Celebrating a Christ-Centered Christmas

WEEK 2

25 DAYS OF FAMILY DAILY DEVOTIONS & ACTIVITIES

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December 7

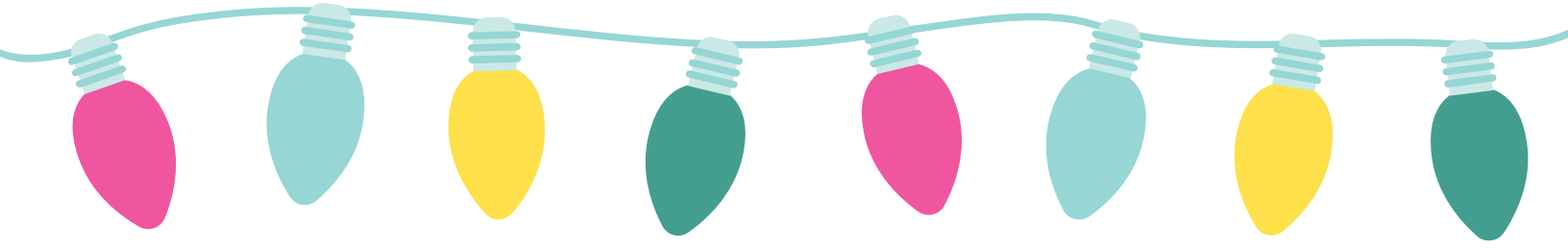
DISCUSS: How does it feel to live in darkness all the time? What are some things that we wouldn't see or appreciate if we lived in darkness? What kind of light is needed in our spiritual lives?

READ: Luke 2:25-32, John 8:12

When Jesus was dedicated in the temple at eight days old, an old man named Simeon, who was waiting for His coming, came face to face with Him. Simeon praised God as he cradled Jesus in his arms and called Him "a light of revelation to the Gentile world". When we follow Jesus, the Light of the World, we will no longer live a sin-filled life. Let's determine to "walk in the light, as He is in the light, for the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7)

DO: Put up some Christmas lights in your home or check out some displays around town.

PRAY: Ask the Lord Jesus, the Light of the World, to continue to reveal to you your sin. Confess it to Him so His light can shine brighter in your life.



December 8

DISCUSS: What are some ways we show love to one another? Do you like to receive or give gifts? Could you love without giving?

READ: John 3:16-18

There is a saying that goes: "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving". Indeed, God's great love for mankind was the motive behind sending Jesus to this earth. It is such a wonderful thought to ponder! God so loved the world that He gave.

GOD - the greatest Giver
SO LOVED - the greatest motive
THE WORLD - the greatest number
THAT HE GAVE - the greatest act
HIS ONE AND ONLY SON - the greatest Gift
THAT WHOEVER - the greatest invitation
BELIEVES - the greatest decision
IN HIM - the greatest person
SHALL NOT PERISH - the greatest deliverance
BUT - the greatest difference
HAVE - the greatest certainty
ETERNAL LIFE - the greatest possession

DO: Prepare a gift basket for a family in need or donate some items to an orphanage or your favourite charity.

PRAY: Thank God for His great love in giving us the ultimate gift of His Son.

