

Resource for families



Faith 5

Family Favourites

Bible Stories



INTERGEN
TEAM

Faith 5 a simple way to bring your family closer together and closer to God.

The faith 5 steps:

- 1 talk about the highs and lows of your day
- 2 read a passage from the Bible
- 3 talk about how the Bible passage relates to your day
- 4 pray for one another
- 5 bless one another.

This resource has been created to help families with step 2.

To find out more about **Faith 5** and how to establish a **Faith 5** routine in your home see pages 7-10.

Why establish a Faith 5 routine?

Faith 5 is a way of nurturing and passing on faith

When parents bring their children to baptism or dedication, they are acting on a desire for their child to have faith in Jesus Christ.

Four keys for passing on faith in families are

- Caring conversation
- Family devotions (worship)
- Family traditions and
- Service to one another and to others.

Used regularly, **Faith 5** incorporates caring conversation and devotions, it becomes a tradition and encourages service.

Used regularly in a family, **Faith 5** provides opportunity for young people to develop the assets* needed for making positive life decisions.

These assets include:

- Family support
- Positive family communication
- Adult role models
- Boundaries
- Expectations
- Caring
- Equality and Social Justice
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Restraint
- Interpersonal skills
- Cultural competence
- Resistance skills
- Peaceful conflict Resolution skills.

* search-institute.org/content/40-developmental-assets

Many studies show that children — despite what they may say at times — crave and value time spent with parents and honest conversation.

Parents also crave and value opportunities to listen to and talk with their children. **Faith 5** is an easy way of structuring your family life to include some dedicated quality time and caring conversation with your children.

Family Favourite Bible Stories

Bible stories can be read directly from the Bible.

Sometimes a complete 'story' is contained in just a verse or two. Other stories are told over several chapters. Long passages are not appropriate for the *Faith Five plan*, especially with young children.

Bible Story Books

You will find it easier to read stories from a Bible Story book. Most Bible story collections are written and illustrated for specific age groups. Choose a Bible story book appropriate to the age of children in your family.

Bible story books do not all use the same title for stories, but most identify the Bible texts on which the stories are based.

You may do Faith 5 sessions based on the selection of stories in whatever Bible story collection you are using. You may pick stories at random, but reading Bible stories in sequence will help your family to see the big story of the whole Bible and to see how one story relates to other stories — as well as how it relates to the highs and lows of your own lives.

Sample List

The following sample list of favourite stories and their Bible references is fairly comprehensive. It is taken from *The Family Story Bible* by Ralph Milton.

The Family Story Bible contains excellent re-telling of Bible stories, with enough background information and interpretation to make them accessible and relevant to children, ages 5-12. There are also some helpful introductory pages for parents.

Hebrew Scriptures

- ☐ God makes a worldGenesis 1
- ☐ God's beautiful gardenGenesis 2:4 – 3:24
- ☐ Two brothers have a fight.....Genesis 4:1-16
- ☐ God makes a promiseGenesis 6:1 – 9:17
- ☐ God sends a rainbowGenesis 9
- ☐ The people build a towerGenesis 11:1-9
- ☐ Abram and Sarah begin a journey.....Genesis 12, 13:14-18
- ☐ Abram and Lot solve a problemGenesis 13
- ☐ Hagar hears God's promise.....Genesis 16:1-16 & 21:8-21
- ☐ A mother of nationsGenesis 17 – 18:19, 21:1-7
- ☐ Abraham doesn't understandGenesis 22
- ☐ Rebecca and IsaacGenesis 24
- ☐ Rebecca and her babiesGenesis 25
- ☐ Jacob steals from EsauGenesis 27
- ☐ Jacob's dream.....Genesis 28:10-22
- ☐ Jacob falls in loveGenesis 29
- ☐ Esau forgivesGenesis 31,32,33
- ☐ Rachel dies having a babyGenesis 35
- ☐ Joseph's coat of many coloursGenesis 37

Hebrew Scriptures continued ...

