



RAISING GENERALS

How to Train the Smallest of God's
Children into the Greatest of These

A Six Week Kids and Family
Devotional Study by Tara Wall at
Consider the Fields



PARENT PRINTABLE

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WEEK ONE

MINDING OUR OWN BUSINESS

DAY ONE: Read John 21:15-33

DISCUSSION: Here we have a story about Jesus and Peter. Jesus asks Peter THREE times if he loves Him, and every time, Peter says yes, of course. It seems like it may have hurt his feelings a little bit, because after they are done talking, Peter looks at John, Jesus' closest friend, and asks Jesus, "What about him?" We can kind of understand why Peter would ask this, but Jesus makes it very clear how He feels about Peter's question. He basically tells Peter, "It's none of your business." In our family, we call this "Nunya." It is normal and natural to look around at others who may seem to have it easier or better than we do, but Jesus' command is very clear: "Nunya." We just need to do what WE are called to do and not look around or worry about others.

ACTION: Today I will pay attention to my thoughts and focus on what I should be doing rather than bossing others.

DAY TWO: Read John 21:17-19

DISCUSSION: Jesus tells Peter some VERY important things here: he tells him to "Feed His sheep" and "Follow me." Peter was so busy looking at John and how easy he had it in that moment, he could hardly pay attention to what Jesus was saying. Let's make sure we are not so distracted with what others are doing that we forget to do what God has told us to do.

ACTION: Write down the things that you KNOW that God has called you to do. They may seem simple, like "Go to school," or "Help my Mom," or "Feed the dog." But the truth is, if we are so busy doing what we are SUPPOSED TO DO, we don't have time to be jealous of others. Do your jobs with ALL of your heart today.

DAY THREE: Read John 21:20-21

DISCUSSION: We talked before about how Peter seemed a little hurt and frustrated that Jesus kept asking him the same question, and gave him the same answer. Have you ever felt frustrated when your parents may have asked you to do MORE than your other siblings, or you found yourself working on chores while every one else seemed to be playing? Here we see that God wants each of us to do the jobs that HE has given us and not compare among ourselves.

Peter went on to be an AMAZING disciple of God, bringing MANY into the Kingdom... just like Jesus told him to...

WEEK ONE

MINDING OUR OWN BUSINESS

DAY THREE: Continued

ACTION: Share with your family about a time when you felt like things were unfair or you felt like you had to do MORE than everyone else, and how it made you feel. Encourage each other in ways to do better in those areas of your life. In those times, remember that God is watching, even when Mom or Dad may not be. And God ALWAYS blesses those that do His will. Be proud of yourself for doing what God has called you to do, and remember that you are doing it as unto the Lord!

DAY FOUR: Read Colossians 3:23-24

DISCUSSION: What does it mean to work at something "with all your heart?" How would you act differently if you knew you were working for the Lord, and not for a person? Here we see that actually, that's how God WANTS us to see our lives, as working as if He is right there with us and we are doing it for Him. Would you do your chores half-heartedly if Jesus was there with you? Probably not. If you knew God was signing your paycheck, would you do less work or clock out early? Most likely not. So God is asking us to act that way ALL the time, and THAT is how we receive our reward!

ACTION: Write down 1 or 2 areas in your life or jobs that you know you need to work on a little more. As you go through your day, picture Jesus right there with you as you do those things, and share how it helped you all through the day until bedtime.

DAY FIVE: Read Acts 5:15-16

DISCUSSION: We mentioned earlier in the week how Peter went on to do many amazing things for the Lord once he started minding his own business and just did the work that Jesus tells him to. Peter became so full of the presence of God that his very shadow would heal people as he passed by them! Miracles like these can ONLY happen when we truly surrender our lives to God and do the things He is telling us to do. All of those miracles brought so many people in to the kingdom of God. That is how God wants to use YOU, too!

