

# CAFFEINE, GOLDFISH, & JESUS

A DEVOTION FOR  
KIDS MINISTRY LEADERS



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# INTRODUCTION

As a kids ministry leader, you probably tend to consume lots of **CAFFEINE** to have the energy needed for the role God has called you to do and you've probably given out more **GOLDFISH** than anyone can imagine. As you dive into this devotional resource, may your walk with Him be strengthened as you spend time with **JESUS** and meditate on His Word each day.



This 12-month devotional guide, “CAFFEINE, GOLDFISH, & JESUS” was created by 18 men and women who serve kids and children’s ministry leaders in various state conventions. We know you face specific challenges and opportunities in your role, and it is our prayer that God will reveal Himself to you as you read the devotions, Bible passages, and prayer prompts. Each month introduces a new theme. Each week begins with a Bible passage, devotion, and prayer prompt. For the following days, we encourage you to read the Scripture and consider the prayer prompt.

**Get ready to grab some caffeine, goldfish, and your Bible and enjoy spending time with Jesus.**





# JANUARY : JOY

Sing a New Song

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** David Anderson, Children’s Ministry Strategist  
Louisiana Baptist Convention



## DAY 1

Sing a new song to the lord; let the whole earth sing to the lord. Sing to the lord, bless his name; proclaim his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his wondrous works among all peoples.

Psalm 96:1-3, CSB

It is here! A whole new year. A clean slate of hope-filled dreams and unmet expectations. In the midst of turning the page, we are challenged to sing a new song. But how many of us are walking into this new year with the same plans and same attitude from the past year?

This is our chance to leave old things behind and embrace what God has laid out before us. Five different times in the Psalms we are commanded to a new song. The Lord is not talking about a hymn or a chorus. Rather, He is urging us to see the newness of every day and every opportunity. When we take the position of recognizing His hand in every moment and making that proclamation the song of our life, only then will the whole earth sing along with us. When we proclaim His salvation daily, then we will discover the true meaning of daily joy. When we declare His glory among all peoples, then we find our own selves living in an unshakable joy that will carry into any plans that He has for us in the coming year.

**Prayer Prompt:** Today commit yourself to be fully present in every day this year. Allow yourself to sing your life song about Him in a way that all peoples will see who He truly is. Take a moment and pray, asking the Lord to show you His new mercies every morning and to give you the strength to proclaim it daily.



## DAY 2

Come, let's shout joyfully to the Lord,  
shout triumphantly to the rock of  
our salvation!

Psalm 95:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Take a moment to praise God for the joy that He brings into our lives. Then ask Him to give you the courage to not just whisper about this joy that lives inside of you. Instead, ask Him to give you a boldness to share the joy of your salvation with all those around you.

---

## DAY 3

The Lord reigns! Let the earth rejoice;  
let the many coasts and islands be glad.

Psalm 97:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** The command to sing a new song that we saw in Psalm 96 is bookended by Psalms 96 and 97 which both begin with commands to shout joyfully and rejoice. This is not a coincidence or a mistake. Pray today and thank the Lord for His reign in your life. Ask Him to help you rejoice in a true reflection of all that He means to you today.

## DAY 4

His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant!  
You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.  
Share your master's joy."

Matthew 25:23, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Take a moment to praise God for the joy that He brings into our lives. Then ask Him to give you the courage to not just whisper about this joy that lives inside of you. Instead, ask Him to give you a boldness to share the joy of your salvation with all those around you.

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## DAY 5

"And others are like seed sown on rocky ground.  
When they hear the word, immediately they receive it with joy."

Mark 4:16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Have you ever seen people that have heard the Word and received the Word with great wonder and joy? Those are the sweetest moments when we see a new dawn light in a child's eyes as they discover new things about God. Today ask God to remind you of your first love and the joy that you experienced when you first received the gift of salvation. Ask Him to bring that joy to you as you continue to learn more about Him every day.

## DAY 6

“I tell you, in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who don’t need repentance.”

Luke 15:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Scripture is clear about the joy in heaven when someone turns to Christ in repentance. If you are in a season of discouragement, remember this truth. The joy that comes from the Father is often centered around those discovering and committing to Christ. Ask God today to give you the opportunity to share this joy with someone. Nothing can lift one's spirit and bring evidence of joy like being part of sharing the gospel with someone and watching them step into new life.

## DAY 7

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.

Galatians 5:22-23, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** We must remember that joy is a fruit of the Spirit. In this remembrance we must never forget that joy is not an option for a believer. It is also not a goal to be achieved. Rather, it is a natural result of living in the Spirit. Thank God today for the joy that He brings into your life as a believer. Determine to live in the Spirit daily so that you may experience the joy that is a natural result of that living.

[illegible]



# JANUARY : JOY

## Where Joy Starts

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** David Anderson, Children's Ministry Strategist  
Louisiana Baptist Convention

DAY 1

WEEK 2

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.”

Matthew 6:33, CSB

Let's take a fresh look at where our joy originates. True joy flows directly from our relationship with Christ. Someone once said happiness comes from happenstance or our circumstance. But joy comes directly from God. He is the source of our joy and the replenisher of our joy. No long-lasting joy exists outside of our relationship with Him. When the trials of life present themselves – and they will – we may tend to feel overwhelmed and forget what we truly have in Him.

Deep joy is a character trait that is unexplainable. It sees us through our darkest days and offers hope. This does not mean a denial of the reality of life. Instead, it means that our joy comes only from Him and encourages us to maintain our focus on Him. This week we will be looking at a wonderful hymn that is all about joy. It is known as a Christmas hymn in many churches, but it's words are timeless and applicable to a life of joy.

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God today for the joy that He provides in every situation. Take time to remember joyful times in the past and look toward the plans for your future. In both situations, attempt to focus and see that God was (and will be) working it all out for good for those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Spend some moments just expressing your joy in Him.

DAY 2

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flow’rs before You, Op’ning to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day!

Verse One

**Prayer Prompt:** In today’s prayer time, focus on the way you worship the Lord on a daily basis. Are you truly able to sing “joyful, joyful, we adore thee?” Our worship should be punctuated with a deep joy for who He is. As this verse says, He melts the clouds of sin and sadness and drives the dark of doubt away. Thank Him for being a God that loves you so much that He wants to share His joy with you and allows you to return that joy back to Him in praise before Him.

DAY 3

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

All Your works with joy surround You, Earth and heav’n reflect Your rays, Stars and angels sing around You, Center of unbroken praise; Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow’ry meadow, flashing sea, Chanting bird and flowing fountain Praising You eternally!

Verse Two

**Prayer Prompt:** Stop and realize that you have a choice. You can either join all creation in praising Him or you can choose to not to join in. However, He will be praised! Join in with all creation and praise Him today and surround Him with joy for all that He has created, including YOU.

DAY 4

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

Always giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest, Well-spring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest! Loving Father, Christ our Brother, Let Your light upon us shine; Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

Verse Three

**Prayer Prompt:** Look at the words of this verse and allow your heart to soak into the reality of what it is saying. In your prayer time, thank Him for all He truly does for you and all that He means to you. Nothing else will bring you joy like that thought and then you will begin to understand how that “lifts us to the joy divine.”

DAY 5

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

Mortals, join the mighty chorus, Which the morning stars began; God’s own love is reigning o’er us, Joining people hand in hand. Ever singing, march we onward, Victors in the midst of strife; Joyful music leads us sunward In the triumph song of life.

Verse Four

**Prayer Prompt:** By now, you should be humming this hymn over and over. This is a great thing since this last verse invites us mortals to join the mighty chorus and march onward. The key to catch in this last verse is to see that this joyful and triumphant way of living is actually our song of life. Praise Him today for the opportunity to join others hand in hand in singing His praise and being drawn ever onward and upward to a joyful life in Him.



## DAY 7

You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy;  
at your right hand are eternal pleasures.

Psalm 16:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What an incredible promise that we find abundant joy in His presence. Today, as we end our second week focusing on joy, spend your time just praising Him. Sing out “The Hymn of Joy” and “I’ve Got the Joy” both. It will lead you to understand how amazing how God is and how much joy His presence actually brings. Finish this week in a personal worship and prayer time of joy.

[illegible]

# JANUARY : JOY

## Shouts of Joy

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** David Anderson, Children's Ministry Strategist,  
Louisiana Baptist Convention



## DAY 1

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Our mouths were filled with laughter then, and our tongues with shouts of joy. Then they said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.” The Lord had done great things for us; we were joyful. Restore our fortunes, Lord, like watercourses in the Negev Those who sow in tears will reap with shouts of joy. Though one goes along weeping, carrying the bag of seed, he will surely come back with shouts of joy, carrying his sheaves.

Psalm 126, CSB

Psalm 126 is considered a Psalm of Ascent. These Psalms were the songs that the nation of Israel would sing as they ascended up to Jerusalem for the annual festivals. This song book of the people reminded them of the goodness of God and His promises. We can learn much from these songs.

Eugene Peterson has written a wonderful book that walks through them called “A Long Obedience in the Same Direction.” It speaks of how each Psalm has a theme. The theme of Psalm 126 is JOY. This is obvious in that the word joy appears four times in these six short verses. This week we will explore those four instances and see what brought God’s people joy and how that can apply to us today.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to give you a joy for all that He has done. Thank Him for your journey to this point and make a commitment to allow joy to mark your journey up that mountain toward the amazing city of God.





## DAY 2

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.  
Our mouths were filled with laughter then, and our tongues with shouts of joy.

Psalm 126:1-2a, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Think back to the major struggles of your life when you felt far from God. Remember the ways that He was there, even when it didn't feel like it. Then take a moment and recall the joy you felt when that burden or struggle was lifted. Just bask in that moment again and thank God for His deliverance in every moment and every situation.

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## DAY 3

Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."  
The Lord had done great things for us; we were joyful.

Psalm 126:2b-3, CBS

**Prayer Prompt:** Contemplate what the world says about Christians in general. Then take a moment and evaluate what those around you think about you. Do the nations say, "The Lord has done great things for them" about your life? Walk in joy and watch how the world responds to you and your life. On this day, decide to walk in joy and see how the world reacts, then celebrate in your joyfulness for all that the Lord has done for you.

## DAY 4

Restore our fortunes, Lord, like watercourses in the Negev.  
Those who sow in tears will reap with shouts of joy.

Psalm 126:4-5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In today's prayer time, do not shy away from the hurts in your life. Give those hurts, pain, and tears over to God and allow Him to begin healing in a way that only He can. Now spend some time thanking Him for that healing and embrace the joy that only He offers as you walk out of those hurts with shouts of joy.

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## DAY 5

Though one goes along weeping, carrying the bag of seed,  
he will surely come back with shouts of joy, carrying his sheaves.

Psalm 126:6, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Yesterday was focused on hurts and struggles that the Lord is healing in our lives. Today the focus is on hurts that continue with us in our journey. However, notice that when we sow in tears, we will still reap a harvest of joy when we trust Him. His promise to us is that the result of our lives will be joy. Embrace that today and spend time thanking Him that the result of your life will be unending joy in His presence.

## DAY 6

Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from his fullness.

John 1:16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Allow this verse to permeate your thoughts today. There are no limits to grace that streams from His fullness. As John says in verse 16, “We have all received grace upon grace.” That should bring joy to any heart. Sometimes just sitting in the realization of the grace you have received from Him is all that you need to experience joy. Revel in that today.

## DAY 7

You will indeed go out with joy and be peacefully guided;  
the mountains and the hills will break into singing before you,  
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands

Isaiah 55:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** The promises of God seem to go on forever and can be found around every corner. This promise in Isaiah is a moment of a wonderful concert where humankind and all of nature will “go out with joy” in constant praise. Spend time in joyful prayer and thankfulness as you wait expectantly for that amazing day. In the meantime, go out with joy, and don’t wait for sometime in the future to do so.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



# JANUARY : JOY

## Finding Joy in Our Ministry

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Kris Buckman, Children's and Youth Ministry Consultant,  
Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware

### DAY 1

Weeping may stay overnight,  
but there is joy in the morning.

Psalms 30:5b, CSB

I love a new start! The new year, a new month, a new week, even a new day – each gives us a chance to start over, to try again, to begin with a fresh attitude. How many times have you driven home from church thinking, “That’s it! I’m done! I can’t do this anymore, Lord!”

Whether that one volunteer didn’t show up again (without any notice), that one child must’ve been fed extra sugar before coming to church, or the lesson completely flopped, we are blessed with the opportunity to regroup at the end of each day and start again in the morning. Tomorrow is a new day to show grace to your leaders (as much as God has shown you!), a new day to welcome even the rowdiest of children, and a new day to tackle a new lesson.

In times like these, I find it helps to pray and to do something right then and there to bring you immediate joy. Maybe it’s a trip to Starbucks or a long, hot bath, or your favorite meal. Then, take a deep breath and remember why it is you do what you do. Recall the “wins” of your ministry, like the child who took time to say thank you, the parent who told you their child was excited to come to church this morning, or the feeling you got when you saw the joy on a child’s face after finding a Bible verse on his/her own for the first time!

God sheds new joy on us each morning if we leave yesterday where it belongs.

**Prayer Prompt:** Praise God that we are renewed each day! Praise God that we can find joy in even the hardest of circumstances. Ask God to show you the joy He has for you today and begin with a deep breath and new song in your heart.

## DAY 2

Because of the Lord's faithful love we do not perish,  
for his mercies never end.  
They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!

Lamentations 3:22-23, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God chose you for this ministry role. He has equipped you with all you need. Pray for his faithfulness mercy as you navigate through the challenges.

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## DAY 3

This is the day the Lord has made;  
let's rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalms 118:24, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Praise God for another day! Praise God that you get to serve alongside Him by leading little ones to know that He loves them. Ask God to overwhelm you with joy today!

## DAY 4

Rejoice in the Lord always.  
I will say it again: Rejoice!

Philippians 4:4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God today for the ways He walks with you as you plan and prepare for the kids in your ministry. Thank Him for the families he has brought under your care and the children they entrust to you. Don't miss the joy in the details!

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## DAY 5

“Until now you have asked for nothing in my name.  
Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.”

John 16:24, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What do you need in your personal life or in your ministry that you have not yet asked God for? Ask Him for those things! There is nothing too small or too large to ask of God. What would bring you more joy in your ministry? Ask God and watch Him work!

## DAY 6

For our hearts rejoice in him because we trust in his holy name.

Psalm 33:21, CSB

Prayer Prompt: :Do you ever feel like everything is working against you and you just can't catch a break? Spend some time expressing your gratitude for what He has already given (remember the small things!) and trust that He will provide what you need to press on.

## DAY 7

The Lord your God is among you, a warrior who saves. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will be quiet in his love. He will delight in you with singing

Zephaniah 3:17, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** You bring great joy to God! He is with you and for you! He delights in all that you are, all that He's created you to be! Thank God today for the opportunity He's given you to share His love with children. Ask Him to continue to equip you to fulfill His calling in your life.

[illegible]

# JANUARY : JOY

Always Be Joyful

WEEK 5

**Contributor:** Kathy Miles, Generations Associate Director  
South Carolina Baptist Convention



## DAY 1

WEEK 5

Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NLT

Growing up, I had a first-grade teacher who was the epitome of joy. Mrs. Patterson started every class belting out a beautiful song at the top of her lungs. She knew the importance of starting every day with a smile on her face and joy in her heart. In my old(er) age, I can still see exactly what she looked like, feel how special I was to her, and remember how excited I was to learn.

But hardship often comes even in the midst of joy. As a young child, I knew Mrs. Patterson’s hair shouldn’t be falling out. She struggled to play the piano at times, but her joy was ever present. One of her favorite songs was “I’ve Got the Joy, Joy, Joy.” I knew even then that her joy came from someplace special, where it was rooted deep and secure. She had a love for the Savior and a passion for sharing her joy with a classroom full of six-year-olds. Here’s how she taught me to embrace joy.

May this generation experience the joy of knowing the Savior and having children’s ministry leaders like you and Mrs. Patterson who sing from the rafters the love of Jesus!

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**Prayer Prompt:** Lord, help me to always be joyful. Help me to see that joy is contagious, and that I need to laugh with my kids. Help me to smile when I feel completely overtaken with everything that’s going on around me. Help me to turn to you and choose joy even in the hardest situations. Let me show and tell others where my joy comes from. In Jesus’ name, amen.



## DAY 2

Though you have not seen him, you love him; though not seeing him now, you believe in him and you are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:8-9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** With the new year, people often put pressure on themselves to accomplish grandiose goals and objectives. How are you seeing God work in your ministry today? This verse assures us that God is here. He fills us with joy unspeakable! We don't need a special time of year to put pressure on ourselves. Pray, open your eyes, write about the joys you experience, and praise Him for this incredible and insurmountable work He is always doing.

## DAY 3

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped.  
Therefore my heart celebrates, and I will give thanks to him with my song.

Psalms 28:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend some time in prayer thanking God by completing the following prompts: I praise You that You heard my cries for mercy when ... I praise You that You are my strength and stronger than ... I praise You that You have protected me from ... I praise You that I can trust You with ... Thank You for ... I pray that You will strengthen my heart as I trust You for ... Help my church trust You to carry us through ...

## DAY 4

But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who long for your saving help always say,  
“The Lord is great!”

Psalms 70:4, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Recruiting volunteers is one of the most challenging aspects of any children's ministry leader's job. Creating a culture of consistent volunteerism begins with top leadership and moves throughout the team. What is your strategy for successfully engaging new people to join the vision and mission of your ministry? Pray now that God will send you workers for the harvest, and you will exclaim that HE IS GREAT!

## DAY 5

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you  
and that your joy may be complete.

John 15:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What a wonderful promise! Thank God that the joy of the Lord is your strength. Ask Him to help you to always abide in Him, so that you may be joyful, fruitful in life, and bring glory to Him.

## DAY 6

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

3 John 1:4, NIV

Prayer Prompt: As a mom of five adult children who are walking with Jesus, this verse makes my heart skip a beat with joy. The same can be said of every child that crosses our thresholds in ministry. As leaders, are we making sure that what we are teaching is truth and that everything flows straight from scripture? Pray for your children in ministry by name.  
-Ask God to continually guide them to His truth and protect them from the enemy.

## DAY 7

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace.  
In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart;  
I have overcome the world.

John 16:33, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Sometimes we think being a Christian should be easy and carefree. The reality is that this verse reminds us that there will be troubling times for all of us. We are not exempt from experiencing pain, sorrow, or worries. God cares for you and wants to hear you cry out to him. What is troubling you today? The good news is that in JESUS we have peace, and He carries us through all of life's difficulties. Thank the Lord that your mind and heart can rest in Him!

[illegible]





# FEBRUARY : LOVE

Love One Another

WEEK 1

Contributor: Belinda Stroud, Children's Specialist,  
Alabama State Board of Missions



## DAY 1

WEEK 1

“It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.”

John 13:1, NIV

Jesus knew His time to be present physically on this earth was coming to an end. He was to be betrayed by one disciple, disowned by another, and deserted by others. He knew all of this and He still showed them the full extent of His love.

My mom, who taught school for over 40 years, had a plaque in her house that said, “Children need love the most when they deserve it the least.” That is what Jesus does for each of us. He gives us unconditional love even when it is certainly not deserved. As we minister to the families and children in our churches, sometimes they are not easy to love just like we are not so easy to love at times. We should constantly strive to love others like Jesus loves us in the good and bad times.

A mentor in ministry gave me the best advice as I began as a minister: “Love the people you are ministering to, and it will all be ok.” That was over 35 years ago, and it certainly remains true today.

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that you will be able to love others as Jesus loves you.

## DAY 2

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”

John 13:34-35

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for help to love others as He has loved you. People will know you are a Christian by the love you have for others.