- ☐ Joseph helps PharaohGenesis 40 & 41
- ☐ Joseph and his brothersGenesis 42 – 45
- ☐ Miriam saves her brotherExodus 1 & 2
- ☐ Moses kills a manExodus 2:11-25
- ☐ Moses goes back to EgyptExodus 3 & 4
- ☐ The Hebrews leave EgyptExodus 5 – 12
- ☐ A long, long journeyExodus 14 & 15
- ☐ Special foodExodus 16 – 17:7
- ☐ The ten commandmentsExodus 19 & 20
- ☐ Moses sees the new land.....Deuteronomy 34
- ☐ The people claim the promised landJoshua 1,3 & 4
- ☐ The battle of JerichoJoshua 2,5:13-6:27
- ☐ The Hebrews remember.....Joshua 9, 24:24-29
- ☐ A mother for IsraelJudges 4 & 5
- ☐ Samson and DelilahJudges 16
- ☐ Two brave womenRuth
- ☐ Hannah prays for a baby1 Samuel 1 & 2
- ☐ God calls Samuel1 Samuel 3
- ☐ David and Goliath1 Samuel 17, portions from 16,18 & 19
- ☐ David and Jonathan1 Samuel 18 – 20
- ☐ David and Bathsheba2 Samuel 11 & 12
- ☐ A very wise king1 Kings 3:16-18, 4:29-34
- ☐ The prophet Elijah1 Kings 17:7-24
- ☐ God speaks in a whisper1 Kings 19:11-13
- ☐ Miriam smiles2 Kings 5:1-15
- ☐ The queen says 'No'Esther 1
- ☐ Esther saves her peopleEsther 2
- ☐ The story of JobJob
- ☐ Songs from the BiblePsalms 22,23 & 150
- ☐ Song of SongsSong of Songs
- ☐ The story of IsaiahIsaiah 1 – 39
- ☐ Isaiah's messageIsaiah
- ☐ A servant leaderIsaiah 40 – 53
- ☐ The story of JeremiahJeremiah
- ☐ A king learns about GodDaniel 3
- ☐ Daniel and the lionsDaniel 6
- ☐ When God's children ran awayHosea 11:1-11
- ☐ Amos, the farmer prophetAmos
- ☐ The funny story of JonahJonah

Christian Scriptures: The New Testament

Many of these stories of Jesus and his church are recorded in two or more places, but only one is listed below

- ☐ Mary learns about her baby.....Luke 1:26-38
- ☐ Mary visits her cousinLuke 1:5-25, 39-80
- ☐ Jesus is born Luke 2:1-7
- ☐ The shepherds visit JesusLuke 2:8-20
- ☐ Jesus is presented at the TempleLuke 2:22-39
- ☐ The Magi visit JesusMatthew 2:1-23
- ☐ Jesus in the TempleLuke 2:41-52
- ☐ John baptises JesusLuke 3:2-22
- ☐ Jesus gets ready.....Luke 4:1-13
- ☐ Jesus goes to a partyJohn 2:1-11
- ☐ Nicodemus comes to see JesusJohn 3:1-21
- ☐ The woman at the well John 4:5-30, 39-42
- ☐ Jesus helps a childJohn 4:46-54
- ☐ Simon gets a new job Luke 5:1-11
- ☐ Mary begins a new life Luke 8:1-3, 24:10
- ☐ Matthew's surpriseLuke 5:27-32
- ☐ Mary and her friends help JesusLuke 8:1-3
- ☐ Things Jesus said.....Luke 6:27-35
- ☐ Jesus teaches.....Luke 6:20-23
- ☐ Jesus teaches us to prayLuke 11:1-4
- ☐ The woman who washed Jesus' feetLuke 7:36-50
- ☐ Stories about God's shalomLuke 8:5-15
- ☐ A child helps Jesus Luke 9:10-17
- ☐ The poor woman's giftLuke 21:1-4
- ☐ The woman who touched JesusLuke 8:42-49
- ☐ Jesus helps a sick girlLuke 8:40-42, 49-55
- ☐ Simon becomes Peter Luke 9:18-25
- ☐ Jesus on the mountaintop.....Luke 9:28-36
- ☐ Jesus and the childLuke 9:46-48
- ☐ The lost sheepMatthew 18:10-14
- ☐ A mean trick on JesusJohn 8:1-11
- ☐ The Good SamaritanLuke 10:25-37
- ☐ Martha learns about food Luke 10:38-42
- ☐ Jesus talks about money Luke 12:13-31
- ☐ The bent-over woman Luke 12:10-13
- ☐ A loving father Luke 15:1-2, 11-32
- ☐ Lazarus is alive John 11:1-53
- ☐ Jesus and the children Luke 18:15-17
- ☐ Zacchaeus climbs a tree Luke 19:1-9

Christian Scriptures: The New Testament cont...

