bible is the Word of God. God tells us through the Bible how he wants us to live and that he wants us to be holy and obedient to his Word. This means we can use the Bible just like a mirror. We can use it to check if we look good and clean inside where only God can see us.



Read the Word

Let's read James 1:19–25:

¹⁹My dear brothers and sisters, always be more willing to listen than to speak. Keep control of your anger. ²⁰Anger does not help you live the way God wants. ²¹So get rid of everything evil in your lives—every kind of wrong you do. Be humble and accept God's teaching that is planted in your hearts. This teaching can save you. ²²Do what God's teaching says; don't just listen and do nothing. When you only sit and listen, you are fooling yourselves. ²³Hearing God's teaching and doing nothing is like looking at your face in the mirror ²⁴and doing nothing about what you saw. You go away and immediately forget how bad you looked. ²⁵But when you look into God's perfect law that sets people free, pay attention to it. If you do what it says, you will have God's blessing. Never just listen to his teaching and forget what you heard.

JAMES 1:19–25 (ERV)

When you look at yourself in the mirror and you see dirt on your face, or maybe a bit of food is stuck between your teeth, you immediately remove it or wash your face. The verses above are saying the same thing. The Bible tells us how we should live as children of God. If we come up short against what the Bible says and ignore it, it's like seeing our faces with a lot of mud but not washing the mud away. We want to look clean and neat when we face other people. We should feel the same way when we face God. God looks at our hearts more than our faces, and he can see when our hearts are not clean. The Bible helps us see that. We should not only read it but should also do what it teaches. Being obedient to what the Bible teaches is a way to continue to keep your heart clean.

Gather

Parents to Kids

4–6 years old

- ▶ Do you want to obey God? Why or why not?
- ▶ Do you think you are obeying God when you obey your parents?

7–12 years old

- ▶ Is the Bible revealing anything to you that you need to obey? What do you plan to do about it?

Kids to Parents

- ▶ How has God's Word changed you?

Similar to how a mirror can show us what we want to see, the Bible shows us the condition of our hearts. As we examine our hearts against what the Bible teaches, God will reveal to us when we have sinful thoughts, emotions, and even motives. When we find that they are not in line with God's Word, let us be obedient and ask the Holy Spirit to help us align them with God's.

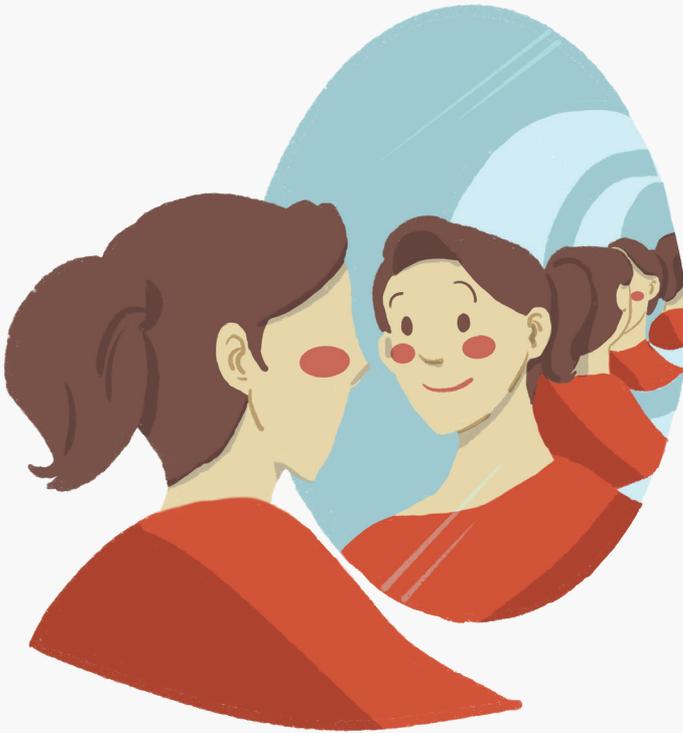
Pray

Dear God, thank you for loving us even during times when we are not obedient children. Thank you for giving us your Word so that we can see if we are following you or are moving away from you. We trust that you will continue to love us and teach us your ways for our own good. You will even use our parents and others to bring us closer to you. Please help us obey you because we want our thoughts, our words, and our actions to be pleasing in your eyes. In Jesus' name, amen.

Discover

Try creating an infinity mirror. Get a smaller mirror that you can carry or hold and go in front of a larger mirror. See how the mirrors keep reflecting one another so it looks like you have multiplied!

There are also other cool experiments you can do to show the power of mirrors.



Day
4

The Word Is a Hammer



Connect

Prepare a paper and pen for everyone.

On the piece of paper the players will write two truths and a lie about themselves. Once everyone is done writing, each player will take turns reading their answers out loud. Everyone gets a turn to guess which one is the lie. Once everyone is done guessing, the player will reveal which of the three statements they made is a lie. The players that guessed right will get one point. The one with the most points at the end wins.

If you are good at spotting lies, so was the prophet Jeremiah. He was a prophet of God who wrote the Bible passage that we will read today.