---

## DAY 3

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this:  
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank Christ today for showing you love by dying for you, the ultimate sacrifice.

## DAY 4

If I speak in tongues of men and angels,  
but I have no love I am only a resounding  
gong or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13:1, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that the focus of your life is to love others, to not be distracted from that.

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## DAY 5

Be completely humble and gentle, be patient,  
bearing with one another in love.

Ephesians 4:2, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray to have a humble and gentle spirit as you strive to love one another.



## DAY 6

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love,  
for I have put my trust in you.  
Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

Psalm 143:8, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank the Lord for His unfailing love and ask Him to direct your steps.

## DAY 7

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power together with all the saints to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

Ephesians 3:16-18, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for your life to be rooted in God's love, also being able to understand how wide, long, high, and deep the love of Christ is for you!

[illegible]

# FEBRUARY : LOVE

## The Greatest Love

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Kathy Miles, Generations Associate Director  
South Carolina Baptist Convention



## DAY 1

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

1 John 4: 8-9, NIV

Love is a word that we hear and use a lot. Hollywood uses it to promote the latest romantic movies and sets up people for great feelings and emotions. Whether it's the latest Hallmark movie or a Disney princess that finds her prince, the greatest, ultimate meaning in love is not based on temporary feelings and emotions.

The verse above tells us that to understand God and His character, we must understand that He is Love. John tells us that God showed His love to us through His Son, Jesus. Because of His life, death, and resurrection, we can be made right with God. When we submit to His authority, repent, and follow Him, we can experience the peace, joy, and security that comes from knowing Him. This is not just a mushy feeling or emotion, but the greatest love story ever written.

Who do you know that needs to experience this great love this week? Is it someone that lives in your family, your community, or at your child's school? Make a strategic plan today to begin developing relationships so that you can share the Good News of Jesus with them and allow them to experience God's GREAT LOVE.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to help you think through people in your circles that don't know Christ. Write their names down in your Bible and begin praying for each of them. Pray for courage and obedience as you take next steps and that hearts would be open to the Holy Spirit.

## DAY 2

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”  
 Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.  
 And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Matthew 22:36-39, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to help you love Him with everything that you are – heart, soul, and mind – and to realize that loving Him and loving others works in tandem and not independently of each other. Remember that if you love the Lord, then your life will reflect it in how you love those around you. Children’s ministry can often feel like a task driven list of things to do, but that is not God’s design for ministry. What relationships are you investing in today and who is discipling you? Pray that God would reveal wisdom and discernment as you continue to grow in Him.

## DAY 3

Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.  
 I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.

Psalms 63:3-4, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Sometimes the overwhelming nature of ministry rushes me to ask God for what I need or want. In reality, I should rest in the power of who He is and what He is already doing. So, for a few minutes, stop and praise God for who He is, for how He is working in your life and ministry, and give Him the glory today.

## DAY 4

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** When looking at this verse, can you say that you love with a Christ-like love? Replace the word “love” with your name. Are you patient, kind, not envious, not boastful, and so on? Ask God to give you a heart that is overflowing with an immeasurable amount of love that is describe in these verses. Ask Him to help you show grace, mercy, forgiveness, and truth in all situations that come your way and that love will always prevail.

## DAY 5

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

Hebrews 6:10, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** God sees your service in children’s ministry. He knows how hard you work, and He remembers it. Your service in His ministry is showing His love. Ask God to help you fulfill your church’s mission and vision as you serve sacrificially to children and families. Pray that God will reveal needs among the people as you continue to share the gospel in your community.

## DAY 6

This is how God showed his love among us:  
He sent his one and only Son into the world that  
we might live through him.

1 John 4:9, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Every kid in your ministry will talk with their parents about the fun things that happened at church but they will also talk about the gospel lessons you teach them. Be encouraged today! You are loved. These life-giving, transformational talks are changing lives forever as the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of your kids. Ask God to give you strength, perseverance, steadfastness, patience, and an extra cup of coffee to help you make it through this day. You've got this. God is at work! He is using you to do awesome things!

## DAY 7

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called.

Ephesians: 4:1-4, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you seeking ways to humbly love others who might have differences? Can you settle those differences or disagreements with affection, kindness, gentleness, and selflessness? Pray that your speech and actions promote and nurture unity within the body of Christ. May God help us bear one another in love.

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# FEBRUARY : LOVE

## Loving Our Enemies

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Jenni Carter, Statewide Children's Consultant  
Georgia Baptist Mission Board



## DAY 1

WEEK 3

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do what is good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For He is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Luke 6:32-36, CSB



It's easy to be loving and kind and generous to those who are loving and kind and generous to us. For the parents who thank us for what we do and always offer to help whenever needed and give generously to our ministry, we think highly of them and love them. However, this Scripture points out that we need to love those who we can't expect anything from. We need to show love and kindness to the parents who complain about every ministry we offer, who never offer to help and ignore pleas for donations. It can be hard, but with God's help it can (and should) be done.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to help you have a right attitude towards those who may complain about aspect of kids ministry. Ask His forgiveness for thoughts you may have had towards those who are hard to love. Ask Him to show you ways you can show love to everyone.



## DAY 2

Let love and faithfulness never leave you;  
bind them around your neck,  
write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 3:3, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Love and faithfulness go hand in hand. Pray for discernment as you seek to be loving and faithful to God and to the families in your ministry.

## DAY 3

My command is this:  
Love each other as I have loved you.

John 15:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God loves us so much He sent His Son to die for us. Ask God to help you love others with a self-sacrificial love that can only come from Him.

## DAY 4

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.  
Be devoted to one another in love.  
Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Have you ever been around someone whose words didn't match their actions? Maybe it was someone who said one thing but acted another way. Kids can spot a phony or fake person right away. As you pray today, make sure your motives are true as you seek ways to show kids and family love.

## DAY 5

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast,  
it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking.  
It is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Children (and even some adults) can try our patience. Examine your heart before you pray today to be sure you're not envious (of other kids ministries, other staff members, etc.). Look at your heart to be sure you're not boastful or prideful, dishonoring others, self-seeking, or easily angered. Pray and ask God to help you be patient and kind whether you're working with kids or adults.

## DAY 6

Be completely humble and gentle;  
be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Ephesians 4:2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** I've always felt the best leaders are those who are servant leaders. As you serve kids and families today, ask God to help you be humble, gentle, and patient with everyone you encounter.

## DAY 7

And over all these virtues put on love,  
which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:14, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In the verses prior to verse 14, we are told of several virtues we should have. In this verse, we learn that love will bind all the virtues together in perfect unity. Pray that God would help you to show love and to love and live in perfect unity with others.

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# FEBRUARY : LOVE

## Love God and Love People

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Donna Blaydes, Childhood/Women's Ministry Specialist  
Tennessee Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they came together. And one of them, an expert in the law, asked a question to test him: "Teacher, which command in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

Matthew 22:34-37, CSB

In this passage we see Jesus responding to the Pharisees' attempt to trap him by quoting a key passage (Deut. 6:5) of the law they sought to uphold. The law says to love the Lord your God, not with some and not with a little, but with all your heart, all your soul and all your strength. This is everything that makes you, you. Jesus said to love God with every part of you. This sounds easy, right? Maybe on the surface.

But, to love God with everything means to make Him the most important person in your life. It means to make spending time in God's Word and in prayer a priority. When you love God like that, your desire is to keep his commands.

Jesus didn't stop there. He quoted another key passage (Lev. 19:18) of the law: "Love your neighbor as yourself." This is what it is all about. When we love God with everything, our response is to love people. To love like God intends, we must be in right relationship with him.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to help you have a right attitude towards those who may complain about aspect of kids ministry. Ask His forgiveness for thoughts you may have had towards those who are hard to love. Ask Him to show you ways you can show love to everyone.

## DAY 2

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you except to fear the Lord your God by walking in all his ways, to love him, and to worship the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul?

Deuteronomy 10:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** There are times that the demands of your ministry fill your days. Today, seek God. Spend time worshiping God in sweet surrender. Ask God to reveal areas in your life or your ministry that are keeping you from walking in all his ways.

## DAY 3

“The one who has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me.  
And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father:  
I also will love him and will reveal myself to him.”

John 14:21, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** You know God’s commands. You teach them week in and week out to the kids God has placed in your ministry. Ask God to reveal to you any commands you are struggling to keep. Confess your struggles to Him. Trust His love for you and His promise that He will forgive you.

## DAY 4

Above all, maintain constant love for one another,  
since love covers a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Maintaining constant love for other people can only happen when you truly love them. This type of love comes from the Father. When you are loving people like God loves them, your focus isn’t on their shortcomings, but on who they are in God’s eyes. Thank God for those people who have forgiven you because of the love they have for you. Ask God who you need to truly love and what steps you need to take to demonstrate that love.

## DAY 5

“This is what I command you:  
Love one another.”

John 15:17, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** To command is to “give an authoritative order.” In this verse, and multiple others, Jesus gave us an authoritative order to love one another. It isn’t a suggestion. Ask God to help you to be obedient and love those He has placed in your life.

## DAY 6

Do everything in love.

## 1 Corinthians 16:14, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In this verse, Paul instructs us to do everything in love. All means every thought, every action, every word, every attitude, everything must be done in love. Ask God to help you do everything in love – His love.

## DAY 7

For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters.  
But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead,  
use your freedom to serve one another in love.

## Galatians 5:13, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** As a Christ-follower, you have the incredible gift of freedom. This gift is not intended to allow you to live as you desire, but as Christ desires. Paul's words say to use your freedom to serve others in love. In kids ministry you are constantly serving. Ask God to show you if you are serving in love or out of obligation. Ask Him who you need to serve.

[illegible]





# MARCH : EASTER

## All-Access Pass

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Kris Buckman, Children's and Youth Ministry Consultant,  
Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware



### DAY 1

WEEK 1

The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom

Mark 15:38, NIV

For the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

Luke 23:45, NIV



Have you ever had an all-access pass to something? Maybe it was to a concert, and you got to go backstage and meet the band. Or maybe it was to a theme park, and you got special privileges to get in early, stay late, or see areas closed off to others. All-access passes allow us to experience things in abundance or above and beyond the “normal” access. Sometimes, all-access passes are expensive and hard to get!

On Good Friday, after Jesus had been ridiculed, beaten, spat upon, and nailed to the cross, He took His last breath. At that time, the temple veil was torn in two, from top to bottom. The temple veil separated the holy place from the holy of holies (Ex 26:33). Only the high priest had access to the holy of holies once a year on the Day of Atonement to make sin offerings. The veil represented the separation of God and man. The tearing of the temple veil symbolized Jesus’ gift of an all-access pass to Himself and the Father. God provided a way to Him through Jesus. No longer would we have to go through someone else to access the Creator. Those who believed now had the freedom to boldly approach God as His adopted children.

Are you using your all-access pass to approach the Father? Are you boldly approaching Him for direction, wisdom, counsel, and guidance as you lead your ministry? It’s easy to spend our time seeking the latest and greatest resources that promise to make our ministries better than they were yesterday. But let’s not forget to utilize the most valuable resource that was delivered on Good Friday; our free, all-access pass to the Father.

**Prayer Prompt:** Praise God for sending His son, Jesus, to give His life for us on the cross! I can’t imagine the pain He felt as His only son released His last breath. But with that breath came the miracle of the torn temple veil that granted you and I direct access to Him again. May we never take that privilege for granted!



## DAY 2

For through him we both have access  
to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 2:18, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Seek access to God’s wisdom today. Ask for the wisdom you need as you make plans to disciple and equip the next generation to love Him and serve Him.

## DAY 3

Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence,  
so that we may receive mercy and find grace  
to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:16, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Ministry can be hard and overwhelming at times. And there are times when our hearts aren’t in it, and our priorities aren’t lined up according to His will. Seek access to His mercy and grace today! Ask for renewal to continue to serve the next generation.

## DAY 4

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life.  
No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6a, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** There are so many wonderful resources available to us as ministry leaders. But let us not forget to keep the Word at the center of all we do in ministry. Ask God to refocus you if you get distracted and to refill you if you get depleted.

## DAY 5

In him and through faith in him we may approach  
God with freedom and confidence.

Ephesians 3:12, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** It is because we have placed our faith in Christ that we have all access to God. Go before Him today with freedom and confidence in your belief! Be bold in what you ask. And ask for it in all confidence, for we know He is capable of great things. Pray big!

## DAY 6

“This is what the Lord almighty says: ‘If you walk in obedience and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here.’”

Zechariah 3:7, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** It's easy to neglect our walk with God as we get busy in ministry, especially this time of year. Before our feet hit the floor in the morning, we're thinking of all the things we need to do for those special Easter events! Today, before you get distracted, seek to walk in His ways and keep His requirements.

## DAY 7

“In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”

John 16:23-24, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Isn't it exciting when we ask for something, and God delivers? Doesn't it bring such joy to your heart? Not everything turns out the way we hope and ask for, but God delights in our asking, and we delight in His answering! What do you want to ask God for today? It may be big or small, but whatever it is ask Him!

[illegible]

# MARCH : EASTER

## The Triumphal Entry

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Karen P. Kennemur, Preschool & Children's Ministry,  
Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

### DAY 1

The next day, when the large crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took palm branches and went out to meet him. They kept shouting: Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord—The King of Israel!

John 12:12-13, CSB

What comes to mind when you think of Palm Sunday? For many children's ministers or leaders, we often think of children, palm branches, and excitement! Can you see it in your mind? The children in your ministry gathering around you or their Bible study teacher to acquire a palm branch. Then assembling with other children to wave the branches and repeat, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The Scriptures tell us the crowd was excited to see Jesus. Jesus knew the cheers of the crowd would shortly change. I hope and pray that you remember the voices of children in your ministry praising Jesus. One of the joys of ministering to children is to see how they love Jesus with innocent sincerity. During this Easter season may we remember to praise Him for His amazing love for us and the calling He placed on our lives to minister to children and their families.

**Prayer Prompt:** Who are the children in your ministry? Say a prayer of thanksgiving and praise for the opportunities you have to teach, lead, and love children and their families.

## DAY 2

He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6b, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Isaiah 9:6 is a passage of Scripture we typically read at Christmas. But as Easter is approaching what a great time to praise Him as the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. What other names can you add to this list as you praise God today?

## DAY 3

Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of Joy!  
For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared,  
a great king over all the earth.

Psalms 47:1-2, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Do you remember the song, “If You are Happy and You Know It?” In the lyrics of this children’s song, the singer is instructed to say amen, clap your hands, and stomp your feet if he or she is happy. Children love this song. They sing with gusto as they shout “Amen,” clap their hands, and stomp their feet. As I listen and watch children sing with delight, I wonder if I sing with this much delight to the Lord. Pray for delightful praise in your life today.

## DAY 4

He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

Psalms 40:3, ESV

Prayer Prompt: Do you know people who are constantly singing throughout the day? My mom sang hymns throughout the day as long as I can remember. What did this say to me as a child and adult? It said to me that my mom was a happy, loving Christian who loved the Lord. Pray today that those who encounter you will know you are a happy, loving Christian who loves the Lord.

## DAY 5

Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God;  
for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting.

Psalms 147:1, ESV

Prayer Prompt: One of the best ways for me to feel close to God is by simply going outside to enjoy God’s beautiful world. A short walk around the block gives my mind a break and my voice a desire to sing God’s praises. I encourage you to enjoy something today that makes you feel close to God.



## DAY 6

Praise the Lord! Praise, O servants of the Lord,  
praise the name of the Lord!

Psalm 113:1, ESV

Prayer Prompt: Do your prayers of praise sometimes seem repetitive? Do you use the same words or phrases? Today voice a prayer of praise by reading from the book of Psalms. Perhaps instead of reading only the one verse listed above, read the entire chapter as a prayer of praise.

## DAY 7

My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,  
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

Psalm 145:21, NIV

Prayer Prompt: Palm Sunday for many Christians is the beginning of the Easter season. As you turn your attention to the crucifixion, praise God for loving us beyond our understanding. Praise God for giving mankind a second chance by sending Jesus to die on the cross to save us from our sins.

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# MARCH : EASTER

## The Crucifixion

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Karen P. Kennemur, Preschool & Children's Ministry,  
Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

### DAY 1

They took Jesus's body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the fragrant spices, according to the burial custom of the Jews. There was a garden in the place where he was crucified. A new tomb was in the garden; no one had yet been placed in it. They placed Jesus there...

John 19:40-42a, CSB

We can only imagine the emotions of Jesus' followers on the day of His crucifixion. They probably had many questions! What happened? Where was God? Why? Where do we go from here?

Have you ever found yourself in a place of doubt? Have you questioned God and asked why has He placed you in your ministry context? Have you ever pondered your calling? Why did God call you into ministry? Satan loves to place doubt in our minds.

When doubt comes, think back to the day God called you into ministry. Recollect the days and hours that He spoke to you. Remember the moment you realized God was calling you into ministry. When times of doubt arise, think back to those days and hours. Remember the calling God placed on your life. Turn to Hebrews 13:5 where the Lord says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Just like the early followers, even in the darkest hours God was with them. God is always with us.

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for your calling into the ministry. Thank him for the wisdom and experience he has allowed you to gain. Ask Him to continue to work through you in your ministry to children and families.

## DAY 2

The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.  
What can man do to me?

Hebrews 13:6, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Jesus’ followers were probably afraid and discouraged on the day of His crucifixion. We can feel a sense of fear, lostness, and discouragement in our ministries. In these times God is our only answer. Read Hebrews 13:6 as you pray today. Remember God is your helper. He will always carry you through difficult times.

## DAY 3

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people  
to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.

Joshua 1:6, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** God was speaking to Joshua in the verse above. Moses was dead and it was Joshua’s responsibility to lead the Jews to the promised land. Like Jesus’ followers before the resurrection, Joshua must have felt alone and confused. But God told him to “be strong and courageous” for he was the one to lead God’s people. Have you doubted your leadership? Your calling? Is God telling you to be strong and courageous? Ask God for strength and courage as you lead His people in His church.

## DAY 4

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial,  
for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life,  
which God has promised to those who love him.

James 1:12, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for steadfastness in your life and ministry. The workers you lead look to you for faithfulness to your family, your church, and to the Lord. They will gain strength from watching you remain steadfast.

## DAY 5

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.

Jeremiah 17:7, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Children are reminder of simple trust. Their childlike trust in God is refreshing. Have you stopped to listen to the prayers of children lately? Take time this Sunday, Easter Sunday, to listen to the prayers of children in your church. Listen to the trust in the Lord as they pray, even as they learn about the crucifixion. Thank the Lord for the words in Jeremiah and the trust of children.

## DAY 6

O Lord of hosts,  
blessed is the one who trusts in you!

Psalm 84:12, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** For many, the Easter season is a time of reflection. A time to reflect on God's love and grace for all mankind. As you meditate on God's love, think about trust. Do you trust the Lord in all aspects of life? Some might say to love is easy, to trust is difficult. In your prayers, pray trusting the Lord will lead you as you lead others.

## DAY 7

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,  
for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

James 1:2, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Do you remember learning how to ride a bike? I fell several times before I could balance and ride by myself. With practice I became quite the rider. Even though one learns how to ride a bike, it does not mean the crashes will not come. But each wreck or incident makes you a better bike rider. You become aware of your surroundings, looking for safe roads or paths for bike riding. Today's Scripture tells us that the bumps in the road or the "bike wrecks" in life test our faith and make us stronger. In your prayer, thank God for the steadfastness He is producing in you.

[illegible]

# MARCH : EASTER

## The Resurrection

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Karen P. Kennemur, Preschool & Children's Ministry,  
Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

### DAY 1

“He is not here. For he has risen, just as he said.  
Come and see the place where he lay.  
Then go quickly and tell his disciples,  
‘He has risen from the dead...’”

