

April 2024

Faith Family Talks

By Rachel Sherron,

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Week of April 7

Listen.

Open your Bible and read John 21:4-14 together as a family.

This story happens after Jesus dies and comes back to life. It is one of the times when Jesus appears to the disciples after His resurrection. Jesus has “breakfast on the beach” with some disciples. In my mind, I can see the boat on the water, the disciples working hard to catch fish. It is early in the morning, so the sun is starting to come up and they can see a little. I can see Jesus standing on the shore, building a fire with some sticks.

This story reminds me of the stories about when Jesus first called the disciples (Luke 5:1-11). They were out fishing, just like they are here! In that story from Luke and in this story, Jesus tells them how to catch more fish. Both times, they do what Jesus says and they catch so many fish! I think this is why they realize it is Jesus, because they remember when Jesus helped them fish the first time. That time, they left their nets, the boat, even the fish, and followed Jesus.

Maybe Jesus shows up to see the disciples, because He wants to remind them of that first story. Jesus wants them to follow Him. He wants them to keep being His disciples, doing all of the things he taught them to do. Jesus loved the disciples and wanted them to love others. Jesus wants you to know that He loves you. Sometimes, we get busy, and we forget that no matter what happens, Jesus loves us and wants us to follow Him.

Talk.

I wonder what part of this story is your favorite?

If you were going to have breakfast with Jesus, I wonder what food you would bring?

Why do you think Jesus wanted to have breakfast with the disciples?

What do you think it means to follow Jesus?

Dear Jesus, we love you so much! Thank you for loving me. Keep teaching me how I can follow you. Sometimes this is easy to do. Sometimes I need you to remind me. Amen.

Go.

Option 1: Plan a time to have a family meal together. Put away electronic devices. Go around the table and talk about what was good that day, and what was not so good. Talk about what it

would be like to eat a meal with Jesus. What would you eat? Bring? Wear? Would Jesus care? What would you want to talk about with Jesus?

Option 2: Play a game of "Follow the Leader." Choose one person to be the leader. Everyone else must copy the leader's movements, doing what the leader does, going where the leader goes. Let one person be the leader for a minute, then switch turns. What was it like to be the leader? What was it like to be the follower?

Week of April 14

Listen.

Open your Bible and read Acts 1:12-14 together as a family.

After Jesus goes back to heaven, the disciples and some of Jesus' followers go back to Jerusalem. They get together and they pray. They have been through a lot together! They were friends to Jesus. They learned from Jesus. They saw Jesus heal people who were sick. They heard Jesus forgive people's sins. They saw and heard what happened to Jesus when He was put on the cross and when He came back to life.

After everything they had been through together, they stayed together. Their response is to pray. We do not know what they prayed about here. We do know that their prayers brought them closer together. It seems that they thought prayer was a good thing to do. Prayer was important to them. I bet they trusted that God was listening to them when they prayed.

We can trust that God knows our prayers. God can be trusted with whatever makes us feel joy, anger, hurt, and sad. God receives it all. We can pray to God at any time and in lots of ways! Our prayers to God can be as creative and as unique as we are.

Talk.

When is it easy for you to pray? When is it hard to pray?

What are some things you might pray about?

What are your favorite ways to pray? Do you like to pray with your voice? Or in your mind? Do you like to draw or color your prayers? Or sing your prayers?

Creator, thank you for all of the beautiful things! Some things make us feel sad or mad. I trust that you know how I feel. I trust that you hear me anytime I pray. Amen.

Go.

Option 1: Practice body movement prayers. Gather together. As you pray, move your body to show your thoughts and feelings. Take turns, let each person name their prayers and everyone can pray the same movements together. Some prompts for your prayers might be:

Dear God, thank you for....

I am sorry for...

Today I feel...
I hope that...
Please help me...
I love you because...

Option 2: Go on a prayer walk! Visit your favorite park or walk around your neighborhood, or even downtown area. Notice things that you are thankful for. Can you see God's creativity in nature, in the different colors, shapes, and created things? Notice things that might need God's help and care. If you are walking in an area with lots of buildings and people, pray for the people and the businesses as you walk.

Week of April 21

Listen.

Open your Bible and read Acts 2:37-41 together as a family.

Peter is preaching! He has been a friend of Jesus for a long time. He tells the crowd about who Jesus was: Jesus healed people and showed that He is God's Son.

The people are confused. They are not sure what to do, so they ask Peter. He tells them that their hearts and lives must be different. Maybe they are living in a way that is not the way that Jesus would want them to live. Then, Peter tells them to be baptized. Peter testifies, which means he tells his own story about how he has experienced God in his life. He encourages the people to be different from people who do not know God.

God asks us to follow God. This means that we try to live and think in ways that look more and more like Jesus. Sometimes we might think and act differently from people who do not know God. When we decide to follow God, one way that we can show that we are followers, is to be baptized. Being a follower of God does not mean that we are perfect. It means that we are trying to live like Jesus, for our whole lives.

Talk.

I wonder what the people will do after Peter baptizes them?

Have you been baptized? Or, have you seen a baptism? Share your baptism story, or talk about what you have seen and heard when you saw someone get baptized.

What can you do to show the love of God to someone?

Dear God, I love you so much, sometimes it feels like my heart will burst! Thank you for making me. Thank you for the gifts you have given to me. You have made me special. Thank you for making me, me! Amen.

Go.

Option 1: Draw a picture of a baptism. Maybe it is your baptism or maybe it is one that you have seen. Who is it? What happened when they were baptized? Do you remember the words that the pastor and the person said? Talk about the baptism traditions in your church.

Option 2: Baptize your doll, lego character, or animal toy. Get a bowl and a cup of water. Talk about what happens when someone is baptized. Practice the movements and the words with your toy.

Week of April 28

Listen.

Open your Bible and read Acts 2:42-47 together as a family.

People started hearing about Jesus. They believed in Jesus and became a part of new church communities. The Bible tells us about what they did when they gathered together. Look back at the scripture. Can you identify what they did together? Some of these things may sound familiar to you, because we still do them today!

God gives us the gift of a church family who loves us. There are all kinds of people in churches, with many different talents. We work together to care for each other and care for our communities. We worship together. We pray for each other. We look for the needs of our communities and try to help others. We welcome people to our church family.

Talk.

I wonder what it felt like to sell their things and give the money they made to people in need? What are some of the things that the early church members do together? Do you see any of these things in your church?

What are your favorite things that you do with your church family?

Who do you know that you could invite to church?

Dear God, thank you for my church family. Thank you for my friends, church teachers, and pastors. Help us to work together to share your love. Amen.

Go.

Option 1: Draw a picture of your church family. What people can you think of? What is their role in the church? Can you draw something that shows how they are an important part of the church? Don't forget to draw yourself and your family! You might even show your drawing to your pastor. They may enjoy seeing what you have drawn.

Option 2: Write a thank you note to someone from church who cares about you. Thank them for caring about you. Or, you could write a "get well" or "we love you" card for someone who is sick or homebound. Let them know that you are glad they are a part of your church and that they are loved.

