

Faith at Home Corner - *For the week of January 17th, 2021*

by Rev. Steve Andrews Jr.

Weekly Tip for Worshipping with Your Children: *Worshipping with children is not easy, but it is necessary and worthwhile! Even from the time of birth, children learn the most by observing what their parents do. We are here to help. This week's tip is for: **Everyone!***

COLOR CHANGE: Notice that the different colors of the altar and the stoles (the sash that the pastors wear over their albs/robes) changed! The colors help us mark the time of the church year. We have switched to **green** in honor of **Epiphany**. Epiphany's message of Christ's revelation to the Gentiles along with the season's traditional emphasis on extending Christ's kingdom through missions, calls for the use of green-the color symbolic of growth.

Outreach Made Simply Practical! *Live your normal, everyday lives with Gospel intentionality!*

Know Your Neighbors: Can you name the people on your street? Do you know a story about each of them? Are you the neighbor in the neighborhood that they go to when they are in need or need someone to talk with? Why not? Care about your neighbors, know about their lives, and be there to listen and help! A neighbor like that sticks out! Be present, be yourself, and wear your faith on your sleeve. Let God use you to impact your neighbors and their lives. The more you are in their lives the more opportunities you will have to care for them and point them to the Ultimate Caregiver – Christ!

Weekly Worship Helps for the Home: *How do we go about doing devotions together as a family? How do we teach our children about their Lord and Savior? Here are some simple ways to do just that, to make Christ the center of your family and to be in His Word daily. This guide is designed to help your family read through the Scriptures together in three years and to cover the Small Catechism in just one year!*

You can certainly do this however you would like. In my home, we read a chapter of the Bible together after dinner each night, followed by reciting the three chief parts of the Catechism (Ten Commandments, Apostle's Creed, and the Lord's Prayer) and then we sing a hymn. There are any number of ways to talk about God in your home!

-Pray together! This week's **Prayer List:** <http://www.gracefaithlove.org/newsletter>

-Daily Scripture Readings: Let's read Mark 8-14! Feel free to ask your pastor any questions that come up!

-Memory verse: Jonah 3:10 – "When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that He had said he would do to them, and He did not do it."

-Hymn: *O Christ, Our True and Only Light* LSB 839, also in [Lutheran Service Builder](#)

-Psalm: 62

-Small Catechism (2017): Read together the section on the Apostles' Creed: Third Article, on pg. 17-18. Digging Deeper with the Explanation – The Seventh Commandment and its meaning, pg. 105-109.

-Devotions resources: grab a copy of *Portals of Prayer* at church or subscribe to daily email devotions from www.lhm.org, www.lutheranchurchcharities.org, or <https://media.higherthings.org/reflections/>.

Feel free to share with family and friends, neighbors and coworkers, anyone you'd like!

God Time at Home

Select questions and adapt for your family.

FOR STARTERS: Find a snack that is primarily seeds, such as sunflower seeds, peanuts, or even popcorn. Place a bowl of these snacks on the Bible. Offer this to all. Say: "Jesus tells us a parable in which the Word of God is like seed planted in our lives. Everyone tell their favorite Bible story or Bible verse." After discussion, ask everyone to think about how knowing God's Word in your heart helps you grow closer to Jesus and do things that help others meet Jesus.

READ THE BIBLE: Read the parable of the seed and the sower as found in Mark 4:1-20.

KEY VERSES: Matthew 13:23, "As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

TALK ABOUT IT: What are the four different things that happened to the seeds? (Mark 4:4-7) What does each of the different types of soil represent?

- The seed that fell along the road. (Mark 4:15. People who hear the Word but Satan comes at once and takes away the Word that was planted in them.)
- The seed that fell on the rocky ground. (Mark 4:16-17. People that hear the Word and accept it at once with joy, but they don't develop any roots. When suffering comes along, they fall from faith.)
- The seed choked by thorns. (Mark 4:18-19. People that hear the Word, but the worries of life and the desires for other things take over.)
- The seed that fell on good soil. (Mark 4:20. People hear God's Word, accept it, and produce fruit.)

Do you think the disciples understood the parable without Jesus explaining it? (Mark 4:13. Jesus needed to help them understand, too!) Talk about ways your family can be like the seeds that fell on good soil.

PRAYER: Have kids pray for ways they can be good soil, receive God's Word, and produce much fruit.

Family Time Option

One day this week, try...

Take some lima beans or other type of beans and plant them in a cup of soil. Place on a windowsill and have family members guess how many seeds it will produce. When the beans are ripe and ready to be counted, gather the family to count at least as many ways that God is using your family to produce fruit in His kingdom.