ACTION: Write a dream that God has put on your heart, and go back and read the jobs you wrote about earlier in the week. Put your dream next to your jobs, and remind yourself that you can only get to your dreams by doing what God has put in front of you to do. That is how He opens doors for you: by your obedience to do the first thing, before He gives you the next thing.

WEEK TWO



HAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE

DAY ONE: Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

DISCUSSION: Go around the table and each pick out words that describe what LOVE is. List as many as you can find in the verses you just read. What do they each mean? Which ones do you love the most? Which ones do you have a hard time with? What does LOVE look like to you?

ACTION: Write down one way that you struggle showing love using the list you just read from. Write that word on a list on the fridge and leave it there for the week as a reminder to work on that characteristic of love.

DAY TWO: Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 again.

DISCUSSION: Who is one person in your family that you struggle to show love? Ask the others around the table to help you answer why that is so. Talk about what you can do to help yourself have an easier time of loving others, especially your brothers and sisters in the house. Ask each other for help to do the same.

ACTION: Write down the name of the person that you need to practice loving better. Commit to praying for them throughout the day, and asking God to help you show love better.

DAY THREE: Read 1 Corinthians 13:5

DISCUSSION: What does it mean to "keep no record of wrongs"? How can you apply that better in YOUR life? God is telling us that if we have His love in us, we have the power to forgive others so clearly that we cannot even show proof that we ever recorded their wrong against us. That means we don't bring it up again, or use it to make them feel bad, or tell others about what they've done so we embarrass them and make them feel bad for hurting you. We ALL make mistakes. We ALL fall short. The love of God empowers us to forgive and move on.

ACTION: Look around the table at each person sitting there with you. Check your heart and make sure that you are not keep a record of wrongs for each and every person. If you find something that you have not forgiven them for, or asked for their forgiveness, take the time to do that now. When everyone is ready, pray together that God will help you stay in unity as a family and continue to practice keeping NO record of wrongs.

WEEK TWO



HAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE

DAY FOUR: Read Matthew 18:21-22

DISCUSSION: Peter must have really been having trouble forgiving someone for him to ask Jesus about it! I wonder who bothered him so much? But the truth is, we ALL have opportunities EVERY DAY to be offended with others. I wonder what kind of answer Peter was expecting from Jesus? He even suggested seven times, probably thinking he was being generous. But Jesus gave quite an extreme answer, didn't He? Seventy times seven!!! So some translations come up with 77 times, and some come up with 490 times... either way, I think we get the picture, right? We need to forgive ALL the time! So why is that so hard for us? Maybe as we practice the "keeping no record of wrongs" from yesterday, we will find that we can be free to forgive others.. just as Jesus forgave us.

ACTION: Go around the table again today, looking at each person sitting there with you for a long moment. Check your heart again to make sure you have no unforgiveness or offense against each person at the table. Ask each person to forgive you if YOU have caused an offense or hurt them, even if it was an accident. Cut out your Forgiveness Tickets, and give everybody permission to start over... EVERY TIME they need it that day.

DAY FIVE: Read John 13:35

DISCUSSION: We have worked VERY HARD on love and forgiveness this week. We have learned that walking in love and showing forgiveness allows us to have the best life... but is that ALL there is? Here Jesus tells us a special secret: when we do these things over and over, and live our lives in this peaceful way, the world will know that we belong to Him. That's it! We don't have to preach or shout it out loud or sing it every second of the day. All those things are great to do in their place and time, but Jesus tells us that all we have to do is LOVE ONE ANOTHER for the world to know we belong to Him.

ACTION: Color the page that reads, "Love one another." As you color, ask God to help you to remember His simple, special rule, even when life may seem confusing or hard.

WEEK THREE

P RIDE COMES BEFORE A FALL

DAY ONE: Read Proverbs 16:18

DISCUSSION: What does it mean when we say we can "fall" if we have a haughty spirit? What does it mean to be "haughty"? The definition means to be "arrogantly superior and disdainful." Give an example with each other of what that might look like. Discuss what pride can look like.

ACTION: Think of a way you have been prideful in your life, and what kind of destruction or fall you faced because of it. Write about it or draw a picture of it, showing how you felt.

