

JOURNEY™

DISCIPLES

PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 1.1: SIN

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 3:9-31

SUMMARY:

We hit the ground running in this first week of Journey: Disciples talking about sin. In Romans 3, Paul really wants us—all of us—to understand how hopeless our situation is, how completely trapped we are by our own sinfulness. It's not just the bad things we sometimes do. Sin is embedded into our hearts from the moment we're born.

But that's not the end of the story, is it? God made a way for human beings to be made righteous—*through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe (v. 22)*. God offers to take Jesus' death as the payment for our sins and to give us credit for the sinless, righteous life Jesus lived.

CORE VERSES

As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

Romans 3:10-12

CORE CONCEPTS

Mankind is broken due to the effects of sin.

SIN:

Our desire to be God, to replace Him

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What is so destructive about sin?
- When did you realize that you were a sinner?
- Do you feel like sin is weighing you down? Have you felt the relief of Jesus' forgiveness?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 1.2: HOLINESS

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 9:18-28

SUMMARY:

In this week's lesson, students learned about holiness. This is a big idea in the faith and life of a disciple of Christ. Becoming more and more like Christ is becoming more and more holy, more and more set apart for God's purposes only. But how can we do that when we learned last week about our sin nature? Jesus! Jesus paid it all! You don't have to be separated from God by your

sin anymore. You can be holy once again, not because of any actions or works on your part, but because of the perfect, sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross. Remind your child that Christ has paid the debt of his or her sin so he or she is free to become more and more holy, like Christ, and live accordingly.

CORE VERSES

But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 1:15-16

CORE CONCEPTS

Mankind was created to be holy.

HOLINESS:

To be set apart for God's purposes and to begin to live accordingly

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How do you know that you've been restored to a right relationship with God?
- Have you placed your faith and trust in Christ?
- What does being holy mean to you in your life?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 1.3: SANCTIFICATION

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 2:1-16

SUMMARY:

This week your student learned about sanctification. Sanctification refers to the continuing work of God with humans to restore us to our originally intended state. As we continue this process of sanctification, our lives begin to look more and more like Jesus. In essence, in Philippians Paul is using Jesus as the example to follow. He is saying, "Here's the model to live up to ... go and live

accordingly." This transformation of becoming more like Jesus requires trust and obedience. Only through trust and obedience can we ever hope to live up to Jesus' example and experience the freedom and joy found in Him. Encourage your student to lean into this process of sanctification even when it feels painful and hard.

CORE VERSES

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12-13

CORE CONCEPTS

The transformation to become like Jesus Christ is a process.

METAMORPHOSIS:

A change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Has following Jesus and obeying Him ever felt hard or difficult for you? How?
- Has your level of trust and obedience increased or decreased in the past six months? Explain.
- Where do you find encouragement to continue in your process of sanctification? Who encourages you to trust and obey?
- Where are you in the process of becoming more like Jesus?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 1.4: IDENTITY IN CHRIST

SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21

SUMMARY:

In this week's passage, Paul is responding to some critics who were questioning his motives for living for and speaking about Christ. He admitted that he wasn't normal in the human sense; he had become a *new creation*. Everything he said and did was motivated by his love for Christ. He had a brand-new identity in Christ. Christ

became the reason for everything that Paul did. That's what it means to be a disciple. This week, remind your student that disciples become more and more like their masters. Followers of Jesus stop being normal and continue to take on the identity of their Savior.

CORE VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

CORE CONCEPTS

Our true identity is found in a relationship with Jesus.

IDENTITY:

How someone defines him- or herself or is defined by others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How would you describe yourself to someone you're meeting for the first time?
- How does Christ and the Bible influence how you make decisions?
- Who do you know that best demonstrates their identity in Christ? Why did you choose that person?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 2.1: FAITH

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 11

SUMMARY:

In this week's lesson, students are asked a serious question; what does God want from us? We learn from Hebrews 11 that God wants us to trust Him and live by faith. Faith is believing and living according to what we know is true even though we can't see or prove it. Hebrews 11 includes a long list of the Hebrew heroes who

lived by faith and by doing so pleased God and received His blessings. We cannot follow Jesus without trusting God. But if we're willing to be convinced of what we cannot see and live like it is true, we can please our Father.

CORE VERSE

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.