Read the Word

Read Jeremiah 23:23–32

²⁵I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' ²⁶How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart, ²⁷who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal? ²⁸Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD. ²⁹Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? ³⁰Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, declares the LORD, who steal my words from one another. ³¹Behold, I am against the prophets, declares the LORD, who use their tongues and declare, 'declares the LORD.' ³²Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, declares the LORD, and who tell them and lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness, when I did not send them or charge them. So they do not profit this people at all, declares the LORD."

JEREMIAH 23:25–32

Have you ever been cheated out of something because you were lied to? This is where we find the people of Israel in Jeremiah 23. The prophets at that time were lying to the people and turning their hard hearts away from God. But God desired to correct the worship of Israel and restore his relationship with them. He chose Jeremiah to give warning and instruction to his people, giving them a chance to repent and change their ways. God used his Word like a hammer to pound on and smash the hardness in their hearts.

Gather

Parents to Kids

4-6 years old

- ▶ When was the last time you lied? Why did you lie?

7-12 years old

- ▶ Think carefully. Is there anything in your heart that seems hard and unbreakable right now? Perhaps it is something you are holding onto tightly and refusing to let go? What is it?
- ▶ What have you been feeding your spirit lately? Is it more of the Word of God or do you feed off the things you see on the internet? Why?

Kids to Parents

- ▶ How do you let go of the hard things in your heart?
- ▶ Can God really break the hardness in our hearts?

There are many things going on around us. The internet is on 24/7, and when there are things we cannot understand, we try to find answers to our questions on the internet. By itself, this is not harmful, but the danger comes when we constantly fill our minds and hearts with the things of this world. You see, the things of this world are like the false prophets during Jeremiah's time. But the more we feed off these "false prophets," the more our hearts become hard toward God. But God wants to break that in order that our hearts may be turned back to him. God wants our hearts to be filled with things of him because only through him can we be truly satisfied.

If you think or feel that you have veered off from following God and have started to follow the "false prophets," perhaps God is calling your attention now. Go back to spending time in his Word and allow it to be the "hammer" that will smash your hard heart and turn it soft for Jesus!

Pray

Dear God, please give me a hunger for your Word. Help me to know you more by it. Increase my faith and understanding in your Word. Show me any area of hardness in my heart and change it by your Word and the Holy Spirit. Help me to grow in your love and truth. In Jesus' name, amen.

Discover

There are many types of hammers that serve different purposes.

Common ones would be:

1. A ball and peen hammer for shaping metals
2. A roofing hammer for putting on a roof
3. A rubber mallet for assembling wood parts like your cabinets and shelves
4. A welder's hammer for welding

When we look back at the verse we talked about, we can imagine that the hammer could be like a sledgehammer which is used to break rocks and do demolition work—something like the one used in the home-themed TV shows doing house renovations!





The Word Is a Sword



Connect

Talk about this as a family:

Suppose you have a house. There are different rooms in your house, such as your bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, dining room, living room, study, and office. Perhaps you have other rooms in your home, which you may add here.

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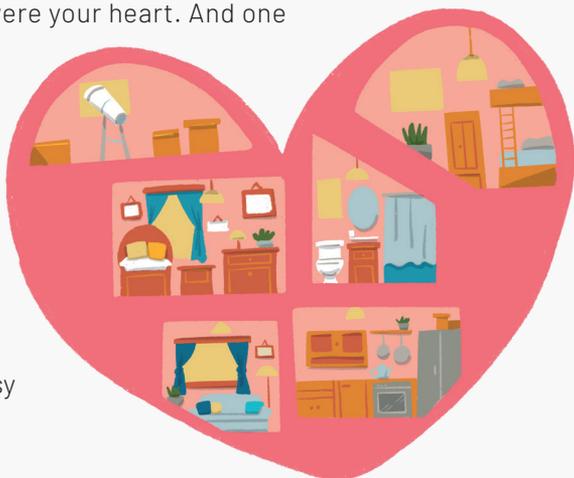
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Now, when a guest comes to your home, which rooms will he or she be allowed to go to? Why?

Which rooms would you prefer that the guest will not enter? Why?

Usually, when a guest comes to our home, we decide where he or she can go. To the living room, yes. To the dining room, yes. To the kitchen, maybe. To the study or office, maybe. To the bathroom, yes. To the bedroom, most likely, **no!** Because it is our private sanctuary and where we keep our most private things. And sometimes, it is messy. That's why we don't want our guests to go there.

Now, imagine if this house were your heart. And one day, Jesus comes knocking. He wants to go to your bedroom, where you keep your most private things, like your thoughts, your fears, and everything else. The thing is, Jesus already knows about all our private things. Will you allow him in and let him see all your messy and private stuff?



Read the Word

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

HEBREWS 4:12 (NIV)

If you have seen a war movie where people fight with swords, you have an idea of how dangerous a sword is. A sword is a weapon with a blade that is used to cut the enemy. Like a sword, the Bible can cut through our hearts. It can pierce through our thoughts, our emotions, our fears, our messy and private things, and everything else hidden in there. This is because, as we have learned earlier, nothing can be hidden from God. He knows everything within us.