DAY TWO: Read 1 Peter 5:6

DISCUSSION: The opposite of pride is humility. Humility literally means "a modest view of one's own importance." Can you give an example of someone who is humble in your life? Share WHY you feel that person is humble. God LOVES a humble person! What is the promise we have in Him if we humble ourselves? He will EXALT us in due time! So we know that God rewards us as we follow Him!

ACTION: Write a few sentences about a humble person in your life that God has used to do great things. Share it with them if you can.

DAY THREE: Psalms 37:11

DISCUSSION: What does it mean to be meek? The very definition is to be "quiet, gentle and submissive." Now, we know that this doesn't necessarily mean that we have to be quiet as in whispering and silent all the time, but it means to be peaceful and humble in heart, not picking fights and being sensitive to those around you. So if we can be considerate of those around us, and kind to others, respecting authority, God promises that we will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity. What a great promise that is!!!!

ACTION: Draw a picture of what a life of peace and prosperity looks like to you, or write the words that come to mind and color them in with beautiful colors.

WEEK THREE

P RIDE COMES BEFORE A FALL

DAY FOUR: Read Numbers 12:3

DISCUSSION: Moses is described as "very meek" in the Bible, and God literally uses the words "above all the men" when talking about him. So it seems like "meek" does not mean a low or negative thing, but rather an assurance of who you are in God so you don't feel the need to avenge yourself, but let God take care of your battles for you. Think of a time in your life when you thought too highly of yourself and it got you into trouble. Maybe you tried to fight a battle for yourself instead of give it to God? What would you do differently next time?

ACTION: Pray together with your family right now. Take turns asking God to help each of you be humble, not prideful, and have peace instead of fighting. Cut out your bookmark as a reminder and set it next to your bed. Practice being humble for the rest of the day and see if you have more peace than you usually do by bedtime tonight.

DAY FIVE: Read Philippians 2:3

DISCUSSION: Let's talk about the words STRIFE and VAINGLORY for a second. Strife is "angry or bitter disagreement over important issues." Vainglory is "Excessive pride in oneself." Neither of these definitions sound very nice at all, and neither sound like someone we would want to be around. So when we find ourselves getting upset over things that should not matter, or bossing others when we have no place to do that, how can we fix it? Well, the Bible tells us that we need to think of others better than ourselves. Think about it! If you truly respected your brother and thought of him as more worthy of respect, would you bicker and fight with him like you do? Probably not! In the same way, God tells us NOT to fight and be mean, but instead choose to be humble and treat everyone BETTER than we treat ourselves.

ACTION: Go around the table and say something you admire about every person at the table. Every person takes a turn, and every person lists one thing about every person. See how you feel about yourself afterwards. See how you feel about every one else at the table afterwards.

WEEK FOUR



OBEDIENCE TO THOSE OVER US

DAY ONE: Read Hebrews 13:17

DISCUSSION: The apostle Paul wrote the book of Hebrews, and he explained WHY we want to "obey those that have the rule" over us. What did he say? Who do YOU obey that is over YOU in your life? Do you choose JOY for them, instead of GRIEF? What are some ways you can choose joy over grief when it comes to obedience?

ACTION: Read 1 Corinthians 14:33. If God is NOT the author of confusion, than He cannot be IN confusion. He can only live in Peace. That word "confusion" literally means "disorder." Draw a picture of what Peace looks like in your life, and how God is in the Peace, and not the confusion.

DAY TWO: Read 1 Timothy 2:2

DISCUSSION: Paul wrote this letter to his young helper Timothy to try to explain WHY we should pray for those in authority over us. What does he tell us will happen as we pray for those in authority over us? What will happen in YOUR life if you pray for those who are in authority?

ACTION: Write a list of all the leaders in your life and commit to praying for them this week.