Hebrews 11:6

CORE CONCEPTS

Without faith, it's impossible to please God.

TRUST:

Firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How confident are you that God is trustworthy? Why?
- Is there an area of your life where it is difficult to trust God?
- Of the Christians you know, whose faith is most impressive to you?
- What would the next five years of your life look like if you completely trusted God?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 2.2: WORSHIP

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 145

SUMMARY:

Psalm 145 presents a perfect picture of what it means to worship God. Worshiping God and bringing Him glory is at the very heart of what it means to be a disciple. In studying this passage, we begin to understand several big ideas about what worship looks like. Worship and praise is our heartfelt response to His goodness and love. It can

be wildly creative and expressive and, as we see with David in this Psalm, a natural part of every conversation and everyday language. Our expression of worship should be as unique as God made us. Praising God was a defining characteristic of David and should be a distinctive factor for anyone who follows Christ.

CORE VERSES

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made.

Psalm 145:8-9

CORE CONCEPTS

Worship is our heartfelt response to the goodness and love of God.

HONOR:

High respect; esteem

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What does a worshipful experience look like to you?
- How do you use your unique skills and talents to bring glory to God?
- Which form of worship do you love the most? Why?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 2.3: PRAYER

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 11:1-13

SUMMARY:

In this week's passage, Jesus is teaching His disciples how to pray and one of the first words out of His mouth is Father. There can be a lot of ways students interpret that concept, but if God is our heavenly Father, students need to know that they can talk to Him with the same closeness of a loving father with his children. God longs to hear from His children and looks out for their best

interests. He may not always give us exactly what we are asking (a good father has to say "no" sometimes), but He will always give us exactly what we need. This week, encourage your student to make prayer a priority. Encourage him or her to ask for what they need and even want and encourage him or her to build a close, loving relationship with his or her heavenly Father.

CORE VERSES

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Matthew 6:9-13

CORE CONCEPTS

Prayer is a conversation based on a loving relationship with our heavenly Father!

CONVERSATION:

An exchange between two people who have a desire to express their views and know they have been heard

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What are you praying for these days?
- How is prayer a part of your life and daily routine?
- How can I pray for you?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 2.4: DISCIPLE

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 10

SUMMARY:

This week's lesson is the title for the whole book. It pretty much sums up in a nutshell the whole year of lessons, what it means to be a disciple. Matthew 10 describes the life of a disciple very practically. A disciple is always becoming more like Christ. A true disciple is literally following Christ's example and living more and more like Him every day. Christ leads and the disciple follows.

Ultimately, to be a disciple is to follow the ways of Jesus so closely that we act, think, and talk like Him all the time. This week encourage your student to live a life so closely imitating Jesus that others can't help but see Jesus in them.

CORE VERSES

And whoever does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 10:38-39

CORE CONCEPTS

God wants us to surrender our will and our ways that we may become like His Son, Jesus Christ.

APPRENTICE:

A person legally bound through indenture to a master craftsman in order to learn a trade

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What is your level of commitment to following Christ?
- What have you changed in your life to become more like Christ?
- What do you still need to change in your life to become more like Christ?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 3.1: SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 1

SUMMARY:

In this week's lesson, students are challenged to make a decision and examine the consequences of whom they follow. Psalm 1 starts off defining the blessed person by whom they don't follow. A disciple won't listen to or make role models of the wicked people, sinners, and scoffers. Instead, this blessed person uses God's Word as the pattern for her whole life. As faithful disciples of

Jesus, we are called to experience this blessed life according to God's plan as we reflect and respond to His Word. Challenge your student this week to choose the path of the blessed person and study God's Word diligently.

CORE VERSE

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Joshua 1:8

CORE CONCEPTS

A disciple reflects and responds to God's Word on a regular basis in order to live as God intends.

SCRIPTURE:

The definitive collection of 66 divinely inspired books that make up the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What is your attitude toward the Bible?
- How has reading the Bible changed you?
- Do you have a regular time to read and reflect on the Bible?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 3.2: REST & RENEWAL

SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 20:8-11

SUMMARY:

This week's passage is about rest and renewal, keeping the Sabbath and making it holy. Students are studying what that means for them now that we are no longer under the Old Testament Law. Human beings need rest. We need renewal. God made us that way. He doesn't intend for us to work endlessly until we collapse from exhaustion. God designed His Sabbath command for

Israel's good and modeled it for us. A disciple of Jesus will benefit from following God's pattern of work and rest. Remind your student this week to take time away from his or her busy schedule for rest and renewal, just as Jesus did.

