

# Carving Out Time With Jesus

## Note for Parents

Carving Out Time With Jesus is designed for families to incorporate faith into their fall family fun. We will be looking at four ways we can do that: reading the Bible, prayer, worship music, church. It includes the following:

- 4 Family Devotions (1 per week)
- 4 Games (1 per week)
- 4 Crafts (1 per week)
- 4 Snack Ideas (1 per week)

## When is a good time to do these activities each week?

- Use it on Saturday or Sunday and do all activities for that week in one day.
- Spread out the activities over the whole week. For example, you could read the devotion before school one morning. Then another day do the craft, next day game, next day create the snack.
- Pick out one or two items off the Fall Family Bucket List to do each week.

Fall is a great time to start the habit of spending time together in God's Word as a family. Once you create this habit, your children will want to do it every day and will remind you if you miss a day! These habits will hopefully form in your children a love of God's Word that will stay with them throughout their lives. You are building a foundation of God and His love into your children by spending time together in His Word.

# Family Devotion

## Week 1 – Read the Bible

***"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17***

Are you carving out time for Jesus in your life? What I mean is...do you spend time with Jesus on a daily basis? Are you devoting part of your day to reading the Bible, talking to Him, worshiping Him, and learning more about Him?

This month, we will be looking at how to do just that. We will be diving into what it means to carve out time with Jesus. And today we will be focusing on reading the Bible.

Ok...let's be honest with each other...how often do you open your Bible and read it? Every day? Twice a week? Only on Sundays? Never?

I would love if each of you answered by saying you read the Bible every day. Maybe there are some of you who do, but I would venture to say that some of you lean more to the once a week or never side. And I understand why you don't. You're busy. You've got homework to do, tests to study for, chores to do at home, sports practices and games, friends to hang out with. Your plate is full every day and there just isn't much time left to hang out with Jesus.

But can I tell you a little secret? You do have time! If you have 5 minutes...then you've got time!

*So if I've got 5 minutes in my day, why should I read the Bible?*

As Christians we know and believe that the Bible is God's Word. As the verse above says, all Scripture is "God-breathed", which means God used people to write down what He said to them. There are 66 books in the Bible and all books were written by people who encountered God and followed Him. The stories that are told are not made up stories, but they are real-life stories...things that actually happened. And these stories are in the Bible because they can be used to help teach us, rebuke us (which means pointing out to us things in our life that we need to change), correct us, and train us to live right with God. They are stories that we learn so we can learn how to live for God and be true followers of Him.

God has so much to teach us, but we need to carve out time in our day to spend reading His Word so we will know what He says. So how can you make time? Get up 5-10 minutes earlier so you can read your Bible (or your parents can read the Bible to you). Read the Bible in the car ride to school. Read the Bible while you eat your after-school snack. Read the Bible at dinner time as a family. Read the Bible at bedtime before you go to sleep.

Carving out time to read your Bible and spend with Jesus is an important part of growing in your faith and gaining wisdom on how to live your life as a Christ follower. Your challenge this week is find those 5-10 minutes of your day and open your Bible. I know you can do it! Then share with your parents or friends what you learned when you read the Bible!

*Father God, thank You for giving us the Bible so that we can learn more about You. Help me to make time every day to read Your Word and draw closer to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## **Family Devotion Activity**

Every week after you read your family devotion you will be "carving" your own pumpkin! Using the pumpkin template on the following pages, you will use this as a visual reminder of the ways you can carve out time with Jesus.

First, color it orange. Then cut out the 2 eyes, nose, and mouth. For today, take one eye and write in "Read the Bible". Then color it (yellow would be a great color). Glue that eye to the pumpkin. Hang your pumpkin where you can see it every day and remember to carve out time with Jesus and read your Bible. Every week you will add a piece of the face to the pumpkin (so don't jump ahead!).

## **Family Game**

### **Week 1 – Bible Book Matching Game**

***Supplies Needed:*** Bible book matching cards

This activity will help you learn the names of the books of the Bible! Beginning to recognize the names of all 66 books of the Bible will be so helpful to you.

Begin by cutting out the cards. Shuffle the cards and lay them face down in rows. Each player will take a turn. Turn over one card and then turn over another card to try to find the match. If no match is found, turn both cards back over. And remember where they are! If you find a match, pick them up and place next to you. The person with the most matches wins!

*\*\*If playing this game with elementary children, after you find a match, try to figure out if the book is in the Old Testament or the New Testament. If you need help, ask a parent or look it up in your Bible.*

*\*\*If playing this game with preschoolers, have them practice saying the name of the book of the Bible out loud.*

## **Family Craft**

### **Week 1 – Scripture Pumpkins**

**Supplies Needed:** pumpkins, Sharpie

*\*\*This activity will require a big pumpkin that you can write on.*

Every year your family probably carves a pumpkin and places it outside on Halloween night, but what if you wrote Scripture on one this year?