- ☐ Jesus goes to Jerusalem Luke 19:28-40
- ☐ The moneychangers Luke 19:45-48
- ☐ Jesus the servant Luke 22:7-13, 24-29
- ☐ Washing feet John 13:1-20
- ☐ A warning Luke 22:21-23,31-34
- ☐ The last supper Luke 22:17-20
- ☐ Jesus prays in the garden Luke 22:39-46
- ☐ Jesus is arrested Luke 22:47
- ☐ I don't know him' Luke 22:54-62
- ☐ Jesus must be killed Luke 23:1-5, 13-25
- ☐ Jesus is killed Luke 23:26-46
- ☐ Mary of Magdala sees Jesus John 20:1-18
- ☐ On the road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35
- ☐ The disciples believe Luke 24:33-48
- ☐ Thomas asks questions John 14:1-7, 20:24-29
- ☐ Peter learns John 21:1-17
- ☐ The birthday of the church Acts 2
- ☐ Sharing Acts 4:32-5:11
- ☐ The story of Stephen Acts 6:1 – 8:1
- ☐ Saul learns about Jesus Acts 9:1-19, 22:3-36, 26:4-18
- ☐ Dorcas and Anna help each other Acts 9:36-42
- ☐ Cornelius becomes a Christian Acts 10:1 – 11:18
- ☐ Lydia starts a new church Acts 16:11-40, Philippians 4:6-9
- ☐ Paul writes a letter 1 Corinthians 1:10, 12:4-31
- ☐ Doing God's work James 2:4-26
- ☐ John's wonderful dream Revelation 1,3,21,22

*... these are written down so that you may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
If you believe this, you will have life because you belong to him.
(John 20:31 NIRV)*

[illegible]

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How to establish a Faith 5 routine

In the lifetime of your family it's never too early to start Faith 5, and never too late.

Faith 5 will look different for each person, family and stage of life...

- The Faith 5 structure grows and morphs as families change and can be used by households of any size and with people of any age.
- The younger your child is when you begin the practice, the easier it will be to establish and the longer you and your child will benefit from it.
- A couple can use Faith 5 before they have children or after children have left home.
- When the first child is an infant, you may begin with just the nightly blessing. When the child develops language, add prayers and Bible stories. When the child starts school, focus on highs and lows. When the child begins reading, add Bible reading and discussion of the Bible reading.
- Subsequent children join in, as they are able, with the family's pattern.

Finding the right time of day

In the daily life of families, often the best time for Faith 5 is bedtime. Studies show that a bedtime routine helps people get to sleep more easily. At bedtime the family can reflect on the events of the day. They bring into the open and deal with issues that might cause sleeplessness if not discussed. Parents commit their child to God's care through the night and children go to sleep secure in the love of God and of their parents.

Some families have found other times of day work for them: first thing in the morning, after school, or after dinner.

Skype and other electronic communication has allowed grandparents to have Faith 5 sessions with grandchildren. It can also allow a family member who is not physically in the house to participate at Faith 5 time.

Suggestions on how to start the routine & keep it going

- It may be good to start doing Faith 5 formally at a particular milestone of the family: a birth, birthday or anniversary, the start of the year or a school term.
- It generally takes a month to establish a habit, so the first month is critical. With older children, talk about what is going to happen and why it is important. Encourage them to create a calendar or tick list to record each time you do Faith 5.
- Give it a try for a week and then have an evaluation. Consider any changes that could make it more effective, eg brush teeth before Faith 5, use a simpler Bible translation, have someone give a 5-minute warning signal, keep one person from dominating the conversation . . .
- Expect some hurdles - there may be a family member who refuses to participate. Respect their decision and ask that they respect what the rest of the family is doing.
- It may be (actually it will be) hard to get everyone together every night. Keep the practice going with whoever is available — even if you sometimes do it alone.
- You may have guests. Tell them about your practice and either invite them to participate or to excuse you for a few minutes.
- Sometimes you may simply forget. Forgive yourselves and start again.

Have support

- Starting Faith 5 in a family usually begins with an adult who sees how it could benefit the family / household.
- It helps if that one person has support from outside the family, perhaps friends who have already established the practice or who are also keen to start it.
- Go to your outside support group to keep you accountable, to give you encouragement and suggestions, and to pray with you about what is happening.

Step 1 - Share Highs and Lows

Take turns sharing the highs and lows of your day. Highs are the good things that happen; lows are the bad things.

The practice of identifying high and low moments and events:

- teaches the skills of reflection and evaluation
- can 'halve the pain and double the joy'
- builds trust and strengthens relationships.

Sometimes the high and the low are the same thing. Bad things and good things may be things that you do, or things that happen to you. As children become more aware of the impact of their behaviour on others, this sharing may lead to confession and forgiving one another.