CORE VERSE

*So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy,
because on it God rested from all His work that He
had done in creation.*

Genesis 2:3

CORE CONCEPTS

God designed an essential pattern for rest and renewal.

SABBATH:

Seventh day, a day of religious observance and abstinence from work, originally commanded by God in the Law to be kept from Friday evening to Saturday evening

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How is your work/rest balance?
- How often do you get anxious or nervous about things?
- When do you plan to rest?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 3.3: ACCOUNTABILITY

SCRIPTURE: GALATIANS 6:1-10

SUMMARY:

Sometimes sin catches us. That's the idea this week's passage is describing. This week we are talking about how to stop the sin cycle once we or someone we care about gets caught up in it. First, we should stop hiding our sins, hoping nobody will find out. Accountability requires real, trusting relationships. Students should always be seeking to build trusting relationships with

mature, gentle (not harshly critical or condemning) Christians who will help them find a way out of sin. God knows that we all need to receive—and sometimes give—compassion and help from each other to live as humble disciples of Jesus.

CORE VERSES

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:1-2

CORE CONCEPTS

God designed us to rely on one another,
not just ourselves.

AUTHENTIC:

Not false or copied; genuine; real

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Who personally challenges you to grow?
- Do you feel comfortable telling a mature Christian about sins you struggle with in your life?
- How do you help your friends if they are caught up in a sin?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 3.4: RHYTHMS

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 11:25-30

SUMMARY:

Here's the really amazing thing in today's passage: Jesus invites everyone listening to Him to come and know God! God is ready and willing to be discovered through faith in His Son. Sometimes Christians think that following Jesus means trying harder and harder, doing more and more. If we're not stressed out, we must not be trying hard enough. But that's a lie!

This week, we are encouraging students to ease up and trust God to work through them instead of trying so hard to prove themselves. Jesus has already done all the heavy lifting.

CORE VERSES

Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

CORE CONCEPTS

God created us to live our lives according to His design.

RHYTHMS:

Regular patterns of movement or behavior

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Do you ever feel tied down like you are trying to prove yourself to God?
- What is your favorite tradition or rhythm of your faith?
- Are you experiencing the effects of living within God's design?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 4.1: PURPOSE

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 15:1-17

SUMMARY:

In this week's passage, Jesus paints a word picture for His disciples. Using a vine as the imagery, God the Father is the farmer or vinedresser, Jesus is the *true vine*, and we are the fruit. We bring glory to the Father by producing fruit or fulfilling the purpose He has given us. We do this by abiding in Him and loving each other in the way that He has loved us. While we do this, He pro-

vides each of us the loving attention we need to fulfill our unique purpose in life. While Jesus' purpose for all of His disciples was that they bear fruit, He also planned a unique purpose for which they were placed here on earth. Help your student explore or lean into the unique purpose God has for him or her.

CORE VERSE

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you.

John 15:16

CORE CONCEPTS

God has a unique purpose for each one of our lives.

PURPOSE:

The reason for which a person or thing exists or was created

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How is your relationship with God impacting your sense of purpose?
- How can I help you as you seek to understand God's purpose for your life?
- How could your unique gifting, talents, and personality be used to show others God's love?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 4.2: MINISTRY

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 20:20-28

SUMMARY:

In this week's passage, Jesus is talking to His disciples. They definitely hear the part about sitting on thrones with Jesus, but selectively ignore when He talks about the suffering they will endure because of Him. They are hung up on the idea of ruling with Jesus. In Jesus' kingdom, the greatest won't be the ones with the most authority to command others—like in the regular, human world. Instead, the

greatest will be the servants, the slaves of all, the ones who give themselves up to meet the needs and goals of others. God built us to be servants. Those who serve best will be great in His kingdom. Those who serve only themselves won't be very great at all. Encourage your student to use his or her gifts and talents to serve and bless others. That is how to become great in the kingdom of God.

CORE VERSES

And whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 20:27-28

CORE CONCEPTS

God desires for each of His people to be a servant.