Matthew 28:6-7, CSB

The joy of being a children's minister is the privilege of telling children about Jesus and the salvation story! The wonder and delight seen in children's eyes when they read or hear the story of the empty tomb is exciting.

Years ago, I was the children's minister in a medium-sized church. Vacation Bible School was one of my favorite weeks of the year. Many of our church members were involved in the preparation and execution of the week, making it a wonderful experience for many. This particular year there were about 100 children in attendance. The gospel was presented to the older children on the second or third day of the week. Nineteen children became Christians that day. Twenty percent of those in attendance accepted the Lord. It was an exciting day! I am thankful the Lord allowed me to be a part of helping children come to know Him.

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank the Lord today for the privilege of telling His salvation story to children.

## DAY 2

We will not hide them from their children, but will tell a future generation the praiseworthy acts of the LORD, his might, and the wondrous works he has performed.

Psalm 78:4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for the Christian parents in your ministry as they lay the spiritual foundations for the children in their home. Pray that God shows you ways to walk beside these parents and help lay the spiritual foundations for their children. Pray for the children who do not have Christian parents. Ask the Lord to show you ways to lay the spiritual foundations in these children's lives.

## DAY 3

He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a new law in Israel,  
“which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children  
that the next generation might know.

Psalm 78:5-6, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** For some fathers teaching the Bible is uncomfortable. Some children will grow up never hearing their fathers pray. Pray for the fathers in your church. Pray that the Lord will give them boldness to teach their children and to speak prayers over them.

## DAY 4

They were to rise and tell their children so that they might put their confidence in God and not forget God's works, but keep his commands.

Psalm 78:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Life is busy for most families! Today pray for the families in your church. Pray specifically for parents as they tell their children throughout the day of God's works. Pray that parents will teach their children the ways of the Lord, even in the busyness of life.

## DAY 5

Apply yourself to discipline  
and listen to words of knowledge.

Proverbs 23:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** During the times that your church gathers, do you feel the eyes of others watching you? I grew up in a pastor's home. I knew people were watching how my parents parented and how I behaved! When I became a children's minister, I realized that people were now watching me parent. This is an uncomfortable reality. Proverbs 23:12 reminds us to apply discipline to ourselves. People are watching. Are we living out what we teach? Pray for areas in your life that are in need of discipline.



## DAY 6

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 everything I have commanded you. And remember,  
I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:19-20, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** We know this verse is the Great Commission. These were Christ's words to His disciples before He ascended to heaven. As Christians, we are to share the gospel with others and disciple them. As children's ministers, we are to tell children the salvation story, but we are also responsible for training our workers how to share the gospel with children. How many training opportunities do you provide for your workers? Do workers and teachers have opportunities to share the gospel with children? Ask God to help you train your leaders effectively. Ask God to work in the lives of the leaders and teachers as they share the gospel and disciple the children they lead.

## DAY 7

Don't let anyone despise your youth, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that the Lord gives you opportunities to encourage the children in your ministry to live out their faith despite their young age. Pray for them as they are examples to others of God's love.

[illegible]

# APRIL : PEACE

You May Have Peace

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Charlie Gatton, Cross Timbers Children's Camp & Childhood Ministry Partner  
Oklahoma Baptists



## DAY 1

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33, CSB

Recently I had the privilege of working with a master smith to forge a knife out of a railroad spike. It was an amazing transformation. We applied extreme heat until the metal was pliable. Then we pounded on it with a large hammer. Between the heat and the pounding a railroad spike became the shape of a knife. Yet it still required more work. Once the shape was there, it had to be ground on with sanding belts. At first the belts were very aggressive. This took a lot of metal away very quickly. The railroad spike started to look more like a knife, but it was still very rough. Next, we used a finer sanding belt to smooth out the rough edges. Then we used something like a scotch bright pad to refine it even more.

Just when I thought we were finished we moved to a leather wheel. Surely this would be all it takes! But there was one more step. The new knife had to be oiled. There were many steps to create the knife that was in the mind of the smith. He used heat, pressure, and abrasives to make that raw metal into a masterpiece. Sometimes we think that because we are Christians our lives should be trouble free. When trouble comes, we think God must be mad at us. Or that our sin has caused us trouble. Certainly, sin has consequences. But often God is using trouble to refine us into a stronger more useful person.

Allow God to work in and through your “troubles” to prepare you for times when you will be able to point others to God through their troubles. Troubles will come and go. Take heart! God may be using heat, pressure, and abrasives to make you into His masterpiece. God's steadfast love endures forever! Have peace.

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray to the Lord and express the troubles that may be weighing on your mind. Ask Him to help you be strong, faithful, and to be refined by it. Remember, He loves You and is with you.

## DAY 2

I wait for the Lord;  
I wait and put my hope in his word.

Psalms 130:5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask the Lord to help you wait on His timing and point you to His Word for guidance.

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## DAY 3

... but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

1 Peter 3:15, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that the Lord will allow your life to shine in such a way that others want to know what is different about you. Ask Him to help you be confident to share who He is and what He has done for you..

## DAY 4

“Because of our God’s merciful compassion, the dawn from on high will visit us to shine on those who live in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Luke 1:78-79, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Praise the Lord for His son Jesus! Pray for continued reliance on Him for peace.

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## DAY 5

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful.”

John 14:26-27, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In times of fear, trust in the Lord to provide you with peace. Thank the Lord for His steadfast love and peace in times of trouble.

## DAY 7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

## Philippians 4:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In times of hardship or busyness, it can be so easy to be overwhelmed. Thank the Lord for His peace even when there's no other reason for you to be at peace and He is the only reason.

# APRIL : PEACE

## The Author of Peace

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Cindy Middaugh, Children's Ministry Coordinator,  
SBC Virginia

### DAY 1

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 26:3, CSB

Simon Peter eagerly jumped out of the boat to walk toward Jesus on the waters of the Sea of Galilee. As he noticed the wind around him, he took his focus off Christ and began to sink into the waters below. Peter's focus shifted off the Giver of Peace and fear set in over his surroundings. When our surroundings take our attention away from Jesus, His love, and His power so freely given, we allow fear and doubt to hold us captive.

Even in the busyness of Vacation Bible School, managing summer camp, and scheduling volunteers to serve in children's ministry, we find peace when our focus is on Jesus. It is He that calms the storms of our lives and allows us to walk in perfect peace to accomplish His work in and through us. Peace can take you from where you are to the place God wants you to be.

**Prayer Prompt:** : What events on your schedule are causing doubt or uncertainty? What more could you accomplish by keeping your eyes on Christ? Ask God to give you the boldness to stay focused on Him as you plan and produce what is on your ministry schedule today.



## DAY 2

You let me rest in fields of green grass.  
You lead me to streams of peaceful water.

Psalm 23:2, CEV

**Prayer Prompt:** Whether caring for the sheep as a lad or ruling a stiff-necked people as Israel's king, David surely had moments where he depended on God for peace and rest. Much like the man after God's own heart, we can tire from shepherding the children in our care and leading those who serve with us in ministry. Pray today for this perfect peace and rest as you lean on His leading and not your

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## DAY 3

He gives strength to the weary and increases  
the power of the weak.

Isaiah 40:29, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Children's ministry work can drain your energy and fill many hours of each day. How do you refuel and refresh, allowing for the strength and peace to keep pressing on? Is prayer an essential part of your day? Thank our loving Father, who knows us the best, for giving us strength and the provisions we need to carry on the work He has called us to do.

## DAY 4

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be  
called sons of God.”

Matthew 5:9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** How can you lead children to be peacemakers? What examples in your own life show this important beatitude? As you prepare to teach the children this week, ask God to give you insight in how to teach them to be peacemakers in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods.

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## DAY 5

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me  
— practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:9, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Paul admonishes us to “pursue the things which make for peace” (Romans 14:19, KJV). When we practice the things we have learned and received from Scripture, we are promised the God of peace is our companion. Thank Him for the peace that is ours when we practice godly living. Ask God to create a deeper desire to love His Word and live it out.



## DAY 6

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Jonathan displayed the fruits of the Spirit in his friendship with David. Does your life bring harmony to those you call “friends?” Think of ways you can put on the peace of Christ with your friends and neighbors this week. Ask God for His peace to rule in your heart, especially when you are busy, tired, or discouraged.

## DAY 7

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Recruiting and managing volunteers in children’s ministry can be difficult. Are you only asking God to meet your ministry needs or are you spending time being thankful for the ministry He has given you? Today pray with an “attitude of gratitude” and give thanks for those who work alongside you.

[illegible]

# APRIL : PEACE

## Casting Our Cares

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Jenni Carter, Statewide Children's Consultant  
Georgia Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

## Casting all your cares on Him, because He cares about you.

1 Peter 5:7, CSB

The passage 1 Peter 5:7 was my mom's favorite verse. My mom was one of the happiest people on earth. Everyone loved my mom and sought to be with her. She brought joy to everyone she knew.

You would think that perhaps my mom lived a wonderful carefree life. But, by the world's standards, her life had lots of ups and downs. She grew up during the depression and her family moved to wherever her dad could find work as a welder. And then her dad died while she was a young teenager. She had two children, but the youngest one died in a robbery when he was working in a store during his college years. All her siblings also passed away long before she did. In her last years she fought a battle with cancer and lost her sight in her very last days. But she never lost her faith and lived out her favorite verse by casting her cares on her heavenly Father.

What's troubling you or causing you concern today? It may be finances, strained family relationships, wondering how you'll get everything done for work and home. Whatever it is – cast your cares on Him because He cares for you!

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**Prayer Prompt:** Make a list of the things that are robbing you from experiencing peace today. Then cast those cares on Him. Ask for His guidance in each of these areas.

## DAY 2

The Lord gives His people strength;  
The Lord blesses His people with peace.

Psalm 29:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What a wonderful promise we have in this Psalm. Thank God for blessing you with strength and with peace.

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## DAY 3

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful."

John 14:27, CSB

**Prayer Prompt** What's troubling you today or making you fearful? Lean into this truth – Jesus gives us peace – His peace. Pray for peace that only comes from Him.

## DAY 4

And let the peace of Christ, to which you were also called in one body, rule your hearts. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:15, CSB

**Prayer Prompt :** I love that peace and thankfulness are joined in this one verse. It's hard to not have peace when we're thankful. In your prayers today, thank God for all your blessings. And then let peace rule your heart.

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## DAY 5

May the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way.  
The Lord be with all of you.

2 Thessalonians 3:16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Our Lord is a God of peace. Pray and ask Him to give you peace IN EVERY WAY.

## DAY 6

And let him turn away from evil and do what is good.  
Let him seek peace and pursue it.

1 Peter 3:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Is there any evil from which you need to turn away? In this verse we're reminded that to have peace we must first turn away from evil, then do what is good and then seek peace and pursue it. Pursue is a strong word. It means we're not just idly waiting for peace; we run hard or fight to attain it. In your prayer today, ask God what you need to turn away from to pursue peace.

## DAY 7

I will both lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone,  
Lord, make me live in safety.

Psalm 4:8, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What's keeping you up at night? Whenever I have a big event coming up, (VBS, Easter Celebration, Fall Festival, etc.) I tend to have a hard time sleeping. Sometimes it helps to have a notepad and pen beside the bed to make notes as I think of them during the night. But the most helpful thing is a prayer for peace before I go to sleep. Pray for a good night's rest tonight.

[illegible]

# APRIL : PEACE

## A Heart Guarded by Peace

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Leigh Ann Stark Northwest Baptist Convention  
Pacific Northwest

### DAY 1

WEEK 4

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7, CSB

We guard our kids so they may know peace. As we lift our concerns to the Lord, He guards our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. The more we surrender, the more He protects.

There is someone who I consider a great mentor in ministry. She models this kind of faithfulness. Whether we are celebrating or needing assistance or direction, her first comment is always, "Let's pray about that." Over the years, her habit of rejoicing in the Lord and laying every petition at His feet has helped me develop a similar habit. Even when life is difficult, she is known as a woman of peace and prayer.

I have tried mental tricks like list making and looking at pictures of happy places, but nothing gives me emotional peace like spending time in prayer.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to make it your natural first response to pray, lifting your concerns to Him with thanksgiving.

DAY 2

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James:  
To those who are the called, loved by God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.  
May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

Jude 1:1-2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for calling you, loving you and giving you peace.

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DAY 3

Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable,  
whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely,  
whatever is commendable — if there is any moral excellence and if  
there is anything praiseworthy — dwell on these things.  
Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me,  
and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:8-9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt** Something negative can easily capture my focus and ruin my day. Ask God to help you focus on the good and true as a way of experiencing His peace.

DAY 4

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely.  
And may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept sound and blameless  
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** : The God of peace enables us to live a life that is holy and blameless.  
Confess anything that separates you from the God of peace.

DAY 5

Eli responded, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel  
grant the request you’ve made of him.”

1 Samuel 1:17, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Hannah poured out her desire for a child, then went in peace trusting God.  
What circumstance in your life needs to be poured out to the Lord? Ask Him to give you peace.



Isaiah 54:10, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for keeping a covenant of peace with you, regardless of the circumstances.

## 2 Peter 1:2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As you have experienced God multiply your peace, your knowledge of Him has also grown. Ask God to make you very aware of His presence and your peace as you go through the day.

# APRIL : PEACE

Live at Peace

WEEK 5

**Contributor:** Leigh Ann Stark Northwest Baptist Convention  
Pacific Northwest



## DAY 1

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Matthew 5:9, CSB

By nature, I desire friendship with everyone I meet. As a child, when I encountered difficult people, Mom told me, “Kill them with kindness.” This attitude enabled me to face rudeness with a smile, return anger with gentleness, see beyond a cold shoulder. Some have been wounded and are unable to trust or care for fear of being hurt again. They are naturally defensive and seem unkind. Repeated displays of peace can help them heal.

Sometimes my tone of voice is harsh without my knowing it. People misunderstand my tone as anger. My husband has helped me by gently asking if I am as angry as I sound. As I have been made aware, I have intentionally calmed my voice and am learning to speak with gentleness. This step is helping me live more peacefully with my family and co-workers.

Some people are difficult to serve or to serve with. We can only take responsibility for our words and actions. We can choose to pray for them, show kindness, and do our best to live in peace with those around us.

**Prayer Prompt:** Smile and say, “Hello!” to someone today. Ask God who you need to respond to with peace.



DAY 2

Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to give recognition to those who labor among you and lead you in the Lord and admonish you, and to regard them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to use others to show you how to be at peace with everyone and to make you willing to hear the admonishment of those who love you enough to help.

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DAY 3

Better a dry crust with peace than a house full of feasting with strife.

Proverbs 17:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Is your home a place of peace or strife? Confess your part in any conflict and ask God to show you how to live in peace with those closest to you.

DAY 4

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Matthew 5:44, CSB

**Prayer Prompt :** Some people are difficult to serve or to serve with. Lift them to the Prince of Peace and ask Him how He wants you to live at peace with them.

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DAY 5

Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Take the lead in honoring one another If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:10, 18, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to show you how to honor others so you can live at peace with them.

## DAY 6

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice. Become mature, be encouraged, be of the same mind, be at peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Corinthians 13:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As a person of peace, ask God how you can build up and encourage those around you. Thank the God of love and peace for enabling you to live at peace with others.

## DAY 7

Therefore welcome one another, just as Christ also welcomed you, to the glory of God...  
Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe so that you may  
overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:7,13, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask the Lord to fill you with joy and peace as you build relationships with those who need the hope only Christ can give.

[illegible]





# MAY : PATIENCE

Sing a New Song

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Cheryl Markland, Children & Family Ministries Strategist  
Baptist State Convention of North Carolina



## DAY 1

WEEK 1

Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:5-7, NIV



In the world of children's ministry, we often function in a "hurry up and wait" mode. Finding last minute substitutes. Hoping for volunteers to agree to serve. Waiting on staff leadership to make a decision that impacts our planning. All of this taxes our patience and can challenge our mental reserve. It is said that patience is a virtue, but children's ministry can make us feel less than virtuous with our need for and lack of patience.

It is interesting to note that patience rides between "peace" and "kindness" in the list of the Fruits of the Spirit. Without the buffer of peace and a desire to show kindness, patience would most likely get lost. It is wonderful to know that the Lord offers a way to find the patience we need, and He makes it so simple: ask for it with a trusting heart, no matter the situation, and He will guard your heart (and mouth) in Christ Jesus! What an amazing promise and gift.

**Prayer Prompt:** What situations or events do you think will tax your patience this coming week?

Pray for God's perfect peace which makes patience possible. Pray for opportunities to exhibit kindness when stretched by life's challenges. Trust God to provide what you need in amazing ways that transcend your understanding of Him and remember to offer thanksgiving for this provision through Jesus Christ.

## DAY 2

The LORD is good to those who wait for him,  
to the person who searches for him. It is good to hope and wait patiently  
for the LORD's salvation.

Lamentations 3:25-26, ISV

**Prayer Prompt:** Learning to live expectantly and watch for the fulfillment of God's plan and purpose will build your patience and your faith. It can change your perspective on your current situation. For what are you praying and waiting expectantly on God to provide or do in your life? Pray for a clear view of His work in your life today.

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## DAY 3

Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart be courageous.  
Wait for the LORD.

Psalms 27:14, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for encouragement, patience, and strength as you wait for the Lord to answer your most deeply held requests and desires. Submit them to Him daily and watch for His work in your life.

## DAY 4

Nevertheless, the LORD will wait so he can be gracious to you; and thus  
he will rise up to show you mercy. For the LORD is a God of justice.  
How blessed are all those who wait for him.

Isaiah 30:18, ISV

**Prayer Prompt:** Sometimes leadership is a lonely place where you can feel forgotten or neglected. Know that God's presence is promised when the answers you seek are not quickly provided. Pray for patience in the waiting, trusting God's will and desire is to be gracious and to show mercy to you. Seek His blessing in the wait.

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## DAY 5

Be joyful in hope, patient in trouble,  
and persistent in prayer.

Romans 12:12, ISV

**Prayer Prompt:** Finding joy and patience as you wait for God to work during times of trouble and discouragement can be difficult. Know that He is always working behind the scenes to make His plan a reality. Pray for a change of heart within yourself as you surrender to His will with patience and joy.



## DAY 6

But if we look forward to something we don't yet have,  
we must wait patiently and confidently.

Romans 8:25, NET

**Prayer Prompt:** At times, God’s answer to your prayers is wait. Waiting well requires patience and maturity that we may not feel if we are anxious about our situation. As you pray for patience, trust God’s “wait,” knowing that His desire is to be gracious and merciful to you as you grow in maturity and the wisdom of what it means to be a Christ follower.

## DAY 7

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:  
With the Lord a day is like a thousand years,  
and a thousand years are like a day.

2 Peter 3:8, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Isn't it funny how time flies when you are having fun and drags when you are bored or in a place you don't want to be? Do you look forward to heaven where the light always shines, and time loses its meaning and grip on our lives? Pray for the awareness of God's presence at all times so the "light of His love" brings hope, joy and peace to every situation.

[illegible]

# MAY : PATIENCE

## Patience in our Relationships with Others

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Cheryl Markland, Children & Family Ministries Strategist  
Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

### DAY 1

Always be humble and gentle. Patiently put up with each other and love each other. Try your best to let God's Spirit keep your hearts united.

Do this by living at peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3, CEV

Always be humble and gentle. Patiently put up with each other and love each other. Try your best to let God's Spirit keep your hearts united. Do this by living at peace.