Everyone in the family should have a chance to share, rather than one person monopolising the conversation. Youngest children may need some prompting about what has happened during the day. Accept each person's story as a true report and a gift to the rest of you. You can respond with caring comments to one another's stories.

Step 2 - Read the Bible

God speaks to us through the Bible. When you read from the Bible as part of Faith 5, you are inviting God into your family's conversation in a way that is appropriate to the age of your children.

For young children you could use:

- a Bible story
- a Bible song
- a single Bible phrase.

For older children as they learn to read:

- they may read the verse from their own Bible and highlight it
- take turns reading and/or selecting Bible readings.
- you may read the passage twice for clarity and understanding.

For Faith 5 it's better to dig deeply into a single Bible verse or thought than to study large blocks of Bible text. The Bible component of Faith 5 can be from any Bible reading scheme, or from readings used in church or a children's ministry program.

Faith 5 Family Favourites

The Family Favourite Bible verses and Bible stories resources are verses and stories provide a useful starting point for getting into the Bible as a family. These resources list verses and stories that people through the generations have found helpful and encouraging.

Family Favourites - Bible Verses

These passages are not Bible stories, but an overview of teachings for life from the Bible. The passages are listed in the order in which they appear in the Bible, but you can use them in any sequence you choose. The selection includes at least one verse from each book of the Bible.

Family Favourites - Bible Stories

The Family Favourite Bible Stories resource is based on the selection of stories found in *The Family Story Bible*, written by Ralph Milton. We highly recommend this book for families with children between the ages of 5 and 10.

These resources are available for free at sa.uca.org.au/intergen

Step 3 - Relate Bible reading to your day

The key question after reading from God's word is 'What does this mean for us?' Adults can reflect on 'what it means for me' and sometimes 'what I think it means for our family', but be cautious about telling the child 'what it should mean for you'.

The ability to relate ideas from one situation (the Bible) to another situation (daily life) requires maturity and practice.

Young children will not make the same connections that adults make. That's OK. Give your children the opportunity to find for themselves in the Bible passage the Good News about God's love and/or the caution or guidance for living that God provides.

This step involves active listening. People concentrate on what they hear one another saying as well as what they hear God saying. It also teaches the skill of reflection as they find intersections between what God says and the stories of their own lives.

Step 4 - Pray

Discussing the highs and lows of your day, and hearing what God has said to you, prepares your hearts and minds to talk to God about these things. You speak directly to God, and place in God's hands all the concerns you have discussed.

- Thank God for your highs, for his love and for his guidance.
- Ask God for continued guidance, help, strength, patience and courage in the face of the lows.
- Children pray as they are able to put their thoughts into words.

Different ways you could pray:

- Go around a family circle and each person pray for the person to their left.
- Name a person (or use a game to identify people) and let each person say something they pray for that person.
- Let each person pray for themselves.
- If you are unsure what to pray, you may simply say 'Lord Jesus, we pray for (name)'.
- Sing a Gospel song inserting the person's name, for example: 'Jesus loves Kelly; this I know; for the Bible tells me so'.
- Leader says 'Thank you, God, for . . .' and each person adds something from their own highs. Leader says, 'Please help us . . .' and each person adds something from their own low.
- Say God's family prayer (the Lord's Prayer). Pause after each line to think of the highs and lows you have discussed (see example on next page).

Jesus' Family Prayer

Our Father in heaven: hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

(What good things have helped you know God is in charge of your life and the world?)

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

(Where do you need help to understand what God wants for you and the world?)

Give us today our daily bread.

(What good things has God given you? What are the practical things you need?)

Forgive us our sins

(What do you need to confess and ask God's forgiveness about?)

as we forgive those who sin against us.

(Who has hurt you and needs you to forgive them?)

Save us from the time of trial

(What trials and temptations are you facing that you need God to help you handle?)

and deliver us from evil.

(What bad things do you need God to help you through?)

For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

This prayer is found in the Bible in Matthew 5:9-13. Your family may use a slightly different version of this prayer.

Step 5 - Bless

To bless someone is to link the person with God's good promises.

A blessing and assurance of love includes a physical touch: hand on head, hug, kiss, or making the sign of the cross.

You can use your own words, words from Bible benedictions or simply: 'Jesus loves you, and so do I' or 'Sleep, my child, for God is with you, all through the night'.

Here are some blessings from the Bible

Numbers 6:24-26

Psalm 121:7,8

Romans 15:13

Philippians 4:7

Philippians 4:19,20

1 Thessalonians 5:28

1 Peter 1:2b

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