SERVICE:

Working to help other people to meet their needs and/or accomplish their objectives

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How are you using the gifts and talents God has given you to serve others?
- Do you feel the weight of responsibility to use the gifts and talents God has given you to serve and bless other people? Why or why not?
- Who has blessed you uniquely by using the gifts or talents God has given them? How did you respond?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 4.3: \$\$ STUFF

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:19-24

SUMMARY:

On the surface, this week's passage seems to be about money, but it's really about trusting God. It's about trusting Him to provide everything we need now and forever. We are talking this week about using the resources God blesses us with to bless others. In doing so, we lay up treasure or rewards in heaven. But we have to choose to do that. We will spend our lives serving money

(and the things money can give us) or we will spend our lives serving God. Every day we wake up we will have to choose to serve one or the other.

CORE VERSES

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:20-21

CORE CONCEPTS

God does not value what the world values.

TREASURE:

Something of great value

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How confident are you that God will provide everything you need now and forever?
- How would you feel if God gives you everything you need, but not everything you want?
- Would you still be willing to give up your possessions for His sake if it meant living without something you desire?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 4.4: STEWARDSHIP

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 25:14-30

SUMMARY:

In the last few weeks, we've talked about purpose, ministry, and money. This week, we are talking about how all of those come together and, when stewarded well, can have an incredible payout. Using the gifts, talents, personality, opportunities, and resources together to serve others will result in God being glorified and more people coming to know Him. God wants us to invest our

lives in that kind of payout. Encourage your student to take responsibility for all that God has given him or her and to invest it for His kingdom.

CORE VERSE

For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Matthew 25:29

CORE CONCEPTS

God desires for us to take responsibility for all that He has given to us.

STEWARD:

One who manages the property or well-being of another

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How could I help you develop your gift or talents?
- Based on your gifts, talents, resources, and trust in God, what would be your dream ministry?
- If Jesus came back today, how do you think He would respond to the way you've used your gifts and talents?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 5.1: FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: RUTH 1-2

SUMMARY:

This lesson begins our unit on love. This week, students are learning about the *storge* kind of love. Storge is the familial kind of love; love that bonds mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers together. We see this kind of love bond Ruth to Naomi in this week's lesson and students are challenged to love like Ruth loved. Our Father God desires for us to show love, commitment,

and respect to the people in our families. While our families may not be perfect, God designed us all to be a part of a family circle.

CORE VERSE

*Love one another with brotherly affection.
Outdo one another in showing honor.*

Romans 12:10

CORE CONCEPTS

God designed you to be part of a family circle.

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STORGE:

Family love, the bond among mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How do we as a family make you feel most loved and encouraged?
- In what areas would you like to see our family show love, commitment, and respect to one another?
- How can you serve your family better this week?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 5.2: FRIENDS

SCRIPTURE: 1 SAMUEL 18:1-5, 1 SAMUEL 19: 1-7

SUMMARY:

This week students are talking about *phileo* love, or friendship love. The passages from 1 Samuel give a wonderful example of *phileo* love between Jonathan and David. The friendship between Jonathan and David was deep and true. They demonstrated sacrificial love for one another over a lifetime. Friendships like Jonathan and David's don't come along every day. Friendships like

this help shape who we become. We must choose our friends wisely, since the people that we spend time with will ultimately alter the course of our lives in significant and powerful ways. Talk to your student this week about the importance of being and having good friends.

CORE VERSE

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

1 Peter 3:8

CORE CONCEPTS

God designed our friendships to help shape us.

PHILEO:

Friendship love, the bond between non-family close friends

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What do you admire most about your best friend?
- What is the biggest challenge you and your best friend have faced? How did you overcome that challenge?
- How could God use you in a positive way in the life of one or more of your friends?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 5.3: MARRIAGE

SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 2:15-25

SUMMARY:

This week we are talking about *eros*; the intimate relationship intended by God to be expressed between a man and a woman in marriage.

Because we live in a fallen and broken world, the world (and the Devil) has tried to convince everyone that our immediate desires should overrule God's intended

design for marriage. But when we break the sexual boundary of marriage designed for our benefit and safety, we will only bring painful consequences to our relationships, to our bodies, and to our own souls. Only when we choose to live according to God's Word can we experience all of the joy and freedom a godly marriage can bring.