Read the story of Abram and Lot in Genesis 13. Dealing with those who always prioritize their own interest above others can be a real challenge for ministry leaders. Recruiting for volunteers who say no because they "need to be fed" or won't make time to serve can be hard to handle. Sharing limited resources like people's time and real estate with other ministries can be stressful, especially if you feel your needs are not a priority.

Genesis 13 shares the account of Abram and Lot, close relatives who both tried to use the same resources for their flocks and families. When the hired hands who took care of the herds quarreled over the land, Abram showed wisdom and grace and offered to divide the land God had promised to him with his nephew, Lot. He unselfishly gave Lot first choice of a portion of the land. Lot chose the lushest part near the Jordan and Abram left to move his herds and family elsewhere. Even though it looks like Lot won the conflict, we know that his decision led to terrible consequences for himself and his family. Abram was richly blessed by God for his wise and thoughtful decision.

Abram's patience with his nephew was a virtue that led to great blessings from God. As you work with others in your church, be sure your patience will honor God's desire for unity.

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for peace, understanding, and grace that leads to God-honoring responses and reactions when you face conflict with others.

## DAY 2

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters:  
 You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.  
 Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

James 1:19-20, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Godly anger comes from pure motives and hatred of sin. If we are not careful, lack of patience that yields human anger and harmful actions can lead to the sin that God hates. Pray for God's wisdom in knowing how and when to respond to conflict with patience and a godly perspective.

## DAY 3

Let's not get tired of doing what is good,  
 for at the right time we will reap a harvest  
 —if we do not give up.

Galatians 6:9, ISV

**Prayer Prompt:** As you move from spring to summer ministries, your body and soul may be screaming for rest or you may be pumped for what God has in store. Summer ministries can be some of the most fruitful of the year with VBS, camp, and other opportunities to reach the children and families of your community. Pray for blessed times of rest, holy moments with God, refreshment, and encouragement as you anticipate the days of summer so that you can meet its challenges with patience.

## DAY 4

God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you.  
 So you should always clothe yourselves with mercy, kindness, humility,  
 gentleness, and patience.

Colossians 3:12, NCV

**Prayer Prompt:** Every morning we face our closet and decide what we will wear that day. It is our choice! Colossians 3:12 reminds us that we have choice about what we should wear each day. Pray for wisdom to choose mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience for your inner garments and for actions and words that coordinate with each one.

## DAY 5

He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday. Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.

Psalms 37:6-7, NRSV

**Prayer Prompt:** Many successful ministry leaders struggle with control issues. This verse reminds us that God asks us to relinquish our need for control and to trust Him. Trust Him for justice, mercy, and sustaining grace when you may feel that you can't win. Know that He is the God of all good things and wants what is best for you. Watch and patiently wait for Him to act for your best and His glory.

## DAY 6

But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners,  
Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for  
those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

## 1 Timothy 1:16, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for His mercy and patience with us as we seek His will for each new day. Pray for opportunities to share your redemption story and the offer of abundant and eternal life through Him.

## DAY 7

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud.

Love is not rude, is not selfish, and does not become angry easily.

Love does not remember wrongs done against it.

## 1 Corinthians 13:4-5, ICB

**Prayer Prompt:** Often our conflict with others comes from our refusal to forget past hurts that may not even involve the person with whom you have a conflict. Lack of trust and an inability to heal come from keeping score and holding grudges. Pray for a loving heart that is patient and thoughtful. Surrender to God your scoreboard and ask Him to heal you so that you can serve with a divine love.

[illegible]

# MAY : PATIENCE

At Just the Right Time

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Patty Burns, Preschool Specialist and VBS Promoter  
Alabama Baptist Board of Missions

## DAY 1

So let us not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

Galatians 6:9, NLT

I recently taught a Sunday School lesson on the Fruit of the Spirit. As I prepared to teach, I looked up the definition of patience, which reads, "The power or capacity to endure delay without complaint."

Waiting. I do not know anyone who likes to wait. Much of our lives is spent waiting for something. It might be as simple as sitting at a traffic light or standing in line at Wal-Mart, maybe it is the waiting room of a doctor's office, or in the que line at your favorite amusement park. Whether the wait is for your favorite rollercoaster, an unknown test result, or just a two-minute red light – waiting is hard.

When Queen Esther was brought upsetting news that Haman, who despised the Jews, wanted them all killed, she had a decision to make. Her cousin, Mordecai, wanted her to act quickly, but Esther felt waiting and fasting for three days would be the wise thing to do. That three days must have seemed like forever. But God, He is in the waiting, and at just the right time He reveals His will and plan for us. We can learn so much as we wait. We learn to be better listeners, our faith grows, and we find strength to do what God has called us to do.

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you in a period of waiting? How is your patience holding up? Are you enduring without complaint? When in a season of waiting, ask God to lead you to friends or family who can pray and wait with you.

## DAY 2

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him.

Psalm 40:1-3, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** When we ask God for His help, we must be patient, knowing at the right time He will reveal His answers. As you wait, thank God for hearing your prayers and for answering them.

## DAY 3

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent... And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved.

2 Peter 3:9,15a, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** God is not slow; He is on His own timetable. Today remember that in all things God has a perfect plan and purpose. Thank Him for revealing His plan at just the right time.

## DAY 4

But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:30-31, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Strength will rise when we wait upon the Lord. I love to sing Scripture! Today, as you are trying to patiently wait on what lies before you – sing to Him and thank Him for giving you the strength you need in this very moment.

## DAY 5

Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust Him, and He will help you... Be still in the presence of the LORD and wait patiently for Him to act.

Psalm 37:5,7a, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** When we commit everything to the Lord, it includes our waiting. Today trust God, believing He is control of all things and He has your best in mind. Trust Him to work everything out for your good and His glory.



## DAY 6

At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Day 6: Luke 2:25-26, NLT

**Prayer Prompt :** I think it could be said that Simeon was a patient man. We don't know how long he waited to see the Messiah – but we do know that God made a promise, and He keeps them! Maybe you have been praying about something for a long time – don't give up hope! God hears your prayers and at just the right time He will give you answers.

## DAY 7

Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

Day 7: Psalm 27:14, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Jochebed had a baby boy named Moses. Pharaoh said he had to be killed. As a mom I can't imagine what she was going through. These were very dark times for God's people, and Jochebed had to find strength, beyond her own understanding, to wait and trust God to protect Moses. Perhaps you are currently walking through dark days, and you need strength to wait until God's answers and His timing are revealed. In dark moments, pray for strength that can only come from Him to help you as you patiently wait on Him.

[illegible]

# MAY : PATIENCE

## Patience is Found in Hope

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Matt Flanagan, Children & Student Ministry Consultant  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

### DAY 1

I am certain that I will see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Wait for the Lord.

Psalms 27:13-14, CSB

Have you ever prayed for patience? For many of us, this isn't our favorite prayer. It seems like a recipe for not getting what you want now. However, for believers, we know that patience is founded in hope. When we are hopeful and confident of the outcome, patience is easier. Patiently waiting for a child in college to come home over summer break is infinitely easier than patiently waiting for the results of a medical exam.

What is the psalmist David instructing when he says to wait for the Lord? How does a believer in Christ posture themselves when we aren't seeing His goodness (v 13)? Many of us wait in a passive manner. When we arrive at the restaurant and are asked to wait for a table, we simply stand and idly wait until our name is called. How we use those minutes do not influence our meal. Being patient and waiting on the Lord is not a passive manner, it is an intentional resolve to be faithful in the current situation until the Lord moves upon our request. And if we don't see this move, we continue to be faithful.

The psalmist instructs us to be strong and have courage as we wait. We bring glory to God as we confidently hope in Him. Remember, it is not the action that provides the hope, it is the person of God. He is faithful and He will move. Be patient and trust in His care.

**Prayer Prompt:** Read through Psalm 27 and think through all the ways that David trusted in the Lord. Then, as you pray a prayer of thanksgiving, ask God to grant you the strength and courage to patiently wait on Him in all things.

## DAY 2

Patience is better than power, and controlling  
one's emotions, than capturing a city.

Proverbs 16:32, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray the Lord would give you patience over your emotions and grant you the steadiness that comes with godly living.

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## DAY 3

Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction;  
be persistent in prayer.

Romans 12:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you walking through difficult times and affliction? Pray that God would grant you patience to rejoice and stand strong during this difficult season.

## DAY 4

A patient person shows great understanding,  
but a quick-tempered one promotes foolishness.

Proverbs 14:29, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** A quick temper leads to foolish decisions. Pray today that God would bless you with patience to listen and think before you speak.

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## DAY 5

The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay,  
but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish  
but all to come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** The Lord perfectly models patience as He delays His judgement and more come to repentance. Pray that the Lord will give you opportunities to share His gospel as you patiently seek to lead others to Christ.

## DAY 6

Be silent before the Lord and wait expectantly for Him;  
do not be agitated by one who prospers in His way, by the person  
who carries out evil plans.

Psalm 37:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** : Does it seem as those who do evil prosper while the godly struggle? Pray today that you will be expectantly patient for His judgement on not lose heart of temporary matters.

## DAY 7

Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up.

Galatians 6:9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** You are making a difference as a kids' ministry leader. Don't give up! Pray that God will give you the patience and endurance to continue doing good.

[illegible]





# JUNE : KINDNESS

Be Kind and Compassionate  
to One Another

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Matt Flanagan, Children & Student Ministry Consultant  
Kentucky Baptist Convention



## DAY 1

WEEK 1

Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.

Ephesians 4:31-32, CSB



Have you ever found yourself exhausted with watching the news, following politics, or simply scrolling through social media? Today's social discourse is not for the faint hearted. When did it become the norm to treat one another with contempt simply because you had a differing viewpoint? There are entire shows in news and sports developed so people to argue their points. Can't we all just play nice?

You may have noticed in many homes in your area with signs asking folks to "just be kind." This is good encouragement for our world. As a follower of Christ, we should model this social grace in both the Church and to the world.

As kids ministry leaders, we never set out to be unkind. However, the business of ministry often stresses us and causes us to miss the mark in how we treat other people. Perhaps you are stressed this week over upcoming VBS and summer camp preparation. Don't allow internal stresses to shortchange the grace you give to others.

In our text, Paul is pleading with believers to be kind to one another, which opens the heart to being both compassionate and quick to forgive.

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank the Lord for His loving kindness demonstrated to you in Jesus. Pray that you would treat those in your family, church, and community with this same kindness. Confess where you have allowed your internal pressures to withhold kindness to others.



## DAY 2

Therefore as God’s chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive. Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Colossians 3:12-14, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Whether you begin your day with coffee, exercise, preparing kids for school, or simply rushing to get ready yourself, take time to pray that God gives you grace to put on kindness first and wear it the entire day.

## DAY 3

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that your love for others would be expressed through the kindness in which you treat them. Pray that others would see the kindness of God in you today.

## DAY 4

Kindness to the poor is a loan to the Lord,  
and he will give a reward to the lender.

Proverbs 19:17, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that God would open your heart to share a special kindness today with someone less fortunate in possessions, friendships, opportunities, etc.

## DAY 5

“But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone hits you on the cheek, offer the other also. And if anyone takes away your coat, don’t hold back your shirt either. Give to everyone who asks you, and from someone who takes your things, don’t ask for them back.”

Luke 6:27-30, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** I encourage you to read the full passage of Luke 27-36. As you read this passage, consider the ways that Jesus has called us to be kind to those who oppose us. Pray that God’s kindness would be revealed through your actions today.



## DAY 7

Therefore consider God's kindness and severity:  
severity toward those who have fallen but God's kindness toward you  
– if you remain in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

Romans 11:22, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend time in prayer today examining God's gracious kindness that He has shown you through your salvation. God is the perfect picture of kindness. In your prayer, reflect on this characteristic of God.

# JUNE : KINDNESS

## Kindness that is Undeserved

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Jack Lucas, Leadership Development Director  
Illinois Baptist State Association

### DAY 1

WEEK 2

“I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.” And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

Luke 15:19-20, ESV

This may not be the first passage that comes to mind when you think of kindness. But the kindness displayed by the father in the parable of the prodigal son is powerful. We often see this as a story of love and forgiveness, which of course it is in part, but it is also a story of kindness.

In the story, the father recognizes the repentance of the son and forgives immediately. This is a direct reflection of the forgiveness God extends to us as we repent. There are going to be people in your ministry (parents, students, other staff members, etc.) who hurt you and are hard to love. Will you show them kindness? Will you go above and beyond and show them kindness even if they are not repentant? That’s not easy. But it is necessary.

Abram’s patience with his nephew was a virtue that led to great blessings from God. As you work with others in your church, be sure your patience will honor God’s desire for unity.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God for strength to show kindness to those who are often difficult to love in your ministry. Seek his forgiveness for any lack of kindness you may have harbored in your heart toward them.

## DAY 2

A man who is kind benefits himself,  
but a cruel man hurts himself.

Proverbs 11:17, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** It may seem that kindness is for the benefit of the recipient. But the Bible indicates that there is benefit for the one showing kindness as well. Pray that God will give you a better understanding of how obedience to His mandates improves your relationship with him. Ask God to give you opportunities to show kindness today. Thank God for the benefits that come from caring for others, both for you and for them.

## DAY 3

He has told you, O man, what is good and what does  
the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** One goal of the Christian life is to be more like God daily and to walk closely with Him. Micah 6:8 indicates that one way to walk closely to God is to love kindness. Pray that God will give you a love for showing kindness and opportunities to do so.

## DAY 4

Let a righteous man strike me — that is a kindness; let him rebuke me  
— that is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it,  
for my prayer will still be against the deeds of evildoers.

Psalms 141:5, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Can you see kindness in correction? The psalmist indicates that when done with proper motives, correction and rebuke are actually an act of kindness. Ask God to send people into your life who care enough about you to offer correction when you need it. Pray that God will give you a heart to care enough about others to gently bring correction to their lives when needed.

## DAY 5

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this:  
to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself  
unstained from the world.

James 1:27, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Showing kindness to those who are in need or helpless holds a special place in the eyes of the Lord. Ask God to open doors for you to minister to those who are lonely and in need. Pray that God will show you opportunities to involve your kid's ministry in these endeavors.

## DAY 6

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:19, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** God has shown us the ultimate kindness in sending Jesus. This should naturally lead to a desire in us to show kindness to others. Ask God to give you a heart that naturally defaults to kindness to others. Pray for daily opportunities to live out that kindness outside of the church family as well.

## DAY 7

And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

Luke 5:18-20, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** The greatest kindness you can show someone is to introduce them to Jesus. Are you a friend that will go to any lengths to bring someone to Jesus? Pray that God will put people in your path that you can introduce to Him. Ask God to give you the boldness to tell others about Jesus.

[illegible]

# JUNE : KINDNESS

## God's Kindness Toward Us

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Vicki Hulsey, Childhood Specialist  
Tennessee Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

WEEK 3

But God who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:4-7, CSB

As a young child, I regularly heard stories from the Bible at home and church. I repeated those stories to anyone that would listen. I loved singing songs about Jesus and memorizing verses from the Bible. While I knew many facts from the Bible, I remember the day that head knowledge became heart knowledge.

At a backyard Bible club, I heard a leader share why Jesus had to die on the cross. It was as if I was hearing parts of that story for the very first time. I became sad as I realized that Jesus died on that cross because of things I had done wrong. Jesus took my punishment. While I had always loved hearing and telling the stories of Jesus, it was that day that I fell in love with Jesus, amazed at what He had done for me. Ephesians 2:4 begins with such hope.

Before Christ, I was dead in my sin, "BUT GOD" saved me by His grace. Verse 7 reminds us that His kindness didn't end there but continues in the ages to come. As kids ministry leaders, we must share Jesus with kids in such a way that they will fall in love with Jesus, amazed at what He did for them on the cross.

**Prayer Prompt:** How did you first realize God's great love for you? Make a list of how He continues to show His kindness to you. Thank God for the opportunity to teach kids about the most important things they will ever learn - God's plan for their lives and how He wants them to live.

## DAY 2

But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us – not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy – through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Titus 3:4-6, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Parents aren't always kind when things don't go how they think they should. Ask God to help you to show kindness even when it's hard.

## DAY 3

“For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake,  
But My loving kindness will not be removed from you,  
And My covenant of peace will not be shaken,”  
Says the Lord who has compassion on you.

Isaiah 54:10, NASB (1995)

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God that His love is the same for you today, tomorrow, and forever. Assure kids in your ministry God will never stop loving them.

## DAY 4

They refused to obey, and they were not mindful of Your wonders that You did among them. But they hardened their necks, and in their rebellion they appointed a leader to return to their bondage. But You are God, ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness, and did not forsake them.

Nehemiah 9:17, NKJV

**Prayer Prompt:** How do you respond to a child refusing to obey? Ask God to help you be ready to forgive, slow to anger, and abundant in kindness.

## DAY 5

How precious is Your loving kindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

Psalms 36:7, NASB (1995)

**Prayer Prompt:** The psalmist reminds us that God's loving kindness is precious. Take a few moments to thank God for the many blessings of His loving kindness toward you.



## DAY 7

Blessed be the LORD, For He has made marvelous  
His loving kindness to me in a besieged city.

Psalm 31:21 NASB (1995)

**Prayer Prompt:** Have you ever felt persecuted while serving God? Thank God that you can run to Him in times of trouble.

# JUNE : KINDNESS

## Extraordinary Kindness

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Jenni Carter, Statewide Children's Consultant  
Georgia Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

The local people showed us  
extraordinary kindness. They lit a fire and took  
us all in, since it was raining and cold.

Acts 28:2, CSB

Extraordinary kindness! When the boat Paul was on shipwrecked and they made their way to the island of Malta, the local people, the islanders, showed extraordinary kindness. How wonderful to be known for showing extraordinary kindness. It's easy to be kind to those who are kind and especially to those we know. But these islanders didn't know these people who came up on their shore. Regardless, they took them in and lit a fire because it was cold and raining.

Sometimes we get so caught up in our own crazy busy lives that we don't notice those around us who are struggling and need to be shown kindness. The truth is everyone is struggling in some way or another. We need to show kindness to everyone we meet. I love that the Bible uses the phrase "extraordinary kindness!" Extraordinary means going beyond what is usual, regular, or customary.

What have you done this month to show extraordinary kindness? Have you done something that has gone beyond what is usual or customary to be kind to someone? I love hearing stories of "Random Acts of Kindness," but I think I would love to hear stories of "Extraordinary Acts of Kindness." Let's start a new trend – Extraordinary Acts of Kindness!

**Prayer Prompt:** As you pray today, ask God to reveal to you someone that needs an extraordinary act of kindness.

## DAY 2

She opens her mouth with wisdom,  
and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

Proverbs 31:36, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** This verse is taken from the chapter about the Wife of Noble Character. But we can all pray and ask God to help us teach with wisdom and kindness.

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## DAY 3

Therefore encourage one another and build  
each other up as you are already doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As I write this, I just finished a week of teaching Missions at our VBS. One day I asked the kids what acts of kindness we could show to others. One little boy answered that we could give people compliments. Ask God to reveal to you someone who needs some kind encouraging words today. Give compliments, encourage others, and build others up.

## DAY 4

Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul  
and healthy for the body.

Proverbs 16:24, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to help you use kind words today with everyone. I think it's sweet to the soul and healthy for the body for both those who speak them and for those who hear them.

---

## DAY 5

The Lord of Armies says this: “Make fair decisions.  
Show faithful love and compassion to one another.”

Zechariah 7:9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** When helping to settle disputes between kids (and sometimes adults) it's hard to know what to do. Everyone has their version of what happened. As you go about your day today, ask God to help you make fair decisions and to show love and compassion to everyone.