December 9

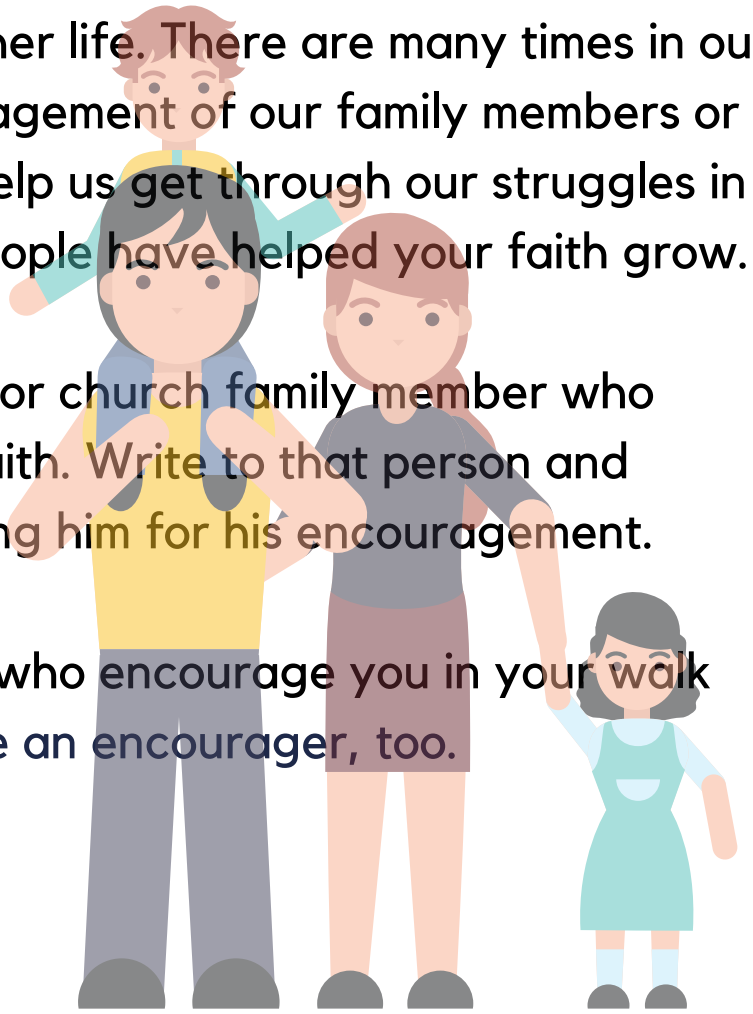
DISCUSS: Ask the mother of the family to share a bit about her pregnancy experiences: How difficult was it to prepare to be a mother? How did you feel after your child was born? Did any relatives around you help during and after the pregnancy?

READ: Luke 1:39-45

Mary went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, when both of them were pregnant. Elizabeth was very happy and called Mary a blessed woman. She said Mary was blessed for her faith in believing what the Lord would accomplish in her life. There are many times in our lives that we need the encouragement of our family members or members of Christ's Body to help us get through our struggles in life. Share about how other people have helped your faith grow.

DO: Think of a family member or church family member who has encouraged you in your faith. Write to that person and send a Christmas card, thanking him for his encouragement.

PRAY: Praise God for people who encourage you in your walk with God. Pray that you will be an encourager, too.