As a family, find a Bible verse (or several verses) that you would like to write on your pumpkin. Using a Sharpie (parents please help with permanent markers), write the verses you have chosen.

Place the Scripture pumpkin on your front porch. This will be a great witness to others and will help others know who Jesus is. On Halloween night, trick-or-treaters will come to your front porch and be able to read about Jesus and His love for them!

## **Family Snack**

### **Week 1 – Campfire Cones**

**Supplies Needed:** *waffle cones, graham crackers, mini marshmallows, snack-size Hershey bars, chocolate chips*

In a waffle cone, layer the following:

- Snack size Hersey bars
- Mini marshmallows
- Graham crackers (broken up)

Repeat layers. Top with chocolate chips.

Then wrap cone in aluminum foil. Place cone on campfire, grill, or in oven for @3-5 minutes. Unwrap and enjoy!

# Family Devotion

## Week 2 – Prayer

***"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." Ephesians 6:18***

Do you like to talk? Some of you may love to chat it up while others of you like to remain silent. But no matter if you are chatty or not, there is one person you should always want to talk to....and that is Jesus.

Prayer is another key component when it comes to carving out time with Jesus. We read the Bible to learn more about Jesus and gain knowledge of all He wants us to know. We pray to Jesus because He loves to have conversations with us. He loves when we come to Him and talk with Him about our day, about our fears and worries, about what makes us happy or sad, about what we are thankful for, about people who are sick and need healing or about what is weighing heavy on our hearts. Jesus loves to talk with us.

Now, you may be saying that you don't know how to pray. You can't pray like your pastor or your mom or dad. And sometimes you are at a loss for words and don't know what to say. Let me just say that there is no right or wrong way to pray. There is no special words that you have to say in order for Jesus to hear you. When you talk to Jesus (no matter what you say), He hears you. He knows everything you ask of Him. And He is so happy that you spend time with Him in prayer.

*So when should I pray and how often should I pray?*

Our Bible verse for the week says that we should pray "*on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.*" This means that no matter what is going on in your life, spend time with Jesus in prayer. Pray in both good times and bad times. Pray when you are doing

well and when you are not doing well. Pray at times even when you would rather not. Just pray.

The end of the verse says that we should "*be alert and keep on praying for all of the Lord's people.*" Being alert means paying attention to what is going on. It means opening our eyes to see how God is answering our prayers and what He is doing in our lives.

And then we should keep on praying for ALL of the Lord's people. Lift up in prayer those whom you know and even those you don't know. Ask God to heal them, provide for them, give them wisdom, and help them know He is present with them. Pray for all people.

Prayer is our communication with God. The best thing about prayer is that we can pray at any time of the day, too. We don't have to have an appointment. We just need to remember to pray. So carve out time with Jesus by praying to Him and then listen and watch for the ways that He talks to you.

*Loving God, help me to remember to spend time with You in prayer. And then help me to listen to You as well. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### **Family Devotion Activity**

Every week after you read your family devotion you will be "carving" your own pumpkin! This will be a visual reminder of the ways you can carve out time with Jesus.

For today, take one eye and write in "Prayer". Then color it (yellow would be a great color). Glue that eye to the pumpkin. Hang your pumpkin where you can see it every day and remember to carve out time with Jesus by praying to Him.

# Family Game

## Week 2 – Prayer Cubes

**Supplies Needed:** *cube template (see link below), markers, tape or glue*

You will be creating your own prayer cubes to use when you are gathered together for family prayer time (such as dinner or bedtime).

To download a copy of a cube template, visit the First Palette website:

<https://www.firstpalette.com/printable/cube.html>

Cut out the cube template. Before assembling the cube, write on each side of the template the names of people you want to pray for or other prayer requests you have. Or you can write 6 categories on the blank template.

Categories such as: prayers of thanks, prayers for someone who is sick, prayers of forgiveness, prayers for a friend, prayers to help those in need, prayers for all parents. Any category you can think of would be great!

Decorate the cube however you like using markers. Use glue or Scotch tape to put together.

At dinner time or at bedtime (as you say your prayers with your parents), roll the paper cube. Whatever it lands on will be what you pray for specifically.



# Family Craft

## Week 2 – Pumpkin Playdoh

### ***Supplies Needed:***

1 ½ cups flour

¾ cup salt

1 ½ tsp cream of tartar

1 Tbsp pumpkin pie spice

1 ½ cups water

1 Tbsp oil

Red food coloring - 5 drops

Yellow food coloring - 5 drops

This recipe can be found on the Natural Beach Living website (see link below). On this website you can find the instructions for exactly how to make it.

After you make it, kids can enjoy playing with it (outside is less messy). As they play, have them use this time to say short prayers to God or to share out loud what they are thankful for.