CORE VERSE

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

CORE CONCEPTS

God designed marriage as a sacred relationship of love and intimacy.

EROS:

Sexual love, intended by God to be expressed between a man and woman in marriage

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What are your biggest questions about marriage?
- How are your current choices about your relationships potentially helping or hurting your future spouse?
- If you decide to get married, what kind of marriage do you want to have?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 5.4: LOVE

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 13

SUMMARY:

God's love is infinitely greater than anything we encounter in this world. In other words, nothing means anything without love and God's love is what adds value to anything. God's love is infinite and unstoppable. God is love. Agape love is grounded in His nature, not our actions. It is not an idea or some utopia. It is literal and practical. God so loved us that He sent His Son down

to earth. Love Himself came down to earth to show us what love is really capable of. This love is overwhelming and once we have placed our faith and trust in Him, we are inseparable from it. This week's passage and lesson is all about God's agape love and how it is infinitely greater than anything else.

CORE VERSES

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

CORE CONCEPTS

God's love is infinitely greater than anything we encounter in this world.

AGAPE:

The selfless, sacrificial, unconditional love of Christ

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Do you experience or feel God's love? Describe how that feels.
- Who do you know that needs to experience God's love like it is described in 1 Corinthians?
- How can you show God's love to the people He has placed in your life?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 6.1: OBEDIENCE

SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 2:1-6

SUMMARY:

This week's lesson is about God's unending grace and His desire for us to be obedient in response. We can easily become desensitized to the gravity of sin. We get used to the idea that God will simply forgive us when we mess up. He forgives not because the sin didn't matter, but because His grace is even bigger than our sin. How can we possibly respond to that constant and continuing gift

of grace? One word: Obey. We are going to make mistakes. Jesus' own disciples made lots of them. But Jesus continued to forgive them and set them back on the path of obedience to God's Word. He will do the same for us as we seek to follow Him with our whole hearts.

CORE VERSE

*And by this we know that we have come to know Him,
if we keep His commandments.*

1 John 2:3

CORE CONCEPTS

God desires for us to be obedient.

OBEDIENCE:

Compliance with an order, request, or law
or submission to another's authority

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Is it easy or difficult to trust God and do what He wants you to do? Why?
- How do you know what God is specifically asking you to do?
- What teachings of Jesus do you need to commit to obey this week?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 6.2: PAIN

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 12:3-11

SUMMARY:

This week's study looks at how God uses painful experiences in our lives not to punish us, but to instruct us to be more like Jesus. We will all experience pain at some point in our lives. As Christians, we must learn to look through these painful experiences to see how our heavenly Father is using them to train and shape us to become the people He desires us to be. While we won't usually enjoy

these moments of discipline, we must seek to persevere, learn, and grow from our pain so that we may become more holy and complete like our Savior.

CORE VERSE

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

2 Corinthians 4:17

CORE CONCEPTS

Life involves painful experiences that instruct us.

SHAPE:

To make something fit the form of something else

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What is the most painful thing you have experienced or are experiencing at the moment?
- What did you or are you learning as result of facing something painful?
- How does it feel to know that God is treating you like His own son or daughter?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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LESSON 6.3: PERSECUTION

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 15:18-25

SUMMARY:

In this week's passage, Jesus Himself told us that the world would hate Him and anyone who followed Him would be mocked and mistreated or worse. It's true that not every Christian in the world is being persecuted all of the time. In the West, especially, it's hard to make the case that all Jesus-followers are hated and mistreated. But Christians have been persecuted—and continue to be

persecuted—in many different places around the world. The idea that following Jesus might lead to suffering shouldn't surprise or scare us—any more than it should surprise us how much strength, hope, peace, and comfort He will give to us at every step along the way.

CORE VERSES

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:11-12

CORE CONCEPTS

The followers of Jesus were told to expect persecution.