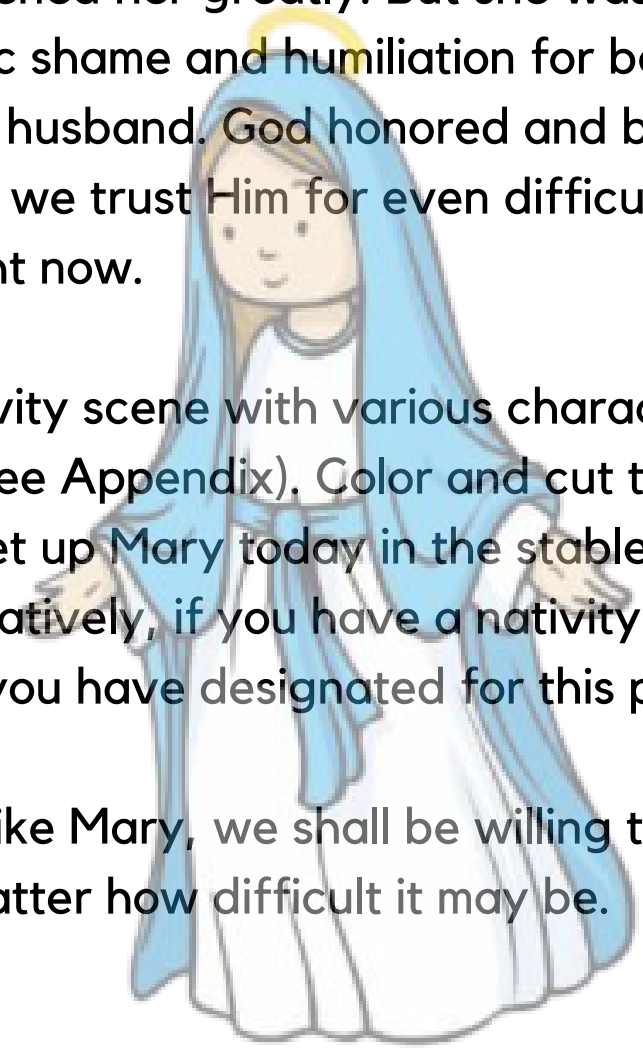


December 10

DISCUSS: Why do you think God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus? What are some things we can learn about her from her praise song? What are some things she praised God for?

READ: Luke 1:46-55

Mary was God's chosen vessel through whom the Christ child would be born. She probably came from a poor, unknown family, yet God had been observing how she lived and how much she loved God. She did not understand what was going to happen to her and this frightened her greatly. But she was willing and ready, even to face public shame and humiliation for being pregnant without a physical husband. God honored and blessed her and He will bless us too as we trust Him for even difficult situations we may be facing right now.



DO: Create a nativity scene with various characters of the Christmas story (See Appendix). Color and cut them out. You can do one per day. Set up Mary today in the stable or tape the figure on the wall. Alternatively, if you have a nativity set, place Mary on the table or shelf you have designated for this purpose.

PRAY: Pray that like Mary, we shall be willing to do whatever the Lord asks us no matter how difficult it may be.

December 11

DISCUSS: What is the meaning of your name? What about your family members? Look up some Bible names and find out their meanings.

READ: Luke 1:35, Matthew 1:21, Isaiah 9:6

The name of Jesus means: "Saviour". It is the same name in the Old Testament as Joshua, meaning "The Lord Saves". In Bible times, children were sometimes named according to their physical characteristics. The name of Jesus was given to Him eight days after His birth when He was dedicated in the temple and circumcised. But before that, the angel Gabriel told Mary and Joseph about His name. He was the most special child ever born and He led the most unique life in the history of the world. Jesus was both God and man.

DO: On a piece of paper, write down your family tree. Go as far back as you can.

PRAY: Thank God for each relative that is a part of your heritage. Thank Jesus that you are a part of God's family through faith in Christ.