<https://www.naturalbeachliving.com/pumpkin-playdough-recipe/>

# Family Snack

## Week 2 – Pumpkin Bread

*My favorite pumpkin bread recipe is the Downeast Maine Pumpkin Bread found on the All Recipes website. Below are the ingredients. Visit their website for specific instructions on how to bake.*

### **Ingredients Needed:**

15 oz can pumpkin puree

4 large eggs

1 cup vegetable oil

2/3 cup water

3 cups white sugar

3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

2 tsp baking soda

1 1/2 tsp salt

1 tsp cinnamon

1 tsp nutmeg

1/2 tsp ground cloves

1/4 tsp ground ginger

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/6820/downeast-maine-pumpkin-bread/>

# Family Devotion

## Week 3 – Worship Music

***"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song." Psalm 95:1-2***

Who in your family loves to sing? Raise your hand and then sing a lyric to your favorite song now!

If you were to poll my family and ask them who loves to sing, they would all vote for me! I may not be the best singer, but I love to belt out my favorite songs while I'm in the car or while I'm cleaning the house or washing the dishes. Sometimes I sing a little too loud and people in my family have to tell me to be quiet!

This week we will be learning that another important piece of carving out time with Jesus is through worship music and singing. We find some people in the Bible who definitely made time for worshiping God. There was a king in the Bible that loved to sing and dance and praise God (and I believe he might have been a loud singer, too). That king was David! We can find his love of singing in the book of Psalms. *(Side note...David wrote some of the Psalms but not all of them. In Psalm 95 we find no mention of this psalm being one of David's. However, in Hebrews 4:7, a part of Psalm 95 is quoted, and it attributes it to David. So we believe that David wrote Psalm 95).*

In the opening verses of Psalm 95, we immediately read that David is inviting us to come and sing! He wants us to join him in shouting and singing praises to God. He tells us to come before God with thanksgiving *(meaning we need to have grateful hearts)*. And he also tells us to extol Him with music and song *(extol means to praise Him enthusiastically)*. He urges us to sing to God!

So why is worshiping God through song so important?

I think David says it best in Psalm 95...we are to worship Him through song because He is our God! He is the King overall. He is our Creator. He is the

One who formed us and knit us together. He deserves all the praise and honor and glory. We are to sing to Him because He is God!

One of my favorite places to sing praises to Him is in the car. I am thankful we have Christian radio stations that play worship music. If you ever ride in the car with me, you will find that my station is always tuned to K-Love or The Fish. I love to sing and lift up praises to God while driving. It clears my head and helps me focus on Him. Does your family listen to worship music in the car? If not, try it sometime. And sing loudly together!

*But what if I don't like to sing or am not good at singing...what do I do?*

I believe you don't have to sing out loud to praise God. You can sing quietly inside your heart. Just turn on some worship music and listen. Take some of the lyrics you hear and turn it into a prayer. Praising God can be done out loud or can be a quiet time just between you and God. And if you're not a good singer, that doesn't matter! God doesn't care what you sound like. He just wants to spend time with you, and He loves when you glorify His name.

So this week, find time to worship God. Turn on some worship music while you're in the car or play some in the background while you're doing your homework. Sing to God because He is our God!

*Holy God, I come before You giving You all praise and honor and glory. I am so thankful that You created me. God, You are so awesome and I love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## **Family Devotion Activity**

Every week after you read your family devotion you will be "carving" your own pumpkin! This is a visual reminder of the ways you can carve out time with Jesus.

For today, take the nose and write in "Worship Music". Then color it (yellow would be a great color). Glue the nose to the pumpkin. Hang your pumpkin where you can see it every day and remember to carve out time with Jesus by worshiping Him through singing and music.

# Family Game

## Week 3 – Name That Worship Tune

**Supplies Needed:** *worship songs downloaded onto phone or played from YouTube.*

Let's see if your family can "Name that Worship Tune!" First, make a playlist on your phone of your family's favorite worship songs. Then, play a small portion of each song. See if your family can guess the name of the song (bonus points if they know who sings the song). The person with the most correct, wins!

*I found a YouTube video of worship trivia from 2018. Play this if you like!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvxOdMj5dwo>

# Family Craft

## Week 3 – Pumpkin Towers of Praise

**Supplies Needed:** *1 bag candy pumpkins, toothpicks*

You will be building a tall tower of praise out of candy pumpkins! You can build any structure or size you want. You will attach the pumpkins together using toothpicks. See how tall you can build your tower!

As you build, sing your favorite worship song (or play it on a phone or radio as you build). Singing to God while you play or work is an easy way to carve out time to spend with Jesus!