## DAY 6

Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved,  
put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Colossians 6:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As you serve in children’s ministry today, only God knows what you may encounter. Things may go as planned, schedules may stay intact, and all your volunteers may show up. But there’s a likely chance that something unexpected may happen. As you pray, ask God to help you be compassionate, kind, gentle, and patient.

## DAY 7

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy,  
is not boastful, is not arrogant.

## 1 Corinthians 13:4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** It doesn't matter what the size of your kids ministry may be, there's always someone down the street or in another part of the state that's smaller than yours and one that's larger than yours. We should never compare our ministries; we should only serve God in the church and community where He has placed us. We also shouldn't envy our fellow kids ministers who may have a larger ministry or be boastful or arrogant if ours is larger than others. Pray to ask God to help you be patient and kind with kids, with adults, and with fellow kids ministries.

[illegible]





# JULY : GOODNESS

## The Good Shepherd

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Katy Parker, Children's and Women's Ministry Strategist  
Baptist Convention New Mexico



## DAY 1

WEEK 1

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, since he is not the shepherd and doesn't own the sheep, leaves them and runs away when he sees a wolf coming. The wolf then snatches and scatters them. This happens because he is a hired hand and doesn't care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father.

I lay down my life for the sheep.”

John 10:11-15 CSB



When people wrestle with their faith in God, they often fixate on His existence and capabilities. Is He real and able to do all that He claims? But faith in Him should also be informed by God's goodness. Do we truly believe that God is good? Jesus addresses this in the book of John. He paints the picture of the Good Shepherd—one who is intrinsically invested in the welfare of His sheep and would even lay down His life for them. The Shepherd's goodness is not dependent on the sheep's behavior; He is good to them simply because they are His. He is also not deterred by the presence of the wolves, and His unchanging goodness is part of His nature. In ministry, difficult and challenging seasons are inevitable, and it can be easy to feel discouraged and question God. In those moments, spend some time meditating on the ways you've seen the goodness of God. The Good Shepherd is always with you.

**Prayer Prompt:** Recount the goodness of God in your life. Spend some time writing out all the ways that He has been good to you. Ask God to continue to bring this to your mind when you are going through challenging seasons.



## DAY 2

“God saw all that he had made,  
and it was very good indeed.”

Genesis 1:31 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend some time praising God the Creator. Think on everything that He perfectly formed and called into existence. Marvel at what He has made and sustained.

---

## DAY 3

“You planned evil against me; God planned it for good...”

Genesis 50:20 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Even though sin is pervasive and powerful, we know that God made a way to restore what was broken. Humbly ask that God would reveal any sin in your life that still needs to be dealt with, and pray for Him to help you walk in a way that pleases Him.

## DAY 4

“Taste and see that the LORD is good.  
How happy is the person who takes refuge in him!”

Psalms 34:8 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In a busy life and ministry, time with God often becomes a task to check off the daily to-do list. Ask that God would give you a hunger for more of Him—that He would teach you to sit in His presence and rest in His goodness.

---

## DAY 5

“Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children.”

Ephesians 5:1 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ponder the ways that you can reflect the goodness of God in your life and ministry. Pray He would remind you of His goodness, and ask Him to help you imitate this part of His character.



## DAY 6

“How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.”

Romans 10:14-15, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Make a list of three to five people whom you know have not experienced the goodness of God. Ask God for opportunities to share the good news with them in the next week. Pray for boldness to share, and pray their hearts would be ready to “taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8).

## DAY 7

“If anyone speaks, let it be as one who speaks God’s words; if anyone serves, let it be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”

1 Peter 4:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As you lead in ministry, God has given you children, families, and volunteers to shepherd. Pray for wisdom and strength to do this well. Ask God to help you model His goodness, speak with His words, and serve with His strength.

[illegible]

# JULY : GOODNESS

## The Goodness of God

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Jamie Brown, Childhood Ministry Strategist  
Missouri Baptist

### DAY 1

“Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!  
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!”

Psalm 34:8, ESV

It’s funny...we seem to think that we can enhance the very nature of goodness. We use words like great, better, best, awesome, and amazing, and in doing so, we have settled for a lesser understanding of what it means to be good. Implying that what is good is lesser than what is great has tripped us up in our understanding of God. While we may acknowledge the sweetness of the words “the Lord is good,” I think we miss the power of them. Psalm 34:8 shows us, though, that sweetness and power go hand in hand. His goodness is sweet, worth tasting and experiencing. But it is also strong, and we can confidently take refuge in Him.

David seems to have a grander understanding of goodness, and he uses lofty terminology throughout Psalm 34. Big concepts like continual praise, magnification and exaltation, deliverance and radiance, and the encamping of angels. God’s goodness is reflected in His creation, carried out in all His ways, revealed in His word, fulfilled in the gospel, and advanced through His people. That is powerful! “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!”

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**Prayer Prompt:** Are you experiencing both the sweetness and the power of God’s goodness? Consider the attributes of God, and spend time in praise acknowledging His goodness.

## DAY 2

“Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever! Who can utter the mighty deeds of the  
LORD, or declare all his praise?”

Psalms 106:1-2, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Yes, the psalmist offers a rhetorical question, but go ahead and give it a try. Spend a little time today recounting His mighty deeds, declaring His praise, and thanking Him for His steadfast love.

---

## DAY 3

“Thus says the LORD: ‘Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths,  
where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.’”

Jeremiah 6:16, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to reveal His path to you today so that you might find rest, remaining in His goodness. Look and find His way, and pray for the strength to walk in it

## DAY 4

“Teach me good judgment and knowledge,  
for I believe in your commandments...  
You are good and do good; teach me your statutes.”

Psalms 119:66 and 68, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you holding close to His word? Find goodness in His commands and pray that the Holy Spirit would instruct you so that you will bear His image.

---

## DAY 5

“I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from  
doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they  
may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them  
in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.”

Jeremiah 32:40-41, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** The gospel is so very good! Praise God for the everlasting covenant He made with us through Jesus. Thank Him today for not turning away from us and planting us in Christ.

## DAY 6

“To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

## 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** His powerful goodness extends into the lives of believers through that gift of faith. Thank Him for the goodness of His grace, pray that He fulfills His good work in you by His power, and pray that Jesus is glorified in you today.

## DAY 7

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,  
equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that  
which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom  
be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Hebrews 13:20-21, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** You are equipped with every good thing! The working of His will is the gospel being proclaimed. Ask God to give you an opportunity to share the gospel today. Pray that the resurrection power of God, which has equipped you, will be powerfully at work through the advancement of the gospel.

# JULY : GOODNESS

## Showing Goodness Through Everything We Do

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Emily Smith, Children's Ministry Specialist  
Arkansas State Baptist Convention

### DAY 1

“We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”

Romans 8:28, CSB

I recall too many times in ministry fretting about a situation, only to look back and realize that God was in control the whole time. He was always at work, making sure everything worked together for good and that His goodness would be exemplified. Being called to ministry—His purpose—we must be willing to display goodness in everything we do, even when it seems impossible.

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to fill you with His goodness and for His goodness to overflow to others in your life. Ask him to reveal someone to whom you can show His goodness today.

## DAY 2

“The LORD is good to everyone; his compassion rests  
on all he has made.”

Psalms 145:9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for creating you and instilling His goodness in you. Ask God to continue to pour out His goodness in your life.

## DAY 3

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever  
things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely,  
whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything  
praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”

Philippians 4:8, NKJV

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend time in prayer, asking God to help you exemplify these virtues in your life. Ask him to cleanse your heart and mind where you have strayed.

## DAY 4

“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.  
Walk as children of light— for the fruit of the light consists of all goodness,  
righteousness, and truth...”

Ephesians 5:8-9, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to let His light shine on your life today. You are a child of the King—bask in His radiance. Pray for God to let goodness, righteousness, and truth be exemplified in your daily walk with Him.

## DAY 5

“How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who  
fear you. In the presence of everyone you have acted for those  
who take refuge in you.”

Psalms 31:19, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Listen to the song “How Great is Our God.” Meditate on the words, make time to take refuge in God’s goodness, and give Him your praise!



## DAY 6

“For the LORD is good, and his faithful love endures forever;  
his faithfulness, through all generations.”

Psalm 100:5,CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God's love will forever sustain you and surround you in ministry. Pray for God to equip you with goodness to do His will in your life today.

## DAY 7

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

Psalm 23:6, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Rest assured when we follow God—the true shepherd—in our daily walk, goodness and mercy are sure to follow. Give Him praise and spend time today dwelling at His feet.

[illegible]

# JULY : GOODNESS

## Showing Goodness Despite Our Circumstances

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Emily Smith, Children's Ministry Specialist  
Arkansas State Baptist Convention

### DAY 1

“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.  
His faithful love endures forever

Psalms 136:1 CSB

When I was growing up, my youth minister always told us, “God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good.” Over the years, we repeated this saying numerous times, but it wasn’t until later that I came to better understand its meaning. I needed to show God’s goodness despite my circumstances. In ministry, there will come times when difficult situations make it hard to experience goodness or show it to others. But think of Jesus—when faced with the cross, He persevered and did the will of His Father. Jesus still taught His disciples, He still healed the hurting, He still loved all people, and He still showed goodness despite persecution and ridicule. Sometimes in ministry, it will be hard to display goodness, but we can strive for the example Jesus gave us. Remember, God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good.

**Prayer Prompt:** Listen to the song “God is so Good” and meditate on the words. Write out ways God has been good to you, and thank Him for showing you His goodness.

## DAY 2

“Show me a sign of your goodness;  
my enemies will see and be put to shame because you, LORD,  
have helped and comforted me.”

Psalm 86:17, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to reveal His goodness to you and give you comfort today.

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## DAY 3

“His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the  
knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness

2 Peter 1:3, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to forgive you of any ungodliness and to instill in you His own glory and goodness.

## DAY 4

“Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; sing praise to his name,  
for it is delightful.”

Psalm 135:3, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend time singing praise of God’s goodness and righteousness. No matter what situation you may be facing, pray for God’s goodness to be proclaimed.

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## DAY 5

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow  
his instructions have good insight. His praise endures forever.”

Psalm 111:10, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to instill in you His wisdom and guidance in ministry. Listen to His instructions and pray for insight as you do the work of your Father.

## DAY 6

“Good will come to the one who lends generously  
and conducts his business fairly

Psalm 112:5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to help you conduct your life with integrity and fairness. Pray for goodness to be displayed in your life, despite your circumstances.

## DAY 7

“May the LORD bless you and protect you; may the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; may the LORD look with favor on you and give you peace.”

Numbers 6:24-26

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray this prayer of blessing over your life, and pray for God's goodness to be displayed in you, no matter the situation.

[illegible]



# DAY 1

“Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.”

Galatians 6:9-10, CSB



Being a kids ministry leader can be exhausting. There’s a never-ending challenge to recruit and equip leaders for the various weekly ministries, as well as the seasonal events. There are supplies to be purchased, promos to prepare, spaces to update, meetings to attend, policies to revise, budgets that need attention, and lessons to prepare. And all the while, we want to minister to kids and their families. I love today’s verses, as they address that doing good can make us tired. But they also remind us that if we don’t give up, we will reap.

Many years ago, I directed a two-week day camp as part of a ministry at our church. The camp was held outside at a lake property, meaning no air conditioning, and our day camp was held in July each year. One evening, after being there all day, I went inside the church to look at messages. I found out that a child who occasionally attended our church with his grandmother was in the hospital. I was exhausted, tired, and dirty, but I didn’t have time to go home, clean up, and get back to the hospital in time for a visit. I tried to reason in my head that it would be okay if I didn’t go, but God kept prompting me to stop by and visit the child. So I did. When I opened the door to the hospital room, the little boy looked up at his daddy and said, “See, I told you Mrs. Jenni would come.” I am so thankful that God wouldn’t let me give up. Don’t give up, dear friend! Keep doing good. Keep ministering to kids and families. You will reap at the proper time!

**Prayer Prompt:** Today, thank God for His promise to reap if we continue to do good. Ask for guidance and endurance to continue doing good for others.

# JULY : GOODNESS

## Don’t Get Tired of Doing Good

WEEK 5

**Contributor:** Jenni Carter, Statewide Children’s Consultant  
Georgia Baptist Mission Board

DAY 2

“My brothers and sisters,  
I myself am convinced about you that you also are full of goodness,  
filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.”

Romans 15:14, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to fill you with His goodness and knowledge so that you will be able to instruct children, parents, and leaders.

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DAY 3

“Trust in the LORD and do what is good; dwell in the land and live securely.  
Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you your heart’s desires.”

Psalms 37:3-4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** There are so many things in which we take delight. As you pray today, examine your heart to be sure you are taking delight in the Lord. Ask for His guidance to do what is good in every situation you encounter today.

DAY 4

“No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:15-16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** We do good works for God’s glory, not for our own. Pray that your good works will testify to His work in your life and that those around you will be blessed and drawn to Him.

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DAY 5

– “Share with the saints in their needs;  
pursue hospitality.”

Romans 12:13, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** There are people in our churches with great needs. Ask God to help you look at others through His eyes—to see and meet their needs.



## DAY 6

**“Do not be conquered by evil,  
but conquer evil with good.”**

Romans 12:21 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** When we see or experience evil things, our human response is often to fight back. Pray for discernment to know how to conquer evil with good.

## DAY 7

“Behold, how good and pleasant  
it is when brothers dwell in unity!”

Psalm 133:1, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Even in ministry, leaders can disagree. Disagreement with a sweet spirit is great, but sometimes the disagreement can lead to disharmony, and this is not helpful for the body of Christ. Ask God to help you live in harmony with your church body.

[illegible]



# AUGUST : FAITHFULNESS

## The Lord's Faithful Love

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Charlie Gatton, Oklahoma Cross Timbers Children's Camp Director and Childhood Ministry Partner, Oklahoma Baptists



### DAY 1

WEEK 1

“Because of the LORD’s faithful love we do not perish, for his mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness! I say, ‘The LORD is my portion, therefore I will put my hope in him.’”

Lamentations 3:22-24 CSB

Forty-two times in the Old Testament it says, “his faithful love endures forever.” God is faithful. Do you believe it? He has been faithful from the beginning, and He will be until the end. Neither our sin, nor our good works, change His love for us. He faithfully loves His children, even in our darkest times. He loves me, and He loves you!

“Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so.”

There is so much comfort and theology in this simple children’s song. Jesus loves me! Forever!

**Prayer Prompt:** God, thank you for your steadfast love. Thank you for sending Jesus to love and die for me. Thank you for your forgiveness of sin. Thank you for Your faithfulness even before I was in a right relationship with You. Thank you for loving me when I mess up. Thank you for always being there when I need you. Help me to be more like You—let my love for others come from You.



DAY 2

“Give thanks to the LORD,  
for he is good; his faithful love endures forever.”

1 Chronicles 16:34 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God Almighty, you are good! You are not always safe, but you are good. Help me to trust in you in all things.

DAY 3

“For the LORD is good, and his faithful love endures forever;  
his faithfulness, through all generations.”

Psalms 100:5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** – Lord, thank you for the fact that you have loved us from the beginning of time and will love us until the end of time. Help me to pass Your faithfulness on to the next generation.

DAY 4

“Hallelujah! Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his faithful love endures forever.”

Psalms 106:1 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Hallelujah, You are good! You are worthy of our devotion and praise. Thank you that you never change and that you love us with an everlasting love! Help me to love others as You love me.

DAY 5

“The trumpeters and singers joined together to praise and thank the LORD  
with one voice. They raised their voices, accompanied by trumpets, cymbals,  
and musical instruments, in praise to the LORD: For he is good; his  
faithful love endures forever.”

2 Chronicles 5:13 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Praise the Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name. Praise the Lord!

## DAY 6

“Let those who fear the LORD say,  
‘His faithful love endures forever.’”

Psalm 118:4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his instruction, have good insight. His praise endures forever” (Psalm 111:10). Lord, thank You for wisdom to trust in Your love!

## DAY 7

“Give thanks to the God of gods.  
His faithful love endures forever.”

Psalm 136:2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Lord God, you are the King of kings and Lord of lords. You are due our worship, our lives, and our love. Thank You for loving us with a steadfast love that endures forever.

[illegible]

# AUGUST : FAITHFULNESS

## Finding Us Faithful

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Cindy Middaugh, Children's Ministry Coordinator  
SBCVirginia

### DAY 1

WEEK 2

“Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God,  
the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His faithfulness to  
a thousand generations for those who love Him and keep  
His commandments.”

Deuteronomy 7:9 NASB

Faithfulness is an outpouring of the character of God, and Moses experienced this faithfulness many times. Moses then poured into Joshua's life, as Joshua would be his successor. Joshua also understood that faithfulness involved action, so he poured into the Israelite people. His faithfulness was evident as the Israelites remained faithful to God throughout Joshua's lifetime. Just before his death, Joshua challenged God's people to continue to, “remain faithful to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day” (Joshua 23:8).

We, like Joshua, need to be faithful to the next generation (Psalm 78:4-6). Children's ministry gives us many opportunities to have gospel conversations with the kids we serve and their families. You may be the only one to connect with a child. Be faithful to minister to the one child who may need you the most.

Remember why you were called to ministry. Is faithfulness an outpouring of your character? What are ministry goals you are working to achieve? What new goals will take you into the upcoming new discipleship year?

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to reveal His plan for the ministry where you serve. Pray that others will see your faithfulness as an outpouring of your love for God and be drawn to His love.



## DAY 2

“Not to us, LORD, not to us,  
but to your name give glory because of your faithful love,  
because of your truth.”

Psalms 115:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Trying new things in ministry can be exciting, yet daunting. But if you are faithfully doing what God would have you do, you can expect His faithful love, and all the glory will go to Him. How would your day look if you focused on His faithfulness and giving Him the glory in all that you do?

## DAY 3

Call to Me and I will answer you,  
and I will tell you great and mighty things,  
which you do not know.”

Jeremiah 33:3 NASB

**Prayer Prompt:** Does your prayer life show your faithfulness to God? Do you believe God can accomplish great things through you in children’s ministry? If we trust God, our loyalty will produce faithfulness to Him. Be faithful to make prayer a daily habit. Pray for your leaders, the children and their families. Thank Him for the blessing of prayer and for His faithfulness.

## DAY 4

“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful  
in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also  
dishonest in much.”

Luke 16:10

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you considering the eternal value of the work of your hands? In the parable of the dishonest manager, Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven, and He applauds the good and faithful servant. Being faithful with what we have brings reward. Pray that you will be faithful in the year ahead with what you have been given.

## DAY 5

“Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully  
with all your heart. For consider what great  
things he has done for you.”

1 Samuel 12:24 ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Summer provides a break in the usual routine, but it can also increase stress as you fill gaps in the volunteer calendar and the hours of ministry activities. When we are faithful to seek God each day and stay in His Word, He can accomplish much through us. Are you merely keeping burnout at bay, or are you refueling with faithful study and prayer? Ask God to ignite a desire in you to study His word more deeply.



## DAY 6

“And you shall repeat them diligently to your sons and speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you get up. You shall also tie them as a sign to your hand, and they shall be as frontlets on your forehead. You shall also write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Deuteronomy 6:7-9 NASB

**Prayer Prompt:** How are you teaching children to be faithful? Children learn best through repetition. Encourage them repeatedly to worship God, to read His Word, to pray and to be obedient. Teach them that God's faithfulness to us is for every generation and pray that the children you teach will be faithful unto the next generation.

## DAY 7

“Never let loyalty and faithfulness leave you. Tie them around your neck;  
write them on the tablet of your heart.”

Proverbs 3:3 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you a trustworthy teacher? Do you make promises and keep them? Solomon admonishes us to have faithfulness as a constant companion. Ask God to help you be a loyal and faithful family member and friend and pray that your children will mimic your faithfulness.