DAY THREE: Read Matthew 8:5-13

DISCUSSION: What did the Centurion understand about authority? What did Jesus say about it? How did the Centurion show his faith to Jesus? What happened to the servant? When we understand God's authority in our lives and the power of order and confusion, we can see miracles in our lives, and the lives of those around us.

ACTION: Throughout the day, pay attention to your words and attitudes. If you find yourself being rude and critical, stop and think and replace your negative thoughts with ones of order, peace and faith.

DAY FOUR: 1 Timothy 2:1-4

DISCUSSION: We have learned WHY we want to live a quiet and peaceable life, and WHY we should pray for those that have the rule over us, and now Paul tells Timothy to remember the heart of God. What is it? (Hint: it's in verse 4.) It's so ALL men can see our ways of peace and love and choose Jesus over everything!

WEEK FOUR



OBEDIENCE TO THOSE OVER US

DAY FOUR: continued.

ACTION: List the leaders in authority over you. Write some ways that you can support them, and commit to doing that today. **PRAY** as a family for all leaders over us, even when we don't agree with them.

DAY FIVE: Read Romans 13:1-3

DISCUSSION: Why can it be so hard sometimes to obey them that have the rule over us? Often, when we don't agree with the way a person believes or acts or votes, we can have a hard time seeing them the way God sees them instead of the way our physical eyes can see them. We may not **WANT** to pray for them because we just don't **LIKE** them. Isn't it awesome to know that God knows that?! And that He is not mad at you for that! He only asks that we pray for them, not agree with them. We can **ALWAYS** find something to pray for! Above all things, we can **ALWAYS** pray that God's will be done in our lives, and the lives of those over us.

ACTION: Take a leaders' name from the list you wrote yesterday, and write a letter or a prayer, or draw a picture to thank them for what they do for you or others. If you don't agree with them or respect them, ask God to help you see them the way He sees them, and write a prayer for them... even if they never know it. God will know it!

WEEK FIVE

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

DAY ONE: Read Matthew 6:9-13

DISCUSSION: Read verse 9 again. What does it mean to make the name of God holy? Read John 4:24 and see where we must worship God in Spirit and in Truth. What does that mean? What does holiness mean to you? What does worship mean to you?

ACTION: Write down the ways that you can make the name of God holy in your life. Write the ways you can worship in Spirit and in Truth.

DAY TWO: Read verse 10 again.

DISCUSSION: What does God's Kingdom look like? What does God's will look like? We know that when we pray what the Bible says, we can know that we are praying God's will. Heaven is a place where God's will reigns supreme. What does it look like when God's will is done on earth?

ACTION: Draw a picture of Earth on one side of your paper, and a picture of Heaven on the other half. Draw what God's Kingdom looks like to you in between.

DAY THREE: Read verse 11 again.

DISCUSSION: Jesus tells us that it's okay for us to ask for our needs to be fulfilled, but he uses a very important word we need to remember: daily. Give us our daily bread. Jesus does not want us to worry about tomorrow, or any problems in the future. We need to believe Him for today, and today only. Read Matthew 6:25-34. It seems it is very important to the Lord that we practice focusing on today, and training ourselves not to worry about tomorrow. What things do each of you worry about? How can you fix your focus?

ACTION: Write down the things that you worry about most often and place them into the hands of God. Practice thinking about that image every time you worry.

DAY FOUR: Read verse 12 again.

DISCUSSION: Debts are things that we owe to others. What is Jesus telling us to do? Forgive each other the way we want God to forgive us. Forgiveness is such an important part of EVERY Christian's walk with God in our daily lives. It can be very difficult to forgive others, especially when they have hurt us and they don't even seem sorry.

WEEK FIVE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DAY FOUR: continued.

The trouble with unforgiveness is that it hurts YOU more than the person you are not forgiving. They may not even know that they have hurt you or offended you, so you are the one carrying ALL of that burden. Unforgiveness puts us in a mental prison, a prison in our minds, and we are the only ones who can set ourselves free. No one can do it for you, and you are the only one who can choose to forgive. Read Matthew 5:44.