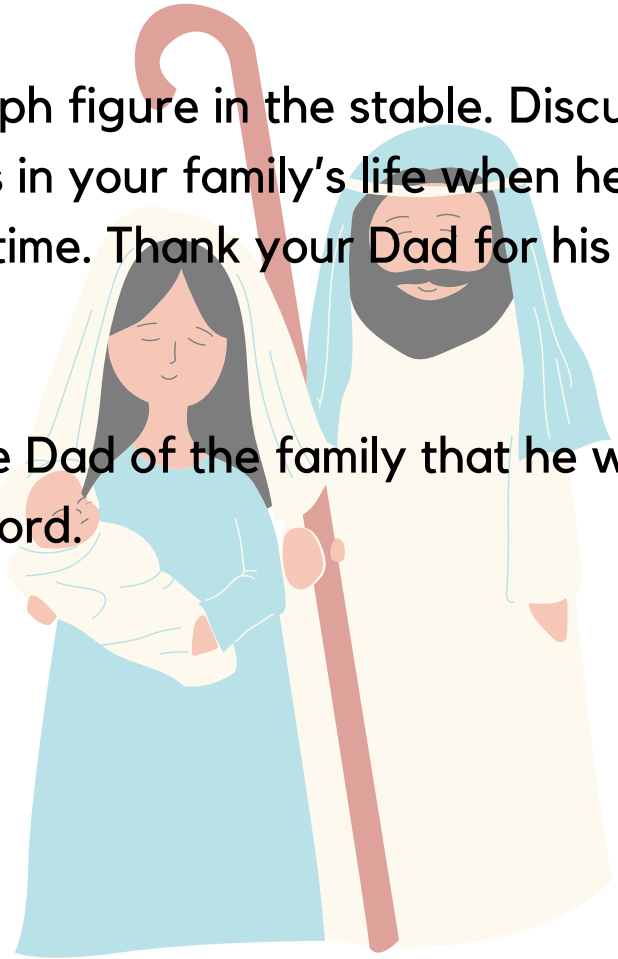
December 12

DISCUSS: Why do people have dreams? Do you recall a memorable dream you've had? Share it with the family.

READ: Matthew 1:18-25

God chose Joseph to be Jesus' earthly father. He was a man who had faith in the promises of God's Word. He wanted to divorce Mary because he found out that she was pregnant, but he planned to do this quietly. But the Lord intervened and sent an angel in his dream to assure him that the baby in Mary was going to be the Messiah. In the end, Joseph chose to trust God and obey Him, even though he could not understand what was happening.

DO: Place the Joseph figure in the stable. Discuss with your Dad some incidents in your family's life when he chose to trust God through a difficult time. Thank your Dad for his faith in God and give him a hug.



PRAY: Pray for the Dad of the family that he will remain steadfast in trusting God's Word.

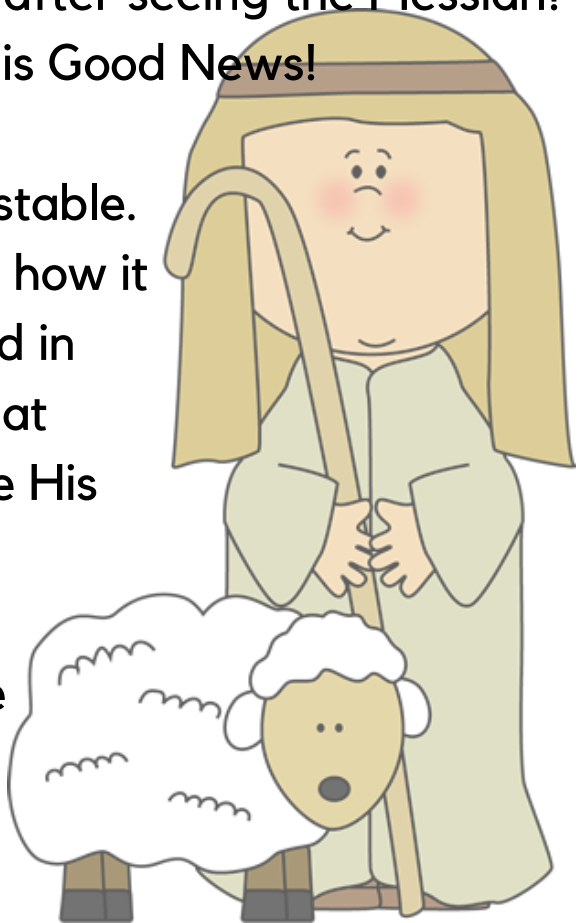
December 13

DISCUSS: Have you ever visited a newborn baby in the hospital? How did you feel when you saw the baby? Who did the baby look like?

READ: Luke 2:8-16

The very first visitors of the baby Jesus were poor lowly shepherds. They were tending their flocks at night when an angel appeared to them and told them the wonderful news of the Savior's birth. God didn't choose rich or important people to visit the baby. He chose these shepherds, perhaps because they were humble and simple enough to accept the story of this miraculous birth. They probably were eagerly awaiting the coming of the Messiah. And what was their response after seeing the Messiah? They went out and told others about this Good News!

DO: Place the shepherd figures at the stable. Eat a candy cane today and talk about how it reminds us of the shepherd's crook used in guarding sheep. It is also a reminder that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and we are His sheep.



PRAY: Pray that we will be humble like the shepherds, willing to hear God's message to us.

Appendix

Figures for the Paper Bag Manger Scene