[illegible]

# AUGUST : FAITHFULNESS

## Memorial Stones of Faithfulness

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Kathy Miles, Generations- Associate Director- Preschool and Children  
South Carolina Baptist Convention

### DAY 1

WEEK 3

“So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, 5 and said to them, ‘Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, 6 to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ 7 tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.”

Joshua 4:4-7, NIV

Feeling Overwhelmed by the barage of negatives current events? Remember God’s faithfulness.

I’m talking about those life-changing moments when God miraculously showed up and showed out—when He carried you and never left you, answered cries of helplessness, comforted and healed.

Joshua led God’s people into the promised land, but it took 40 years longer than it should... because of their lack of faith! But God was faithful in fulfilling His promise. Those stones were a tangible reminder of that faithfulness for generations to come.

What stones do you have that represent the moments in your life when God showed His faithfulness? Tell the stories to those around you so that the next generation will know the greatness of God. When difficult seasons come, we can remember and stand firm in our faith and in the promises of a faithful God.

**Prayer Prompt:** God, help me to remain steadfast in You. If I should grow weary and fearful, help me to remember the times of Your faithfulness and fulfilled promises. Give me the love and courage to show the next generation the wondrous works of your name. I love you, Lord Jesus. Amen.

## DAY 2

He will cover you with his feathers,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart

Psalm 91:4 NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** The imagery of this verse is beautiful and strong. It reveals how God provides communion and refuge, as well as defense and protection. He is faithful, never faltering, steady, graceful and unnerved. Talking to God brings us to the throne of the Father. He wants it, we need it, and it draws us ever so close to Him. So, who can you pray for today?

## DAY 3

“...for we walk by faith, not by sight.”

2 Corinthians 5:7, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** What are you looking forward to in this ministry year? What might be stopping you from trying something in your ministry that you’ve never attempted before? Lack of volunteers? Budget? It’s time to trust God with the details and go for it! Pray, gather a team of trusted leaders and think through practical steps that will help you achieve those ministry goals. It will be a great year of trusting God for big things as you walk by faith and not by sight!

## DAY 4

But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you  
and protect you from the evil one.

2 Thessalonians 3:3, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Do you sometimes feel like the enemy just won’t leave you alone? This verse gives us the assurance that our God has power over any evil. Pray that God would give you a heart, soul and mind that resists the temptations of the evil one. Pray that your calling to do His work would not be in vain and that the whispers of the enemy would fall void. Thank Him for His faithfulness and ask Him to take away your fears and temptations as He draws you closer to Himself. Place your trust completely in Him.

## DAY 5

“Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.”

Proverbs 3:3-4

**Prayer Prompt:** In these verses, Solomon is sharing his thoughts on love, faithfulness, and obedience as a reminder that these qualities should guide how we live as followers of Christ. But what about that parent who frustrates you? Or the child who won’t listen and follow instructions? Maybe that volunteer who seems to not care? Do you have love, faithfulness, kindness and mercy for those people? Ask God to help you embrace love and faithfulness and write them on your heart today. Pray that He would teach you through His word how to remain loving, faithful, kind and merciful.

## DAY 6

**“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.”**

## 1 Chronicles 16:34 NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Anytime I see this verse, I think of the worship song that contains these same words. It resonates with my heart! In Chronicles, David has prepared a feast that will include songs of thanksgiving and praise for God's covenant with His people. The command is to praise the Lord as creation does. What are you praising God for today in your ministry?

Thank God for His faithfulness in all things.

Thank Him for his love, goodness, and mercy.

Praise Him in a song.

Praise Him that His love endures forever.

## DAY 7

“The LORD upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.”

Psalm 145:14 NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you compassionate towards all people? Even those that sin against you? Be intentional this week in showing compassion and the love of Jesus to those who don't know Him. Thank you, God, for your love. Help me to love like you do. Help me never to see sin as acceptable but let me always have compassion for those who are being deceived. Give me strength to share the good news with those who will listen and fill me with your Spirit, love, and forgiveness.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# AUGUST : FAITHFULNESS

## The Rest of the Story

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Belinda Stroud, Children's Specialist  
Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

WEEK 4

## DAY 1

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.”

Hebrews 11:1-2, NIV

Hebrews 11 is known as The Faith Chapter. What a blessing it is to read of all those who have gone before us, faithfully following the Lord! When we read of these faithful servants, we already know “the rest of the story,” as Paul Harvey would say. But do you ever wonder what was going on in their minds amid their struggles and difficulties? How difficult it can be to trust in the middle of hard times when we don’t know “the rest of the story!”

Sometimes we can see God working clearly, while other times we feel we are in complete darkness. But how wonderful it is to know we can trust Him with our story, no matter what part of the journey we find ourselves. We know God will fulfill His promises, but it is when that doesn’t happen immediately that we can demonstrate our faithfulness to Him.

**Prayer Prompt:** My church prominently displays their vision statement in the worship center: “To be found faithful as God’s people.” Pray that as you minister to the families and children in your church that you will be found faithful!

## DAY 2

“And without faith it is impossible to please God,  
because anyone who comes to him must believe that  
he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

Hebrews 11:6, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that you will constantly seek God’s leadership and direction in your life and in your ministry.

---

## DAY 3

“By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an  
ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir  
of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.”

Hebrews 11: 7, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** : Pray to have courage to carry out the tasks God has given you if you feel Him speaking to you to start a new ministry at your church or step out in faith.

## DAY 4

“By faith Abraham, even though he was too old to have children—and Sarah  
herself was not able to conceive—was enabled to become a father because  
he considered him faithful who had made the promise.”

Hebrews 11, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray to have the faith of Abraham and Sarah, believing God for the impossible!

---

## DAY 5

“By faith Abraham, when God tested him,  
offered Isaac as a sacrifice.”

Hebrews 11:17, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** : Pray that when you are asked to do something difficult, especially when it concerns something or someone very dear to you, that you will be faithful to trust God.



## DAY 6

“By faith Moses’ parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict.”

Hebrews 11:23 NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray to have faith that God will take care of the children in your ministry. God has a plan for each one of them! Pray that God will prepare them for what He has planned for their lives and that they will follow Him to complete it.

## DAY 7

“These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”

Hebrews 11:39-40, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that you will be able to focus on what God has planned and promised for us—that which will be made perfect when we see Him face to face!

[illegible]



# SEPTEMBER : GENTLENESS

## Strength Under Control

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Matt Flanagan, Children & Student Ministry Consultant  
Kentucky Baptist Convention



DAY 1



WEEK 1

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!  
Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.”

Philippians 4:4-5, NIV

I am fortunate to have been raised by Christian parents who always instilled in me the importance of being a gentleman. In my youth, this manifested itself through opening doors for others and speaking with terms of respect. However, there is much more to the believer’s call to gentleness.

I have incredibly fond memories of my grandfather, and I have modeled much of the way I treat others from watching him. He never spoke a cross word or raised his voice, and he humbly walked with the Lord. In preparation for his funeral, our family gathered old pictures for the visitation. There was one picture of him in a boxing ring—I never knew about this part of his life! This grainy picture showed him with muscles flexed and fists ready. My grandfather was an incredibly strong man who chose not to exert that strength on others.

The world may define gentleness as being weak or submissive, however, this is not the picture the Bible gives us. Like my grandfather, gentleness is strength under control. God has gifted us salvation, and we know that He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). Yet we are to harness that strength and not exert it over one another. We are to be gentlemen and gentlewomen.

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend a few moments reflecting on all God has given you through your salvation in Christ. How great is our God! Now given these spiritual riches and strength in the Lord, pray that God will give you the gentleness to live in a manner that points to Him and not yourself.

## DAY 2

“Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for right, you are blessed. ‘Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.’ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good, than for doing evil.”

Day 2 – 1 Peter 3:13-17

**Prayer Prompt:** We are to be ready to always give a defense of our faith. Pray that God will prepare you to answer every challenge with gentleness today

## DAY 3

“Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to slander no one, to avoid fighting, and to be kind, always showing gentleness to all people.”

Titus 3:1-2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask the Lord to give you gentleness—strength under control—as you speak with those in leadership over you (church, government, etc.).

## DAY 4

“A gentle answer turns away anger,  
but a harsh word stirs up wrath.”

Proverbs 15:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In a busy life and ministry, time with God often becomes a task to check off the daily to-do list. Ask that God would give you a hunger for more of Him—that He would teach you to sit in His presence and rest in His goodness.

## DAY 5

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is overtaken in any wrong doing, you who are spiritual, restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so that you also won’t be tempted.”

Galatians 6:1

**Prayer Prompt:** In ministry leadership, we may sometimes need to correct those in our care. Pray that God would give you wisdom and gentleness in leading others well.

## DAY 7

**Prayer Prompt:** Gentleness is a characteristic of the lives that God has called us to live. Pray that God would be glorified today through your gentleness in every interaction.

Isaiah 40:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend some time in prayer today reflecting on God's gentle care for those who are in Him. How wonderful that God does not treat us like we sometimes treat one another! Thank Him for His gentleness with His children.



# SEPTEMBER : GENTLENESS

## Show Gentleness to All People

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Katy Parker, Children's and Women's Ministries Strategist  
Baptist Convention of New Mexico



## DAY 1

“Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to slander no one, to avoid fighting, and to be kind, always showing gentleness to all people. For we too were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, detesting one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”

Titus 3:1-5

My dad, a pastor and missionary, used to joke that ministry would be easy if it weren't for the people. We naturally find that gentleness comes easy with some people, but it is more challenging with others. Paul reminds us in this passage that we should be showing gentleness to all people. This includes the children we teach, their parents, those inside the church, and those outside the church. He then points the reader to the reason why we are compelled to pursue these qualities. We can be gentle with others, including the most challenging, because we have been in their shoes. I have noticed over the years, as I mature in my walk with the Lord, that I can more easily see foolishness, disobedience, and deception. However, I have also learned that it becomes increasingly easy to forget where I was without Christ, and simultaneously, to forget that all growth and maturity in Christ flows out of God's mercy. This passage in Titus teaches us the key to Christ-like gentleness: If we actively remember the enormous kindness and mercy God poured out on our foolish, disobedient and deceived hearts, gentleness will overflow like floodwaters in our relationships with others. The gentleness that we lavish on others comes directly from the gentleness that we have received.

**Prayer Prompt:** Spend some time reflecting on where you were before Christ. Recall God's abundant mercy and kindness to you over the years and thank Him for what He has done. Pray and ask God to remind you of His gentleness in your day to day life.

## DAY 2

“And be kind and compassionate to one another,  
forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.”

Ephesians 4:32, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Sometimes it is most challenging to be gentle with those closest to us. Pray for your family and close friends, and ask God to reveal ways in which you have lacked gentleness. Seek forgiveness if needed and ask for help to put gentleness into practice in your daily life.

## DAY 3

“But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head – Christ. From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part.”

Ephesians 4:15-16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for your fellow church leaders. Pray for unity, gentleness and discernment. Ask for God to help you all to work together to serve Him

## DAY 4

“...set an example for the believers in speech,  
in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As you train and disciple your children’s workers and volunteers, pray that God shows you how to set an example for them. Ask Him to give you gentleness with them as they learn and grow. Intercede for them by name.

## DAY 5

“A gentle answer turns away anger,  
but a harsh word stirs up wrath.”

Proverbs 15:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** It’s easy to be gentle with others who are kind and patient. Ask God to help you respond gently and compassionately to the difficult situations and the difficult people in your ministry.



## DAY 6

“When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them,  
because they were distressed and dejected,  
like sheep without a shepherd.”

Matthew 9:36, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for the children in your ministry by name. Ask God to help you to see even the most challenging child through His eyes, and pray that He helps you show them gentleness and compassion.

## DAY 7

“Act wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time.  
Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt,  
so that you may know how you should answer each person.”

Colossians 4:5-6, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to provide a brokenness for the lost in your community. Pray for opportunities to personally share the abundant grace you have received. Pray that your conversations with those outside the church are intentionally pointing to Christ.

[illegible]

# SEPTEMBER : GENTLENESS

## The Gentleness of the Savior

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Jamie Brown, Childhood Ministry Strategist  
Missouri Baptists

### DAY 1

“For who is God, besides the LORD? And who is a rock? Only our God. God is my strong refuge; he makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer and sets me securely on the heights. He trains my hands for war; my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have given me the shield of your salvation; your help exalts me. You make a spacious place beneath me for my steps, and my ankles do not give way.”

2 Samuel 22:32-37

It was our first time tackling a 14er—a hike up a mountain that exceeds 14,000 feet—and true to form, my sister had selected the highest option in Colorado. While the trail on Mt. Elbert is not technically difficult, the elevation was serious. But with every step, my stubbornness kicked in, and I kept telling myself, “We are almost there. Keep going. Don’t quit. You made it this far.” That view at the summit was definitely worth it!

Our descent was remarkably faster than the climb. We were hurrying to get off that mountain as soon as we could before the noon thunderstorm, but as soon as we geared back up and headed down, we heard thunder and found ourselves caught in rain and hail. Going as fast as I could while gingerly navigating my steps on one particularly rocky crag, I quickly became aware of my new boots. My toes jammed repeatedly into the front of my boots as we headed down the unstable slopes, but I had no choice but to keep going to get to level ground.

Since our climb, I have lost one of my toenails and patiently await the loss of a second. Our glorious mountain top experience will be carried with me for many months to come in a visible reminder every time I look down. As difficult as the climb was, it is the descent that will literally stay with me the longest. The Hebrew word in David’s song used for gentleness can be translated as afflicted, humbled, brought low. Our glorious and mighty God is a rock and strong refuge who trains us, equips us and makes us secure. Yet He humbled Himself for our salvation, lowering Himself so that we might experience His resurrection power. That is gentleness in action.

Prayer Prompt: Consider this Hebrew definition of gentleness. How do the concepts of humility and affliction shape your understanding of the gentleness of God? Thank God for His affliction on your behalf.

WEEK 3

## DAY 2

“This is what the LORD says: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where could you possibly build a house for me? And where would my resting place be? My hand made all these things, and so they all came into being. This is the LORD’s declaration. I will look favorably on this kind of person: one who is humble, submissive in spirit, and trembles at my word.”

Isaiah 66:1-2

**Prayer Prompt:** The very one who created everything, who is enthroned on high, wants a relationship with you. After you consider His greatness in praise today, recall your brokenness in confession. Rest in His word, and know that He sees you.

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## DAY 3

“Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth.”

Matthew 5:5

**Prayer Prompt:** Your blessing is not in the things He has given you but in how He humbled Himself for you. Pray that He will help you identify with Him in His sufferings, and in doing so, bring glory to Jesus.

## DAY 4

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take up my yoke and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:28-29

**Prayer Prompt:** Go to Him in your weariness today. You will not only find rest, but you will learn from Him. Ask God to give you rest amid your faithful service to Him as you work in the Holy Spirit’s power, not your own strength.

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## DAY 5

“We don’t want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of our affliction that took place in Asia. We were completely overwhelmed—beyond our strength—so that we even despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.”

2 Corinthians 1:8-9

**Prayer Prompt:** : Has affliction caused you despair? Ask the One who raises the dead to help you learn to rely on Him in all circumstances. Pray He will put Christ on display through your sufferings and that others will receive because of them.

## DAY 6

“The Lord’s servant must not quarrel, but must be gentle to everyone, able to teach, and patient, instructing his opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.”

## 2 Timothy 2:24-25

**Prayer Prompt:** As a children’s minister who is fully able to teach, patiently endure and instruct—are you doing this work in gentleness? Pray that your teaching and correction may display His gentleness and do the work that He has planned—leading others to repentance.

## DAY 7

“But even if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear them or be intimidated, but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet do this with gentleness and reverence...”

## 1 Peter 3:14-15

**Prayer Prompt:** The gentleness of our Savior brought us salvation. Pray that today you would have the opportunity to display gentleness as a testimony of that salvation, honoring the holiness of Christ's suffering and giving a reason for the hope that is in you.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

# SEPTEMBER : GENTLENESS

## Showing Love and Care for Others

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Patty Burns, Preschool Specialist and VBS Promoter  
Alabama Baptist Board of Missions

### DAY 1

WEEK 4

“Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you. Go and sin no more.”

1: John 8:1-11

Becoming a Mimi—a grandmother—has been one of the greatest joys of my life. Holding a new baby in my arms, brushing wisps of hair from her forehead, swaying and humming “Jesus Loves Me,” hoping she’ll drift off to sleep...these are some of my favorite things! It’s not hard to be gentle with a baby.

But when I was a young pre-k teacher, working in the secular world, my class would often consist of 20, or more, 4 and 5-year-old children. There was chaos—often! But gentleness—not often enough! Sometimes the circumstances would get the better of me and I’d speak in a not-so-gentle tone. What I said needed saying—but did I need to say it with an attitude?

In John 8, Jesus is teaching, and a crowd gathers. The Pharisees saw this as another opportunity to try and trap Jesus into saying or doing something they could use against Him. They walked through the crowd, bringing a woman to Him. They placed her in the middle of the crowd and told Him that she had been accused of adultery. The Pharisees looked at Jesus and asked, “What do you say?”

Jesus had no intention of embarrassing or intimidating her, so while they continued demanding an answer, Jesus merely said, “Let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone.” Scripture doesn’t say He shouted it or got in their personal space. He simply stated a fact, and one by one the religious leaders walked away. Jesus then looked at the woman and said, “Neither do I [condemn you]. Go and sin no more.” His response to this woman is reminder that gentleness is well worth the effort it may require of us.

**Prayer Prompt:** Have you ever been placed in a situation where speaking the truth might cause pain? What did you do? Gentleness takes strength of character and self-control—two things God will gladly give when we ask. When the moment arises and you need to speak or act with gentleness, Matthew 7:7 reminds us to, “ask and it will be given to you”.

## DAY 2

“Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love.”

Ephesians 4:2, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Perfection is not possible here on earth. As followers of Jesus Christ, He is our standard, but we all fall short. Ask God to help you see people as He sees them. Ask him to help you to be patient and gentle with other’s weaknesses or faults.

## DAY 3

“Show a gentle attitude toward everyone.  
The Lord is coming soon.”

Philippians 4:5, GNT

**Prayer Prompt:** Have you had a random act of kindness bestowed on you recently? Maybe someone held the door for you, let you get in front of them in the checkout line or let you merge in traffic. How did that make you feel? Today, look for opportunities to show a gentle, caring and considerate attitude toward others.

## DAY 4

“Do to others as you would like them to do to you.”

Luke 6:31, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** The Golden Rule - treat others as you would like to be treated—sounds simple enough. But is it? When facing a situation where “self” would like to jump in, stop and ask God to give you a gentle spirit and the strength to handle the situation with gentleness and grace.

## DAY 5

“When the princess opened [the basket], she saw the baby.  
The little boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him.”

Exodus 2:6, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Do you remember the story of baby Moses in a basket? His mother was trying to protect him from being killed. The Pharaoh’s daughter found him in the river, and she knew her father had ordered the death of Hebrew baby boys. She could have reacted very differently, but instead she was tender-hearted and took the baby to raise as her own. When the opportunity presents itself, pray that you will react with grace and gentleness and that others will see Jesus in you.



## DAY 6

“But the wisdom from above is first of all pure.  
It is also peace loving, gentle at all times,  
and willing to yield to others.”

James 3:17a, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Wise people are peacemakers. When difficult circumstances arise, they don't escalate the situation, but carefully and thoughtfully speak kind, gentle and loving words. In your talks with God today, ask Him to help you practice this in every situation.

## DAY 7

“Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.”

: Luke 10:30-35 , NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Every day God places us in situations where we have the opportunity to show His love and be His hands and feet. Look around you. Who is hurting and needs the gentle touch from you?