PERSECUTION:

Cruel or hostile treatment due to your faith in Christ

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How do you expect to be treated by the world as a follower of Jesus?
- How is your faith affected when you hear about or experience Christians being mocked or mistreated?
- Are you ready to face persecution? How will you encourage those who already face persecution?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 6.4: SUFFERING

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 8:18-25

SUMMARY:

Everybody suffers. All of us—it's just part of what it means to be alive on a fallen, sin-drenched planet. Christians don't get some sort of get-out-of-suffering-free card. Paul describes in this week's passage the suffering of being disconnected. The bottom line is this: We're not home yet. When we get home, all of the suffering will end. Until then, we will keep waiting. There is hope in

our suffering. Disciples of Jesus should not be surprised when suffering comes, but we shouldn't waste it either. We can use those hard moments as another opportunity to move closer to God and see how He will demonstrate His love for us today.

CORE VERSE

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Romans 8:18

CORE CONCEPTS

Suffering is temporary. Glory is eternal.

GLORY:

The state of being perfected in our bodies, minds, hearts, and purpose; free from pain and full of endless joy; honored, and esteemed for our high position

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Since everyone handles things differently, what is your natural response to suffering?
- What encourages you most when you are suffering?
- How do you think you'll feel when you enter the glorious presence of Jesus in heaven?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 7.1: COMMUNION

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34

SUMMARY:

This week our lesson talks about the significance of the Church regularly gathering together to remember Christ's death. By participating in Communion, we are acknowledging the sacrificial death of Christ for our sins. We are also recognizing that, in Communion, all believers are united by our need for salvation and by our faith in Christ. This shared meal of remembrance is a really

big deal to God. We shouldn't participate in it lightly. Communion should serve as an opportunity to examine ourselves, to admit to God our sins, and to thank God for paying for those sins with the blood of Christ.

CORE VERSES

And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

1 Corinthians 11:24-25

CORE CONCEPTS

The Church regularly gathers to remember Christ's death.

COMMUNION:

The act of eating and drinking together with other Christians as a way of remembering Jesus' death on the cross

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What has been your experience with Communion?
- What is the significance of Communion to you?
- What runs through your mind and heart when you recognize that you are forgiven?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 7.2: BAPTISM

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 6:1-14

SUMMARY:

This week students are talking about the significance and limitations of baptism. Baptism in water is a powerful symbol of what happens in the life of a person who trusts in Christ for his or her salvation. The Bible teaches that the physical act of being baptized isn't the thing that saves us; anyone could be dunked under water without actually believing in Jesus. We are saved by God's grace

through faith in Christ. In baptism, we are reminded that we didn't just die with Christ. We were also raised with Him. We were given a new life and the promise of our own future resurrection—shown by our being lifted out of the water in baptism.

CORE VERSE

We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4

CORE CONCEPTS

Baptism is a public declaration of our faith in Jesus.

DECLARATION:

An official announcement delivered in a public way

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- If your student has been baptized: What did it feel like to declare your faith through baptism?
- If your student has not been baptized: What holds you back from taking this step of faith?
- What is someone declaring when they get baptized?
- Do you live out your faith publicly so others know whom you follow?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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DISCIPLES

PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 7.3: CELEBRATION

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 15:11-32

SUMMARY:

The church gathers regularly to remember who God is and what He has done for us. That should warrant a celebration every day. As Christians, we have far more to rejoice about than to feel burdened or serious about. We celebrate because our Father has forgiven our sins, has included us in His family, and will welcome us home. What more do we need? In this week's passage, we read

about a father who celebrates the homecoming of his lost son. We are intended to celebrate and rejoice like the father in this story forever. God sent His only Son to rescue us from sin. He has chosen to include us in His family. If we don't have a reason to throw a party, who does?

CORE VERSES

And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found."

Luke 15:31-32

CORE CONCEPTS

The Church celebrates the great things of God.

CELEBRATION:

To do something special or enjoyable to mark an important event or occasion

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What things should we celebrate in church?
- What was your favorite celebration at church?
- How do you like to celebrate the good things God has done in your life?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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DISCIPLES

PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 7.4: CHURCH

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 2:37-47

SUMMARY:

This week's passage includes a description of the Church right after it was born. The Holy Spirit arrived and it was loud and drew a large crowd. Peter, now full of the Holy Spirit, preached a sermon showing everyone that Jesus really was the Messiah. About 3,000 people became Christians that day and the Church was born. They were a group of sinners, saved by grace, full of joy, who loved

and cared for each other. That first group of Christians quickly gained a reputation as the Church of Jesus—and it was a great reputation. As the Church today, we still can—and should—be God's representatives for others to see how His kingdom brings joy, generosity, and purpose into the lives of those who trust in Him.