You see, when God changes us, he does not just change us on the outside. He goes to our hearts, and he lovingly uses his Word to show us how we are straying away from him. Even though he sees all our sin and the things we try to hide from him, he gives us his mercy and grace. He takes away the sin in our lives and transforms us into who he created us to be.

Gather

Parents to Kids

4-6 years old

- ▶ What lessons have you learned from the Bible?

7-12 years old

- ▶ Have you ever read something in the Bible and felt that it reached your heart? What lesson did you learn from it?

Kids to Parents

- ▶ As you read the Bible, how has it transformed or changed you?
- ▶ What are some things you had to give up?

As we read the Bible, God will slowly use it to work in our hearts. The lessons we learn are proof. Sometimes, it will be a small cut. But other times, we may feel it painfully slicing through our hearts. Whether God's surgery to repair us requires a minor cut or a deep one, God's goal is to transform us for the better from the inside. Will you let him do his work in you?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for being patient with me and for showing me the areas in my life that need to change. Thank you for your mercy and grace to forgive me and help me to obey you. I pray that as I read your Word, you will help me grow and live a life that honors you. In Jesus' name, amen!

Discover

Do you know that there is another way the Bible can be used as a sword?

In Ephesians 6:17, it says, *Put on salvation as your helmet, and **take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.***

The Word of God can be used as a sword when we have to fight the enemy. When we declare, believe, and act on the Word of God, it stops the enemy in his tracks and forces him to be at a standstill. Our enemy cannot truly harm us. But in order to fight with God's Word, we have to know it.

Are you ready to wield this weapon? Start training and using this weapon by memorizing God's Word today!



The Word Is Our Foundation



Connect

Gather the following items:

- a rock that has a flat surface (or a hollow block or any heavy item)
- some sand (or loose soil or any substance that will separate when wet)
- any solid item that will represent a house or a building
- a big pitcher of water
- two trays

Today, we are going to learn about foundations! A foundation is found at the base of a house or a building. It is the lowest point that should be strong enough to be able to support the weight of the entire building. Different kinds of buildings require different kinds of foundations. A two-story building will need a smaller foundation, while a thirty-story building will need a much stronger and more stable foundation.

Let's see what happens when you build on a foundation that is not strong enough for your building. Put the rock on one tray and the sand on the other. Now, place the object that represents the house on top of the rock and pour water from the pitcher. Water represents strong rains, storms, and floods. The house will stand because the rock is solid. Now, place the house on top of the sand and similarly, pour water on the sand. The sand will crumble and not be able to support the house. This is because the sand is not strong enough to support a house and it is not a good foundation for a house.

Can you imagine a thirty-story building that has sand as its foundation? What do you think would happen? (Let the children give their answers.)

Just as a house or a building needs a good solid foundation, our lives must have strong foundations, too.

Throughout the week, we have been studying how God's Word can bring life to us and how it can change and renew us. The key is to build our lives on the truth of God's Word and do what it teaches. Let's read what Jesus taught the people in Matthew 7:24-27.

Read the Word

²⁴“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

²⁵And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

MATTHEW 7:24-27



We have been reading and studying about what the Word of God can do for us. As we end this week, we have to decide if we will cooperate with God's work in our lives. Jesus is the living Word of God whose life and words are recorded in the Bible, God's written Word. He is the truth. When he rose from the dead, he overcame everything, even death. And if we build our lives with him as our foundation, we can withstand different trials and challenges that come our way. Just like the above verses say, we will neither fall nor be washed away because our foundation is Jesus, the Word of God, himself.

Gather

Parents to Kids

4-6 years old

- ▶ Do you want to build your life on Jesus? How do you think you can do that?

7-12 years old

- ▶ Do you want to make Jesus the foundation of your life? What do you need to do to move in this direction?

Kids to Parents

- ▶ Before you met Jesus, what was the foundation of your life?
- ▶ What is the foundation of your life right now?

We can build our lives on Jesus by knowing him, especially through the Bible. By doing so, we grow in our relationship with him. We also pray so we can draw close to him. These empower us so that we can obey him as a natural response to knowing him more. We can obey him because he is the foundation of our faith.

Pray

Dear God, thank you for your love and faithfulness to us. Thank you for giving us Jesus, your living Word and for letting him be our Rock. Thank you for taking us away from sin and giving us a new life that is in Jesus. Help us to love and obey you always. In Jesus' name, amen.

Discover

Aside from the seven pictures that we learned this week about how the Bible can help us grow towards God, here are a few more that the Bible uses to describe itself:

- **Milk**

2. . . as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1 PETER 2:2-3 (NKJV)

- **Rain and snow**

¹⁰For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, ¹¹So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

ISAIAH 55:10-11 (NKJV)

- **Gold and honey**

More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

PSALM 19:10 (NKJV)

The Bible is indeed alive! God inspired and supernaturally guided men to write his very words. Every word in it comes from him. When you read it, it is truly God speaking to **you**! How amazing is that?



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