

Life in Christ

Romans 5:12-21

July Memory Verse: Psalm 34:14 "Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

NOTE: What a simple, yet powerful reminder to kids *and* to us! As believers, we are to turn from evil and do good. We are to seek and pursue peace. Try to weave this verse into your everyday life this month.

Opening Activity: Choose one or two that seem most appropriate for your children to start the lesson. Feel free to work them into the lesson if you kids start to get antsy and lose their attention span... like ours do!

- Practice saying Psalm 34:14 together, along with other verses you have memorized. Say it in funny voices, say it as loudly or as quietly as you can, say it while standing on one foot. If your kids are writers, have them write it down on a pretty or cool piece of paper to hand in their bedroom.
- Pray together as a family for any needs you or others have. Remember to thank Him for His blessings and what He is doing in your lives, too.
- Make posters of the lesson's key words. Include a definition and some pictures or drawings that represent each concept.
 - *Sin*: anything we say, think, or do that displeases God
 - *Gift*: something that is given to you
 - *Grace*: God's favor towards us when we don't deserve

As you make the posters or pictures, talk about each word with your children. What is an example of sin? What is your favorite gift you've received or given? What does grace look like? How do the three words relate to one another? We sin, but God's gift to us is grace.

- If your kids aren't familiar with the event of Adam and Eve sinning in the Garden of Eden, review Genesis 2:15-17 and Genesis 3:1-24 with them. Key concepts to note: God created Adam and Eve and told them not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. But Eve was tempted by Satan (who had taken the form of a snake) and she chose to eat fruit from that tree. She gave some to Adam, too, and he ate some fruit. This sin (choosing their own way instead of God's way) separated them from God. They could no longer be in His presence, so God cast them out of Eden forever.

Today's lesson focuses on how, through Adam, all of mankind sins. We are all born with a sin nature. However, through Jesus Christ, all of mankind can be saved and declared righteous. Death entered through one man, but eternal life is available through another Man.

Lesson: The word of God never returns void (Isaiah 55:11), so rest assured that regardless of how well you think the lesson goes, God will accomplish His purposes in it. Our job is to teach His word regularly and faithfully, trusting that He will take care of the rest.

- Provide a quick recap to your kids: "We are still learning from the book of Romans about how to live in a way that pleases God. Romans was written by a missionary named Paul who loved Jesus and wanted others to love Him, too. We have learned that we are called to obey, to belong to Jesus, and to be holy. We've talked a lot about making righteous (or good) choices instead of sinful (or bad) choices. God rewards righteous choices and punishes sinful choices. Obeying in our hearts matters more than obeying with our hands. It is our faith in God that makes us righteous, not the things we do, just like Abraham's faith made him righteous. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can have peace with God and be reconciled to Him."
- Introduce the passage: "Today, we are reading Romans 5:12-21. After I read it, I want you to tell me what words you remember."
- Read Romans 5:12-21, stopping to repeat verses, explain words, and ask questions, as appropriate for your kiddos. After reading the passage, point to your word posters from the intro activities and talk about the context for each word.
 - *Key concept: Because of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden, we are all sinners destined to die. But through Christ's death on the cross, we can all be forgiven and have eternal life.*Consider reading the passage in The Message or NIV, which are often the easiest to understand. Countless versions of the Bible can be found online at www.biblegateway.com.
- Review the passage:
 - Vs. 12-14: Because Adam sinned, sin reigns in all mankind. The law (or rules) show us our sin.

- Vs. 15-17: Jesus's free gift is different than Adam's curse. We can have righteousness before God because Jesus died on the cross for our sins to be forgiven.
- Vs. 18-19: Sin, death, and condemnation (being declared guilty) come from Adam. But forgiveness, righteousness, and life come from Jesus.
- Vs. 20-21: There's always more grace available than there is sin.
- Connect the Gospel: "Let's talk about that some more. God created everything, including people. But the first people God made, Adam and Eve, chose to disobey God when they ate fruit God told them not to eat. Now, everyone in the world is born with a sin nature. That means we all sin. The punishment of sin is death and separation from God forever. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth so that we don't have to be punished forever for our sins. Jesus lived a sinless life. He was put to death on a cross, taking the punishment for our sin and guilt. He rose to life three days later, showing that He won over sin and death. If we ask Jesus to forgive our sins, He will. Then we can know Him, be part of His family, serve Him, and spend eternity with Him in heaven. Eternal life with Jesus is our best reward for following and obeying Him. If we have faith in Jesus, we are declared righteous."
- "I'm so thankful that God always has more grace. Jesus's free gift of salvation is the best gift we could ever receive."
- Pray, then do some of the activities below, as appropriate for your family.

Activity Ideas: These are designed for use at the end of the lesson or throughout it to break up the "sitting still" times.

- Sin affects everyone... but so can Jesus's forgiveness! Fill a cup with clean water. Show it to your kids. *Talk about how when Adam sinned, that sin worked its way into everyone's heart. Put a couple drops of food coloring in the cup and stir it. Talk about how all of the water changed color, just like all of our hearts have sin in them. Remind your kids that Jesus died on the cross so that our sins could be forgiven. He offers enough grace to cover all of our sins.* Put a large towel on the table. Pour the water out onto the towel. Show your kids how the towel absorbed all of that water and is still dry in some places. *Discuss how we all sin because of Adam, but we can all be forgiven because of Jesus. Jesus cleaned up all of our sin when He died on the cross.*
SUPPLIES NEEDED: Cup, Water, Food Coloring, Spoon, Large Towel
- Write it out. Write "SIN" and "GRACE" next to each other on a piece of paper. *Which word has more letters? Grace does, because Jesus's grace is always bigger than our sins. We all sin because of Adam, and that feels really big sometimes. But Jesus offers forgiveness to each of us, and that forgiveness is huge.* Have kids decorate "GRACE" with fun and bright colors.
SUPPLIES NEEDED: Paper, Pen/Markers/Crayons
- We choose. Print the maze on the following page. Talk about how we have two choices in life: to keep on living in sin or to ask Jesus to forgive our sins so that we can live in Him. Let your kids do the maze and see where it comes out!
SUPPLIES NEEDED: Printer, Paper, Pen/Markers/Crayons

We Choose

Try this maze to see what the best choice is: death or life?