CORE VERSE

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9

CORE CONCEPTS

The Church serves as the representative of God's kingdom on earth.

ECCLESIA:

A congregation or church

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How has church impacted your life and faith?
- How do your friends feel about church?
- How are you doing as a representative of God and the Church? Are we living as visible and consistent ambassadors of Christ?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 8.1: JERUSALEM

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 22:34-40

SUMMARY:

We begin our unit on missions this week by talking about taking the good news of Jesus to our neighborhood, including our friends, family, and acquaintances. We will spend these last four weeks in the book talking about sharing the gospel with those who have not yet believed. Being a disciple of Christ is not all about us. Becoming more like Christ means that we love others more and

will tell them about Him. What is the best way to share the gospel with your neighborhood? Simple: Love them! And the most loving thing we could possibly do for those closest to us is tell them about Christ and our true home with Him.

CORE VERSES

And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:37-39

CORE CONCEPTS

The first step in missions is to love the people in your neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD:

A district, especially one forming a community within a town or city

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- Tell me about a time when you shared your faith with someone at school.
- Why is it important that we tell our neighbors, friends, and family about our faith in Christ?
- How do you plan to share the love of Christ with the people in your neighborhood?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 8.2: JUDEA/SAMARIA

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 4:1-42

SUMMARY:

In the last lesson, we talked about what it means to represent Jesus to our neighbors. This week we're looking at how to be His witnesses to people we don't know yet—including those in our cities or nearby regions. Our passage in John 4 tells the story of Jesus having a discussion with a Samaritan woman. This was a very unlikely conversation. Jesus went out of His way to meet this woman,

breaking all social and religious rules. Jesus didn't care about any of that. He cared about the woman. Following this encounter, Jesus told His disciples that the fields of those who needed be saved were ready for harvest. The harvest is still out there. But we may have to get out of our normal routine and take the road less traveled to meet those who need to hear about God's love.

CORE VERSES

So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him."

Acts 10:34-35

CORE CONCEPTS

Spreading the gospel expands to your city and beyond.

CITY:

An inhabited place of significant size, population, and/or importance

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- When you people watch, what do you think about the strangers passing by?
- What are the different groups of people in our area? Is Christ being shared with all of them?
- How do you plan to share God's love with those outside your normal circle?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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DISCIPLES

PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 8.3: UTTERMOST PARTS

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 8:26-40

SUMMARY:

This week we are looking at an example of how one of Jesus' followers, Philip, took the truth of Jesus to the *end of the earth* (and what that means for us). We learn two important things from this story about being a witness in other cultures. The first thing is that we must be willing to be available even when we don't know exactly what God has planned. The next thing we see about witnessing

to people of other cultures is that we have to know God's Word well enough to answer questions about it. It's about showing up, knowing God's Word, loving those God loves, listening to their questions, and helping them to understand how to believe. God does the rest.

CORE VERSE

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:8

CORE CONCEPTS

God desires for His Church to take the gospel to the world.

ETHNOS:

People of the same race or nationality who share a distinctive culture

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- What is the genealogy of your faith? How far back can you trace how faith was passed down to you?
- What area of the world are you most interested in?
- How do you plan to share God's love with the world?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?

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DISCIPLES

PARENT GUIDE

LESSON 8.4: MISSIONS

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 28:16-20

SUMMARY:

We've spent a lot of time studying what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Those who follow Him are not content to simply be saved from hell and then sit out the rest of their lives on earth serving only themselves. Disciples walk a much more challenging path. Disciples keep going, keep trusting Him, keep being available to be used by Him. In our Scripture passage this week, we see

that Jesus' followers are commanded to go out into the world and make new disciples. Let's be the disciples of Jesus He calls us to be—and let's go make some more of us with His power, His Words, and His authority.

CORE VERSES

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

CORE CONCEPTS

Followers of Jesus make disciples.

DISCIPLE:

A follower or student of a teacher, leader, or philosopher

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Talk to me about the most interesting thing you learned from this week's lesson.
- How have you changed and grown in your faith this year?
- How committed and confident are you in your faith?
- What is your next step as a disciple of Jesus?
- Describe your next steps based on what you've learned. How can I help?