[illegible]





# OCTOBER : SELF CONTROL

## Showing Love and Care for Others

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Matt Flanagan, Children & Student Ministry Consultant  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

### DAY 1

WEEK 1

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age.”

Titus 2:11-12 CSB

In kids’ ministry, the calendar turning to October means it’s time to dig into preparations for holiday events, family devotionals, and other ministry needs for the holiday season. And if your church is like mine, it also marks the season of candies and baked goods coming into the office on a regular basis. Dieting and counting calories are seldom fun, but it can be most challenging during the holiday season for those with a sweet tooth.

What makes self-control so difficult? There is a constant tension in our lives between instant gratification and being faithful to long term goals. A piece of chocolate candy is a sweet treat now, but it does not help me be more fit later. Our pursuit of Christ often meets this same tension of choosing between current godlessness and worldly lusts and long term sensible, righteous, and godly ways.

Self-control is not the accidental result of many years following Christ. It requires an intentional resolve and commitment to daily deny the worldly temptations and train yourself to seek Christ in all areas of your life.

**Prayer Prompt:** Take a few minutes to list areas in your life that are the greatest challenge to your self-control. Now, remember that self-control is a result of you submitting to the Spirit’s work in your life and pray that God will sustain you through all temptations.



## DAY 2

“A person who does not control his temper  
is like a city whose wall is broken down

Proverbs 25:28, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** A lack of self-control may show itself through dysregulated emotions. How is this “like a city whose wall is broken down?” Pray that God would give you self-control over your emotions.

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## DAY 3

“Therefore, I remind you to rekindle the gift of  
God that is in you through the laying on of my hands.  
For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power,  
love, and sound judgment.”

2 Timothy 1:6-7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** How does God give you sound judgement in your daily decisions? Pray that God will rekindle the gift that is in you as you live for Him.

## DAY 4

Death and life are in the power of the tongue,  
and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Proverbs 18:21,CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** One of the most difficult areas for self-control is our speech. Ask God for life-giving words to share with those around you today.

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## DAY 5

“No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity.  
But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you  
are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that  
you may be able to bear it.”

1 Corinthians 10:13, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** It is a great encouragement to know that we are not alone in our temptations. Follow the example of faithful brothers and sisters in Christ and thank God for giving you the strength to endure temptations.

## DAY 6

**“My dear brothers and sister, understand this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger, for human anger does not accomplish God’s righteousness.”**

James 1:19-20 CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Sanctification is the process by which we become more like Christ, and anger does not move us forward in that goal. Pray that God will give you maturity to be slow in words and anger and to live a life that brings about God's righteousness.

## DAY 7

“Don’t you know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way to win the prize. Now everyone who competes exercises self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable crown. So I do not run like one who runs aimlessly or box like one beating the air. Instead, I discipline my body and bring it under strict control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

1 Corinthians 9:24-27, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What daily exercises are you doing to grow your maturity in the Lord? Reflect on Paul's resolve to exhibit self-control to win the prize, and pray God would give you the same heart.

[illegible]

# OCTOBER : SELF CONTROL

Live by the Spirit

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Belinda Stroud, Children's Specialist  
Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

WEEK 2

## DAY 1

“My dear brothers and sisters, understand this:  
Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak,  
and slow to anger.”

James 1:19, CSB

This past year I had the privilege of leading a mission trip, and like most, there were obstacles—less than ideal weather, lack of heat in our rooms, complete strangers who were now expected to work as a team, etc. I was aware that things were hard, but my attitude and disposition did not reflect it while serving. I was completely joyful! But on our way home, it seemed we might miss our connecting flight and be gone from home longer than planned. I was frustrated!

Reflecting on this, I thought to myself, “The Holy Spirit was with me while I was out of the country and I exercised great self-control, but as soon as I landed back in the US, it went away!” But, of course, that was not the case! The Holy Spirit never left me. I was choosing not to allow Him to guide my speech and actions.

**Prayer Prompt:** Are you experiencing both the sweetness and the power of God's goodness? Consider the attributes of God, and spend time in praise acknowledging His goodness.

## DAY 2

“Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep  
a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves,  
and their religion is worthless.”

James 1:26 NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** The world watches how Christians act and speak. Pray that the Holy Spirit would have control of your tongue no matter the situation.

## DAY 3

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt,  
so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Colossians 4:6

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray that your words would be flavorful (“seasoned with salt”) and that others would want to hear more.

## DAY 4

“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will  
not gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Galatians 5:16, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray to live a life completely guided by the Holy Spirit with a willingness to follow God’s Word despite any temptation.

## DAY 5

A patient person shows great understanding, but a quick-tempered  
one promotes foolishness.

Proverbs 14:29, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for great patience and understanding in your relationships.



## DAY 6

“A person who does not control his temper  
is like a city whose wall is broken down.”

Proverbs 25:28, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for the ability to control your temper in difficult situations so that relationships will not be broken.

## DAY 7

“Not by strength or by might, but by my Spirit,’  
says the LORD of Armies.”

Zechariah 4:6b, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray to be led by the Holy Spirit, not by your own words or power.

[illegible]

# OCTOBER : SELF CONTROL

## Self Discipline

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Kathy Miles, Generations – Associate Director – Preschool & Children  
South Carolina Baptist Convention

### DAY 1

WEEK 3

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid,  
but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

2 Timothy 1:7, NIV

Imagine if we lived in a world with absolutely no self-control, and you arrived at church one Sunday morning to find everyone in the elementary department throwing a tantrum and causing complete chaos—what a nightmare! As leaders, one of the reasons we give direction and provide structure for our kids is to help them understand and practice self-control.

Paul reminds us in Titus 2 and in 2 Timothy that if we are following Christ, we need instruction to lead godly lives that are upright and worthy. We all have areas in which we struggle and need the Holy Spirit to provide grace, mercy and discipline. As a leader who is growing in self-control, and as a person who God is sharpening and refining, how would you answer the following questions?

- What is the area in your life in which you have the most trouble exercising self-control?
- Who do you know that could mentor you in this area?
- Are you making yourself available to train and mentor younger Christians?
- Write down three intentional steps you will take to mentor someone this month.

May this season of your life challenge you as a leader, stretch you as a follower of Christ, and bring you the power, love and self-discipline of the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer Prompt:** God, help me to be a humble servant leader. May I walk in your ways, disciplined in thought and action. Provide opportunities for growth, Lord, as I seek to mentor others around me. Thank you for your continued guidance, direction and refining as I seek to become the person you want me to be.

## DAY 2

“...you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

1 Corinthians 6:20, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Many of us don’t think about what we do with our bodies as honoring or dishonoring God. Pray that today you would mindfully honor God in everything you eat, everything you do, and everything you think.

## DAY 3

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.”

James 1:19, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** James gives us a simple, clear message that is, perhaps, one of the hardest instructions to follow. Self-control does not come natural for our sinful humanity. How can followers of Christ learn to be “slow to speak and slow to become angry?” Look at the following:

- Assess what makes you stumble.
- Study and memorize scripture passages that will help you in times of need.
- Seek God’s help in honoring others in this area. He wants you to succeed!

God, thank you for helping me daily to honor others in speech and action. Help me to use your words to show grace and to be used by You.

## DAY 4

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** May the Holy Spirit guide me daily as I pursue God’s truth and live a life worthy of this call.

## DAY 5

“For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness.”

2 Peter 1:5-6, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** At the beginning of this verse it says, “for this very reason.” The verse before it gives us the reason – so that through the promises we can share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire. In your prayer time today, pray that you will seek after faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness and godliness.

## DAY 6

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

## Philippians 4:13, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Kids love this verse. It gives them inspiration, helps them find contentment and undergirds their being. When the apostle Paul wrote these words, he was actually in prison. His circumstances didn't determine his contentment, but rather his contentment came from his relationship with Jesus. Pray that God would bring you joy, self-control and complete dependence on Him today.

## DAY 7

“Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;  
keep watch over the door of my lips.”

Psalm 141:3, NKJV

**Prayer Prompt:** Are there times in your ministry that you wish you could take back something you said? I think we have all been there. Ask God to forgive you for the times your words have been quick, harsh, mean-spirited or unloving. Pray that He would help you to honor Him with the words you speak.

[illegible]

# OCTOBER : SELF CONTROL

## Practicing Self-Control in Whatever You Do

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** Emily Smith, Children's Ministry Specialist  
Arkansas Baptist State Convention

### DAY 1

“And whatever you do, in word or in deed,  
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving  
thanks to God the Father through him

Colossians 3:17, CSB

Merriam-Webster defines self-control as “restraint exercised over one’s own impulses, emotions, or desires.” In ministry, there will come times when we will be faced with difficult situations, but with God’s help, all things are possible. We should not be discouraged “for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control” (2 Timothy 1:7, ESV). He gives us the ability to face adversities with ease, to sustain trying staff meetings, and to navigate challenging parents. You will not always be able to please everyone, but the Heavenly Father is the only one we must truly give account to for our actions and decisions. He is the one who matters the most in any situation, so remember that “whatever you do,” do it for His glory.

.....

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to give you wisdom and a spirit not of fear but of power, love, and self-control as you navigate difficult situations in ministry. Pray for God to give you self-control in your decisions and actions towards others today.

## DAY 2

“But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled  
and put on the armor of faith and love,  
and a helmet of the hope of salvation.”

1 Thessalonians 5:8, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** : Pray for God to protect you and shield you with His faith, love and hope.

---

## DAY 3

“Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength.  
Put on the full armor of God so that  
you can stand against the schemes of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:10-11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** You’re going to be tempted because Satan does not like it when we succeed. Pray for God’s protection today. Ask Him to armor you with His power, love, grace, mercy and self-control today so you can withstand the schemes of the devil.

## DAY 4

“Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist,  
righteousness like armor on your chest.”

Ephesians 6:14, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Start each day with the self-discipline of coming to the Father and praying His armor over you. Pray today that He will instill truth in your actions and exemplify His righteousness in your life.

---

## DAY 5

“...and your feet sandaled with readiness  
for the gospel of peace.”

Ephesians 6:15, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Be diligent and ready to share the gospel today. Pray for God to open up an opportunity for you to share and to equip you with the seeds of the gospel—ready to sow.



## DAY 6

“In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the word of God.”

## Ephesians 6:16-17

**Prayer Prompt:** Take up your sword and spend time in God's word today. Practice this self-discipline every day. Pray for God to protect you with His shield of faith so you can withstand all of Satan's flaming arrows.

## DAY 7

“Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request,  
and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.”

Ephesians 6:18, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Above all else, pray. Pray for the kids and families in your ministry. Pray that God will protect them and armor them with self-disciplines in their own lives to withstand the schemes of the devil.

[illegible]

# OCTOBER : SELF CONTROL

## Practicing Self-Control in Whatever You Do

WEEK 5

**Contributor:** Emily Smith, Children's Ministry Specialist  
Arkansas Baptist State Convention

### DAY 1

WEEK 5

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.”

Hebrews 12:1-2, NLT

As I pondered on the concept of self-control, I was reminded of my younger years when I played sports. Every day we practiced the basics—stretching, warmups, running, throwing, hitting, drills—if we didn’t do these things daily, then we would not be prepared for the games. We had to develop self-discipline to perform well: getting up every day to go to practice, pushing through pain to improve our agility, persevering even when we were losing the game. In ministry, we must also be self-disciplined and practice the basics of daily prayer and Bible reading. Without the basics, we will not perform well, especially during the difficult times.

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to give you the strength to practice the basics and instill in you the endurance to finish well the race set before you.

## DAY 2

“...let us strip off every weight that slows us down,  
especially the sin that so easily trips us up.”

Hebrews 12:1, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** : Pray for God to reveal to you the weights in your life and cleanse you of the sins to which you are clinging. Lay the weights at His feet and ask Him to forgive you so you can continue the race set before you.

## DAY 3

let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,  
looking to Jesus.

Hebrews 12:2, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Practice the basics of self-discipline today so you can run the race with endurance. In everything you do remember the goal—Jesus—look to him to sustain you and equip you with the strength to finish strong.

## DAY 4

“...Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.  
Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame.  
Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.”

Hebrews 12:2, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** Focus on what Jesus did for you on the cross. He ran the race and finished it, even though the end brought a daunting and difficult task. The result, however, saved all mankind. Thank God for sending Jesus to endure the cross on our behalf. Pray for God to instill in you the endurance and self-control to continue the race set before you.

## DAY 5

“I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God’s heavenly call in  
Christ Jesus. Therefore, let all of us who are mature think this way.”

Philippians 3:14-15a, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray for God to help keep your eyes on the prize—sharing the gospel. He wants you to grow and mature in your faith. Practice and hone your skills to help you grow. Ask God to instill self-disciplines in you to strengthen your walk with Him.

## DAY 6

“And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment, so that you may approve the things that are superior and may be pure and blameless in the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.”

## Philippians 1:9-11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Pray this verse over your life today. Ask God to help you grow in knowledge, discernment and purity and to fill you with His righteousness.

## DAY 7

“But as for you, be strong; don’t give up,  
for your work has a reward

2 Chronicles 15:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Keep practicing your basic drills, don't give up, finish the race well and your work will be rewarded. It will be difficult at times, but keeping looking to Jesus. Pray for God to continue helping you with your spiritual self-disciplines so you can finish well.

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# NOVEMBER: THANKFUL

## Catalyze Thankfulness

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Jack Lucas, Leadership Development Director  
Illinois Baptist State Association,



## DAY 1

WEEK 1



“You will be enriched in every way so that you  
can be generous on every occasion, and through  
us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”

2 Corinthians 9:11, NIV

In November, it is common to see people on social media sharing something they are thankful for each day. Whether you post to social media or not, it is good to intentionally recognize the things for which you are thankful. I would also encourage you to consider the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:11. Giving of yourself generously to the ministry of the Lord not only produces thankfulness in you for who God is, but will also be used by Him in the lives of those to whom you are ministering. The result is that they too will be thankful for all that God does. It is important that we are thankful for our relationship with Christ. It is just as important that we let our lights shine in such a way that others are thankful for God as well.

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to give you a heart to generously give of yourself to the ministry to which He has called you. Pray that God will use you in such a way that others will be thankful to Him because of your ministry.



## DAY 2

“For everything God created is good,  
and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.”

1 Timothy 4:4, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** It is easy to be grateful and excited when the big moments of ministry happen, but the Bible indicates that even in the mundane, day-to-day happenings, a proper spirit can bring the same excitement. Pray for a heart that receives everything ministry brings—even the little things—with a spirit of thankfulness.

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## DAY 3

“And whatever you do, in word or deed,  
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Colossians 3:17, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Yesterday we prayed for a heart that receives all that ministry brings our way with thankfulness. Today, pray and ask God to move in your heart so that all that you do in ministry will be done with thankfulness to the Father who called you to it.

## DAY 4

“Continue steadfastly in prayer,  
being watchful in it with thanksgiving.”

Colossians 4:2, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** I truly believe there is a connection between prayer and thankfulness. Pray that God will help you cultivate a lifestyle of thankfulness as you build an even stronger prayer life.

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## DAY 5

“I thank my God always when  
I remember you in my prayers

Philemon 1:4, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** God has given us many things to be thankful for in ministry. One of the greatest gifts He has bestowed on us is the volunteers who serve in alongside us. Pray for your volunteers and thank God for their willingness to serve. Thank Him for those who pour into you personally as well.



## Philippians 4:6 NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Prayer is powerful. The Bible says we can bring what is on our heart to God, and we don't have to be anxious about it. Thank God for the gift of prayer, and ask Him to give you a spirit of boldness in your prayer life. Pray that the Holy Spirit would lead you to pray in and for the will of God for you and your ministry.

Psalm 34:1, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Is the Lord's praise continually in your mouth? Do others hear regularly how thankful you are for who God is and what He means to you? Ask God to give you a bold heart to proclaim to the world your thankfulness for Him. Pray that others will sense God's work in your life and desire a relationship with Him as well.

[illegible]

# NOVEMBER : THANKFUL

## Giving Thanks

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Vicki Hulsey, Childhood Specialist  
Tennessee Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.  
Give thanks to him and bless his name. For the LORD is good,  
and his faithful love endures forever; his faithfulness,  
through all generations.”

Psalms 100:4-5, CSB

I often ask kids what they are they thankful for, but I sometimes lack focused time teaching kids to call on the name of the Lord to express their thanks. To call on the name of the Lord is more than just thinking about Him and what He is done. To call on His name implies going before His presence and proclaiming what He has done before others.

It’s easy to be thankful in November—everywhere we turn, people are talking about thankfulness. However, as the holiday season gets busier, it can be easy to forget about being thankful. In fact, kids (and adults) sometimes get a little grumpy when they don’t get everything on their Christmas list. Thankfulness should be a constant practice of worship, for it is through God that we have life. He gives us salvation and a hope for the future.

**Prayer Prompt:** Take time today to bless the God of your salvation. He is good, His faithful love is everlasting and His faithfulness spans all generations.

## DAY 2

“For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.”

1 Timothy 4:4-5, NIV

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to reveal two things to be thankful for about a challenging child in your ministry. Watch your love grow for God’s masterpiece!!

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## DAY 3

“Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!”

Psalms 95:2, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Do your prayers focus on asking for things? Today, list things you are thankful for. Listen to and sing songs of thanksgiving to God!

## DAY 4

“I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers

Ephesians 1:16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Write names of kids in your ministry in a notebook and list your prayers for each child. Be intentional in sharing with the kids what you pray for them.

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## DAY 5

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Schedule specific times to pray—without intentionality, it might not happen! Spend time today thanking God for His promise to never leave you, even in difficult times.

## DAY 6

“Give thanks to the LORD;  
call on his name; proclaim his deeds among the peoples

1 Chronicles 16:8, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Ask God to help you as you lead kids in giving thanks to God, calling on His name, and declaring to others what He has done!

## DAY 7

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praise to your name,  
Most High, to declare your faithful love in the morning and your  
faithfulness at night.”

Psalm 92:1-2, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Make it a practice to spend time each night thanking God for His faithfulness to you during that day.

[illegible]

# NOVEMBER : THANKFUL

Give Thanks With Your Whole Heart

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Donna Blaydes, Childhood Specialist  
Tennessee Baptist Mission Board

## DAY 1

WEEK 3

“I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart;  
I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.”

Psalm 9:1, ESV

Have you ever found yourself in a season where you were discouraged, feeling like you were being tossed to and fro? As I read the words in Psalm 9:1, the familiar hymn “Count Your Blessings” began to run through my mind. In 1897, Johnson Oatman wrote these words:

“When upon life’s billows you are tempest tossed,  
when you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,  
count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.”

So how can you give thanks with your whole heart, even in life’s hardest times? Remind yourself of what you already know: God is good all the time, God loves you, and God is with you. Take a moment and turn your focus to all of God’s wonderful deeds that prove His faithfulness. He has not forsaken you.

**Prayer Prompt:** Thanking God with your whole heart means not holding anything back. Be honest in your praise, even when it’s raw. Recount God’s wonderful deeds by making a list of what He has done for you, your family and your ministry. State them out loud, thanking God for each one. Ask Him to show you even the smallest of His wonderful deeds—ones you may have overlooked. As you do, may you be reminded how much God loves you.

## DAY 2

“I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,  
and I will glorify your name forever.”

Psalm 86:12, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** What are you most thankful for today? Is your gratitude evident to the Lord? As you spend time with the Father, glorify His name and give thanks to Him. Hold nothing back.

## DAY 3

“Be glad in the LORD, you righteous ones,  
and give thanks to his holy name

Psalm 97:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Being glad in the Lord is more than just being happy. It comes from trusting Him, looking at Him and not your circumstance and from being thankful in all things. Today, turn your eyes upon God, and thank Him for all He has done for you.