# Family Snack

## Week 3 – Candy Corn Punch

### ***Ingredients Needed (enough for 2 people):***

1 small can pineapple tidbits (best if they are cold)

12 oz can orange soda

Whipped cream (or ice cream)

Candy corn

Fill a glass 1/3 the way full with pineapple tidbits. Next, fill the glass with orange soda until about 2/3 the way full. Add whipped cream or a scoop of ice cream. Top with candy corn.

# Family Devotion

## Week 4 – Church

**"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer...Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:42, 46-47**

Church looks a lot different these days, doesn't it? We had to stop meeting in person due to Covid. Many churches made a shift to online church. Some have done drive-in church (where you stay in your car). Others have been meeting outdoors. And some have now gone back inside with smaller numbers, social distancing and masks.

Our final piece to carving out time with Jesus has to do with going to church. It is an important piece in your faith walk with the Lord.

*Do you know how the church began?*

We can find this story in Acts 2. The church began on the day of Pentecost. Jesus had ascended into heaven and before He left, He told the disciples to wait for the arrival of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost (which is 50 days after Passover or Easter), the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples and believers in Jerusalem. It was on this day that many people came to believe in Jesus as their Savior. The Bible tells us around 3,000 people were saved that day!

And on this day these believers began meeting together. This day is also known as the birthday of the church. This is the day that the church was formed. In Acts 2:42 it says that these believers "*devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*" It is from the early church that we learn the importance of meeting together. The church is where we learn more about God through the teaching from our pastors. It is where we can fellowship with other Christians. It's where we can eat together (I love church dinners). And it's where we can pray together and lift each other up.

No matter what church looks like for you these days, remember what the early Christians taught us about being the church and the importance of worshiping God together. I pray that whenever your church opens back up again that your family will attend. Not just "to get back to normal", but to come together to learn

more about God, to fellowship with your fellow believers, to eat and break bread together, and to pray together. And if you find yourself still not meeting in-person together, you can still "go to church". Jump online to a church service, join a Bible Study Zoom meeting, grab take-out from your church's Wednesday night supper, send cards to church members, pray for those who are on your church's prayer list. There are so many ways to continue to be a part of your church even if you aren't able to meet in person.

So your challenge this week is to carve out time for church. If your church is doing a drive-in service, outdoor service, or in-person service, go to it. If your church is still meeting virtually, carve out a time to watch that service together as a family in your living room. Go to church!

And I'll close with a song that I learned about the church when I was a kid...

*"I am the church. You are the church. We are the church together. I will follow Jesus all around the world. Yes, we're the church together."*

## **Family Devotion Activity**

Every week after you read your family devotion you will be "carving" your own pumpkin! This is a visual reminder of the ways you can carve out time with Jesus.

For today, take the mouth and write in "Church". Color it a different color if you like. Glue the mouth to the pumpkin. Hang your pumpkin where you can see it every day and remember to carve out time with Jesus by going to church.

## **Family Game**

### **Week 4 – Pin the Face on the Pumpkin**

**Supplies Needed:** *butcher paper or posterboard, pumpkin face pieces made from construction paper, tape, blindfold*

*Kids will take turns pinning 2 eyes, a nose, and a mouth on the pumpkin while blindfolded.*

On a piece of butcher paper or posterboard, draw a big pumpkin. Hang in your home on a wall kids can easily get to.



Blindfold one person. Spin them 3 times then have them find the pumpkin and pin the face on it. Continue doing with each person in your family. See who can get the closest to putting the face on correctly.

## **Family Craft**

### **Week 4 – Pumpkin Carving**

**Supplies Needed:** *pumpkin, newspaper, Sharpie, sharp knife (parent use only)*

Visit a pumpkin patch or a local store to pick out a pumpkin to carve.

Whether you carve inside or outside, lay down newspaper to keep the clean-up to a minimum.

Using a sharp knife (parents only), cut out the top of the pumpkin. Scoop out all the pumpkin goop (it's fun to get your hands dirty and goopy).

Using a Sharpie, draw out the design you want to use. Parents will then use a sharp knife to carve your pumpkin. Add a candle to the inside of the pumpkin and let it glow!

Close your carving time in prayer together as a family, asking God to help you shine bright for Jesus where you live!

## **Family Snack**

### **Week 4 – Pumpkin Pie Pop-Tarts**

*I love pop-tarts! And I found a recipe where you can make your own! Below are the ingredients needed for this recipe.*

*The directions can be found on the We Are Far From Normal website (see link below).*

**Ingredients Needed:**

1 pkg refrigerated pie crust

Water

**Filling**

1/2 cup pumpkin puree

1/4 cup brown sugar

1 Tbsp maple syrup

1/2 tsp lemon juice

1/4 tsp pumpkin pie spice

**Glaze**

1/2 cup powdered sugar

2-3 tsp milk *(use more or less depending on the consistency you'd like)*

1/2 tsp vanilla

Pinch of salt

<https://werefarfromnormal.com/homemade-pumpkin-pie-pop-tarts>