ACTION: Write down the top 1-3 people that you struggle with forgiving and commit to practicing forgiveness towards them and pray for them. Whenever you may struggle with that, reread these verses and ask God to help you forgive others so He can forgive you.

DAY FIVE: Read verse 13.

DISCUSSION: What does it mean to be tempted? And when we say "evil one," who are we talking about? Read 1 Peter 5:8. How can we stay safe when we are facing an enemy that acts like a lion? We may be tempted to be fearful of the devil, but Jesus tells us HOW to overcome. Peter tells us what he has learned in his time following Jesus: "Be sober, be vigilant." What do those two words mean? Sober is to be self-controlled, and vigilant is to be watchful. So if we practice self control and watch for ways to keep us strong in the Lord, we will be unstoppable to the enemy! A lion only attacks the weak animals, and the ones that are drifting away from the herd. Stay strong in the Lord and stay connected to your church family! And remember, Peter said the devil is LIKE a roaring lion, he is not ACTUALLY a lion. He just likes to pretend he is big and strong and scary so we live in fear. Be strong and do not fall for his old tricks!

ACTION: Talk about the animal the lion and all the things you know about it. Then list the people in your life who help you stay safe. Thank God for those people and practice listening to them... even when it may be hard to do.

WEEK SIX

THE TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE.

DAY ONE: Read John 8:31-32

DISCUSSION: Jesus was talking to the Jews in this verse, and the Jews were known as God's Chosen People, all the way back to Abraham. They had followed many laws and customs up until this point, because it was what God had given Moses even at the time of the Ten Commandments. Jesus was trying to explain to them what true freedom was. What does freedom look like to you?

ACTION: Draw a picture of what FREEDOM looks like to you, and ask God to help you see freedom through His eyes. Pray for those who are not free, and thank God for the freedom we have in Him.

DAY TWO: Read Galatians 5:13-14

DISCUSSION: Paul was writing about freedom to his fellow Christians. What was he saying the people should do with their freedom? What is the greatest way we can show the world love? What are the ways you love yourself? Do you take care of yourself, eat good food and wear nice clothes? Do you do things that are fun and that make you happy? All these things are GOOD, but Jesus wants us to go one step further as Christians and treat OTHERS the way we like to treat ourselves! What would that look like in your world and family?

ACTION: Choose a person in your family that you can show love through serving. Write down their name and three things you are going to do today to show them God's love.

DAY THREE: Read 1 Peter 2:13-17

DISCUSSION: Peter is sharing here about how to submit to authority on earth as an EXAMPLE of how we love our Father in Heaven. What examples does he give? Why does Jesus want us to submit to earthly authority? What kind of world would ours be if we all peacefully followed the laws of our President, Governor, police officers, teachers and parents? How will we feel when we choose to obey those that rule over us, instead of fight with them? Does God want us to use our freedom in Him to justify our behavior when we make a mistake?

ACTION: Write the names of our President, Governor and other leaders in your life. Today, agree and pray together that God will help us all to serve Him by honoring all those around us. Ask God to help you, especially with those you struggle with.

WEEK SIX

THE TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE.

DAY FOUR: Read 1 Peter 2:17 again.

DISCUSSION: What are practical ways we can honor others? What are practical ways we can show love to our brothers and sisters? When we show obedience to God's Word, we are showing that we love and respect God. What does it look like to "Honor the king"?

ACTION: Color the page and think about the power of LOVE and OBEDIENCE in ACTION.

DAY FIVE: Read 1 Peter 2: 21-25

DISCUSSION: Peter is reminding us of what Jesus did for us so that we can remember why we would want to obey him, even when it's hard. How can we feel like we are "free" when we have to submit to leaders over us and show kindness to others who may not even love or respect God?

ACTION: Think about what it means when Peter says that Jesus is our Shepherd, the Overseer of our souls. What things have you done in your life where you have gone astray? How did you feel? How did it make you feel when you remembered that Jesus made a way for you to be forgiven and come back to Him, for FREE?????