## DAY 4

“Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever!”

Day 4 – Psalm 106:1, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** The Psalmist encourages us to give thanks to the Lord because He is good, not because He does good things. He goes on to say that God’s love is steadfast – unchanging and faithful. God’s goodness and love do not run out. Thank God today that He is good and that you can be confident in His goodness and love. Who do you need to tell of God’s goodness?

## DAY 5

“The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps  
me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.”

Psalm 28:7, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** At the beginning of this Psalm, David is crying out for God to hear him in his time of need. But his focus changes in verse 7, and David’s heart is filled with joy because he knows the Lord is his strength and shield. David knows he can trust God. Are you crying out to God to hear you today? As you spend time with the Father, trust that He hears you. Burst out in songs of thanksgiving to Him!



## DAY 6

**“Then I will praise God’s name with singing,  
and I will honor him with thanksgiving.”**

Psalm 69:30, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** How can you honor God with thanksgiving? Think of one thing that was frustrating this week and try to look at it through the eyes of thankfulness. For example, say you have a volunteer who was late, yet again. Instead of focusing on the negative, turn it around and thank God for that volunteer and her willingness to serve. Praise Him for the opportunity you (or another leader) had to teach her class until she arrived. We can honor God by being thankful.

## DAY 7

“Make thankfulness your sacrifice to  
God, and keep the vows you made to the Most High.”

Psalm 50:14, NLT

**Prayer Prompt:** A sacrifice is an offering that costs you something. In this verse, the sacrifice that God is seeking is thankfulness. Not mere words or pretend gratitude—He desires a heart that is truly thankful. Making thankfulness your sacrifice to God takes work. Are you up to the challenge? How can you be thankful today? For what are you truly thankful? Tell God.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook paper used for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings visible on the page.

# NOVEMBER : THANKFUL

## Thankful for People

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** David Anderson, Children's Ministry Strategist  
Louisiana Baptists

### DAY 1

WEEK 4

“I give thanks to my God for every remembrance of you, always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”

Philippians 1:3-5, CSB

There is so much to thank God for in our daily lives. Things like our health, our family, our church, our home, God's financial provision—the list could go on and on. During this final week of November, I want us to turn our attention to the people that God has surrounded us with—both those who have poured into us and those we have had the opportunity to pour into. Think about the great cloud of witnesses that surround your life and ministry. The old poem by John Donne states that “no man is an island,” and I believe that to be true. One of God's greatest gifts to us is the people He places in our life.

**Prayer Prompt:** Take some time to thank God for your people and then spend time praying “with joy” for them. Remember that your ministry is one of partnerships in the gospel and thank God for every one of those partnerships.



## DAY 2

“The Pharisee was standing and praying like this about himself:  
‘God, I thank you that I’m not like other people—greedy, unrighteous,  
adulterers, or even like this tax collector.’”

Luke 18:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** : In this last week of our focus on thankfulness, take a moment and think of times when your thankfulness has gone to selfish places. Admit your shortcomings and thank God for His never ending grace that extends to us all.

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## DAY 3

“Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. He is always wrestling for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature and fully assured in everything God wills.”

Colossians 4:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** We all stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. Perhaps it’s mentors in our current ministry, or even in our personal lives, who laid the foundation and brought us where we are today. Thank God for the forebearers He has placed in your life, and once you have prayed, take action. Send a text, an email or a handwritten note thanking them for what they have meant in your life.

## DAY 4

“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all  
of you because the news of your faith is being reported in all the world.”

Romans 1:8, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Today is a time to think of those you have poured your life into—those who have come through your ministry, either as children or as volunteers. Thank God for their daily walks that are evidence of their faith. Think of a way to encourage some of these people wherever they may be in their life.

---

## DAY 5

“I always thank my God for you because of the grace of God given to  
you in Christ Jesus...”

1 Corinthians 1:4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** In this verse of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthian church, he is speaking to the whole congregation. Today, thank God for the church where you are currently serving and the people who are part of it. Praise God for the grace He has given to each of the members of that local church.

## DAY 6

“Therefore, through him let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name.”

Hebrews 13:15, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Today we will focus our prayer time on those who still need to offer “the fruit of lips that confess his name.” Offer your sacrifice of praise on behalf of those that have not yet trusted Jesus as Savior. Thank God for the opportunity to proclaim His praise daily.

## DAY 7

“...giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...”

Ephesians 5:20, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As we wrap up November, remember that our thankfulness should not be limited to one month or one subject. As Paul tells us in his letter the church at Ephesus, we should always be thankful for everything. Spend time today thanking God for all He is teaching you and all He has brought into your life, then praise Him for all that He is and does.

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# DECEMBER : ADVENT

Immanuel

WEEK 1

**Contributor:** Katy Parker, Children’s and Women’s Ministries Strategist  
Baptist Convention of New Mexico



## DAY 1

WEEK 1

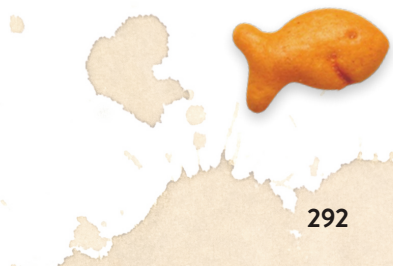
“See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel,’ which is translated ‘God with us.’”

Matthew 1:23, CSB



Immanuel is one of my favorite names for God, and its meaning—God with us—is a continual theme throughout Scripture. In the beginning, Eden was paradise—not because of the beauty of the garden, but because God dwelt there with Adam and Eve. But when sin entered the world, man could no longer stay in God’s holy, perfect presence. Throughout the Old Testament, God made a way to be present among His people through the tabernacle, the temple and sacrificial offerings, but His presence and relationship with His people was not fully restored. The coming of Jesus was the fulfillment of God’s promise to reconcile man to Himself. He took on the weight of sin and suffering so that anyone who would believe and follow Him could be forgiven and someday dwell in the presence of God. Everything we seek is found in Him. He gives us Himself, and in His presence, we find perfect peace, joy, hope and love, ever drawing us closer to Him. Amidst all the darkness and sadness of this world, our greatest hope is God Himself. He is the greatest gift we could receive!

**Prayer Prompt:** This season is busy and stressful for many, and children’s ministry is no exception. Take some time this week to sit in the presence of God. Choose to set aside time to be quiet and still. Meditate on the nature of who God is and the peace, joy, hope and love found in him.



# DAY 2

“Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go up with you because you are a stiff-necked people; otherwise, I might destroy you on the way.’ When the people heard this bad news, they mourned... ‘If your presence does not go,’ Moses responded to him, ‘don’t make us go up from here.’”

Exodus 33:3-4a, 15, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Despite Israel’s sin, God was merciful and still allowed them to go to the promised land, but he would not go with them. The people mourned and pleaded with God to stay with them. Spend some time reflecting on your heart. What is it that you seek after: the gifts God gives or God Himself? How valuable is God’s presence to you?

# DAY 3

“The LORD of Armies is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah”

Psalms 46:7, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** This season can be hard for many. Remember God’s presence. He is the God who sees us and the burdens we bear. Spend some time in prayer giving your burdens to Him, ask Him to remind you that He is present with you and seek peace and rest in Him.

# DAY 4

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.”

Hebrews 4:15-16, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Jesus—God with us—experienced weakness and temptation. Though sin pushes us away from God there is endless mercy and grace found at His feet. Take some time today to pray that God reveals the sin in your heart and ask Him to help you walk in godliness.

# DAY 5

“I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.”

John 14:25-26, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** Because of Jesus’ work on the cross, all who believe in Him have been given the Spirit of God. He is an active helper and counselor—God’s presence always with you. Pray for His help today to fight temptation, to remember God’s words and to help you walk in a way that honors God.



## DAY 6

**“Now you are the body of Christ,  
and individual members of it.”**

1 Corinthians 12:27, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** As the body of Christ, the church is the representation of God to the world around us. Pray for your role in the body. Ask God to use you to show others who He is. Pray for unity in your local church to work together for God's purpose and mission.

## DAY 7

“Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.”

Revelation 21:3-4, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** The promised restoration of God’s presence will ultimately be fulfilled when we are united with Him in eternity. Spend some time meditating on the hope of that promise. Pray God will help you to fix your heart and your mind on His kingdom work and purpose.

[illegible]

# DECEMBER : ADVENT

## Close to Baby Jesus

WEEK 2

**Contributor:** Jenni Carter, Statewide Children's Consultant  
Georgia Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

“They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph,  
and the baby who was lying in the manger.”

Luke 2:16 , CCSB

Every December I pull out our Christmas decorations and adorn every spot in our home. One of my favorites is our Nativity set. It always has a place of prominence to help our family remember why we celebrate Christmas, and I take special care to place each piece exactly where I think it should be. But one year, every time I walked by the beautiful Nativity scene, I would notice that almost all the pieces would be crowded together in the center. I would place the pieces back as I thought they should be, but inevitably the next time I walked by, they would be crowded together again. Thinking someone in my family was simply trying to aggravate me, I finally asked who was doing it. One of my daughters, a preschooler at the time, admitted it was her. When I asked why, she said, “Mom, everyone needs to be close to baby Jesus.”

There was so much truth in that simple explanation. Everyone needs to be close to Jesus. December is a crazy busy month, but for children's ministry leaders, the season is even busier. Not only are you taking care of your family's Christmas schedules, but it's likely you're also planning special events for your kids at church (parties, Christmas caroling, mission projects, etc.) The shepherds had other things on their to-do list that night, like watching their flocks, but they knew they needed to spend time with Jesus. Be sure you're making time for Him as well.

**Prayer Prompt:** What activities might you or your family need to give up so that you can spend more quiet time with Jesus? Or what expectation might you need to lower (decorations, wrappings, etc.) so that your schedule is lightened? Ask God to reveal to you what good activities you can give up to allow more time for the best activity—spending time with the Savior.

## DAY 2

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus,  
because He will save His people from their sins.”

Matthew 1:21 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** At this time of year, we tend to focus on the birth of Jesus, but this verse helps us remember that ultimately, He was born to save us from our sins. Thank God today for sending His Son to die on a cross for us.

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## DAY 3

“But Mary was treasuring up all these things in  
her heart and meditating on them.”

Luke 2:19 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** If you’re a parent, you know how we treasure everything our children do. If you’re not a parent, you may have nieces or nephews or friends’ children who are special to you. As the King James Version puts it, Mary “pondered” these things in her heart. Take some time today to ponder what Jesus is doing in your life.

## DAY 4

“The Lord is near all who call out to Him,  
all who call out to Him with integrity.”

Psalms 145:18, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What’s causing you anxiety or stress today? Is it an overcrowded schedule, unexpected challenges, or holiday disappointments? Whatever is on your heart—call out to God.

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## DAY 5

“Taste and see that the LORD is good.  
How happy is the person who takes refuge in Him!”

Psalms 34:8, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** During the Christmas season we typically taste lots of wonderful goodies and desserts. This season, every time you taste something yummy, thank God that our relationship with Him is better than any sweet treat!

## DAY 6

“Every good and perfect gift is from above,  
coming down from the Father of lights,  
who does not change like shifting shadows.”

James 1:17, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** At Christmas, many people enjoy going to look at light displays. When you're doing this activity, thank God for His perfect gift - Jesus. He is the light of the world

## DAY 7

“That light shines in the darkness,  
and yet the darkness did not overcome it.”

John 1:5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** John came as a witness to the light, and we should also be witnesses to the light of Jesus. In your prayers today, ask God to help you find someone who needs to hear about the light that cannot be overcome by darkness.

[illegible]

# DECEMBER : ADVENT

## Indescribable Gift

WEEK 3

**Contributor:** Donna Blaydes, Childhood Specialist  
Tennessee Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

“Thanks be to God for his  
indescribable gift!”

2 Corinthians 9:15, ESV

Christmas is the season for giving and receiving gifts. I love giving gifts. I can spend hours searching for that perfect gift—one I know the recipient will love. What is the greatest gift someone has ever given you, or what is greatest gift you have given to someone else? How would you describe that gift and what made it so special? A gift isn't something you deserve, or something you earn. According to Merriam-Webster, a gift is “something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation.”

As a Christ follower, the greatest gift you have ever received is Jesus. 2 Corinthians 9:15 in the New Living Translation refers to that gift as “too wonderful for words.” Jesus brings salvation, peace, hope, forgiveness, joy and the right to be called a child of God. This advent season, as you prepare your heart to celebrate, take time to soak in the truth that God willingly gave His only Son for you. And He loves you so much that He would do it again, without reservation.

**Prayer:** As you spend time with the Father, thank Him for the indescribable gift of Jesus. Ask God who you need to share this gift with this season.

## DAY 2

“For by grace you have been saved through faith.  
And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,  
not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** The greatest gift you have ever received was given freely. All it requires of you is faith. Salvation wasn’t given based on what you have done, but rather what Jesus did. Today, dwell on that fact, and as you spend time with the Father, thank Him for salvation—a gift we do not deserve.

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## DAY 3

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should  
be called children of God! And that is what we are!  
The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.”

1 John 3:1, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God thinks you are something special. So special, in fact, that He freely bestowed His love on you so that you could be called His child. Pray that God will help you see yourself as He sees you, and take time to thank Him for the gift of being called His child.

## DAY 4

“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as  
the world gives. Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful.”

John 14:27, ESV

**Prayer Prompt:** I love the way this verse reads in the New Living Translation: “I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.” Peace is a gift! In your prayers today, thank God for His gift of peace. If you are troubled or afraid, tell the Father and rest in his peace.

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## DAY 5

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe so  
that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Romans 15:13, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Paul tells us that God is the giver of hope. Because He is, we can be filled with joy and peace, and we can overflow with hope. If you are lacking hope today, go to the source. God can, and wants, to fill you up! Ask Him to overflow you with His joy, His peace and His hope.



## DAY 6

“He has not dealt with us as our sins deserve or repaid us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his faithful love toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”

Psalm 103:12, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God's love is so great toward us that He has not dealt with us as our sins require. He not only forgives our sins, but He removes our transgressions. We see in 1 John 1:9 that when we go to God, repenting from our sins and seeking forgiveness, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What sin or sins are you holding on to today? Take them to the Father, repent, seek His forgiveness and be cleansed.

## DAY 7

“As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.”

John 15:9-11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Jesus tells us that to remain—or abide—in His love, we must keep His commands. Jesus wants us to have complete joy, and that joy comes when we abide in the Father’s love and keep His commands. Is there something that is keeping you from experiencing complete joy? Spend time today abiding in the Father’s love, and ask Him to help you keep His commands so that your joy will be complete.

[illegible]

# DECEMBER : ADVENT

## The Savior Has Come

WEEK 4

**Contributor:** David Anderson, Children's Ministry Strategist  
Louisiana Baptists

### DAY 1

“Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said,  
Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace, as you promised.  
For my eyes have seen your salvation. You have prepared it in  
the presence of all peoples—a light for revelation  
to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel.”

Luke 2:28-32, CSB

God had promised Simeon, a righteous and devout man, that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. When Mary and Joseph brought the newborn Jesus into the temple, Simeon took the child in his arms and began to prophesy. What is our response to the birth of our Savior? Jesus' birth changed everything! Do we live our lives and conduct our ministry in a way that reflects that? This Christmas gives us an opportunity to proclaiming God's salvation “in the presence of all peoples.”

**Prayer Prompt:** Praise God for fulfilling His promise, just like He said. Then ask Him to show you how different your life is today because of this fulfilled promise. Finally, ask God to give you opportunities this next year to share this promise to all peoples.

## DAY 2

“At that very moment, she came up and began to thank God and to speak about him to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.”

Luke 2:38, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** What are we looking forward to in life and ministry? Take time to pray and ask God to give you a heart “to speak about him to all who are looking forward to the redemption.”

## DAY 3

“When the time came to completion, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”

Galatians 4:4-5, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Jesus did not just happen along at a convenient time. He came at exactly the right time and for exactly the right purpose. God is never early and never late. Pray and thank God that He is always right on time, not just when Jesus was born, but every day and in every way.

## DAY 4

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.”

Luke 19:10, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Sometimes it is hard to wrap a brain around the fact that Jesus was born for you and for me. The truth of Scripture is that this is the very reason He came. Take time today to thank Him for all He has done for you, including your salvation.

## DAY 5

“Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

Matthew 2:11, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** When the wise men encountered Jesus, their first instinct was to worship Him and then offer Him their greatest gift. Take some time to worship Jesus for the gift He is. Then ask Him what gift He would desire from you today. Make a commitment to offer yourself, and anything else that He lays on your heart, to Him today.

## DAY 6

“Then he went and settled in a town called Nazareth  
to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets,  
that he would be called a Nazarene.”

Matthew 2:23, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** God has always been a promise keeper. Every prophecy about Jesus was fulfilled exactly the way God had promised. Take a moment to reflect on the promises that God has kept in your life and ministry. Also reflect on some of the unique ways He has gone about fulfilling those promises and His will in your life. Thank Him for He has done, and will do, in you because of Jesus.

## DAY 7

“The boy grew up and became strong, filled with wisdom,  
and God’s grace was on him.”

Luke 2:40, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** At Christmas, we talk a lot about the baby Jesus, but Luke reminds us that Jesus continued from the manger to become a strong young man. He was strong in wisdom and filled with God's grace. Pray today and ask God to continue growing you in wisdom and grace as you head into the new year.

[illegible]

# DECEMBER : ADVENT

## He Came To Serve

WEEK 5

**Contributor:** Jenni Carter, Statewide Children's Consultant  
Georgia Baptist Mission Board

### DAY 1

“For even the Son of Man did not  
come to be served, but to serve, and to give  
His life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45, CSB

The Christmas season is coming to an end. The decorations are being put away, and the house begins to feel empty. I hope it's been a wonderful celebration of our Savior's birth for you! But as we close out this season, we can't forget why He came. He gave his life as a ransom for many, and He came to serve. When we follow His example to serve others, we are living in obedience to Him.

As a children's minister, you serve children and families every week. It's not always easy, but we've never been promised easy. Sometimes volunteers don't show up, parents complain, kids misbehave, the printer won't work and things just simply go wrong. But amidst it all, you're there—serving Him by serving others, and you do it with a smile.

Even if no one else notices all you do, God does. Continue serving Him!

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for sending Jesus to pay a ransom for our sins and for setting an example of serving others. Ask Him to guide you throughout the next year to look for ways to continue to serve Him.

## DAY 2

“Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ.”

Colossian 3:23-24 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for the opportunity to serve Him by serving children and families in your church and community.

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## DAY 3

“Do not lack diligence in zeal; be fervent in the Spirit; serve the Lord.”

Romans 12:11 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Some people are prone to post-holiday blues. In your prayer today, ask God for His help to remember why you serve and to be diligent in zeal as you serve Him.

## DAY 4

“Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up.”

Galatians 6:9 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Children’s ministry can be exhausting! Ask God to give you strength and stamina to continue to serve Him.

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## DAY 5

“Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face always.”

1 Chronicles 16:11 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** We teach and lead and serve from the overflow of what God is doing in our lives. Continue to spend time with Him so that you can lead well. Ask Him for help in managing your time well during the new year so that you always make time to seek Him.



## DAY 6

“Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others,  
as good stewards of the varied grace of God.”

1 Peter 4:10, CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** – Thank God for giving you a gift to be able to serve Him through children's ministry.

## DAY 7

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16 , CSB

**Prayer Prompt:** Thank God for sending Jesus to be the light, and thank Him for the opportunity to serve others through children's ministry. Ask Him for strength and guidance as you serve in the new year.

# THANK YOU

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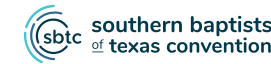
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