



UNCERTAINTY: Bible Lessons for Families

Lesson: Faith in Jesus
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Series Overview

Uncertainty: A 6-pack of Bible lessons helping families wrestle with the COVID-19 pandemic and other uncertain times.

UNCERTAINTY: FAITH IN JESUS

BIBLE: Hebrews 11:1-2; John 10:27; Genesis 39:3-4; Genesis 39:20-21; Romans 8:28

MAIN IDEAS: Faith is having trust in something you can't see. Our faith is in Jesus.

- We get to choose whether we are going to live out our faith every day.
- Jesus gives us meaning, and apart from God, we'll always be empty.
- Learn to recognize God's voice.
- Times of difficulty can deepen your faith in Jesus.

SUPPLIES

For Family Activity:

- Blindfold/bandana

For Object Lesson:

- Perfume/body spray

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Place a blindfold on one person in the family.

Today, we will be talking about faith in God.

Faith requires that we trust in something we cannot see.

So, we're going to do a quick activity that will help us understand how faith and trust work together.

We have asked _____ (*name of person*) to wear a blindfold.

They are going to rely on what we say to do something.

Let each person take turns wearing the blindfold. Instruct the person wearing the blindfold to complete various tasks: putting on their shoes, opening a door, walking to the bathroom, etc.

Instead of just one person giving directions, everyone should work together to tell them what to do.

After the activity is over, say... Did our directions help you or confuse you?

Did you trust that what we were saying was the right thing to do?

You had faith in us because you knew we wanted you to succeed in the task you were doing. We didn't want you to fail.

In your life, you will have lots of people that want you to put their faith in what they say, but God's voice should be #1, above everyone else.

TEACH

Let's talk about listening to God through faith.

Faith is a key part of what it means to follow Jesus.

What exactly is faith?

In the Bible, faith is described like this...

Read Hebrews 11:1-2 (NLT).

"Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation."

Faith is when you trust in something you cannot see.

For example, if you have faith in parents who love you and you ask for a specific present at Christmas, then you know there is a good chance of you getting that present.

Or, if you are sick, you go to the hospital because you have faith that the doctors can help you get better.

Are you 100% positive you will get the gift? No.

Are you 100% positive you will get a better gift? No.

But you have *faith* that you will get the gift and get better.

Faith is trusting in something you cannot see.

Now, remember faith is not blind.

Faith is not just wildly hoping.

For example, you could hope to be a professional basketball player, but if you don't play basketball or aren't a very good basketball player, then it doesn't matter how much faith you have.

So, you aren't likely going to be a professional basketball player.

Faith is based on trust.

If you know you can trust your parents and the doctors, then you have faith in good outcomes.

But if you don't have any trust in your basketball abilities, then you shouldn't have faith in your ability to be a professional basketball player.

The point is, faith is trusting in what you cannot see.

Our faith is in God. Our faith is in Jesus.

When we become Christians, we place our faith in God.

As followers of Jesus, we have come to the place in our lives when we see our sinfulness and realize we need a savior.

That's when we place our faith in Jesus.

We realize we cannot save ourselves and that we need someone to save us.

In that sense, every Christian has faith in the saving power of Jesus' death.

But once we place our faith in Jesus, we get to choose whether we are going to live out our faith every day.

This idea of faith is especially important right now. We don't know what the future holds. We can't see it. It's all uncertain.

It's easy to be drawn away by the promises of being famous or rich or powerful.

We naturally want those things, and it's easy to put our faith in them as the thing that saves us or gives us meaning.

Being popular or cool is something we can put our faith in.

Being athletic or attractive is something we can put our faith in.

Being smart or artistic is something we can put our faith in.

We can begin to trust in these parts of who we are to bring us life and meaning.

But right now, all of those things are stripped away from us. We're quarantined at home, so it's hard to hold on to those things.

The truth is that apart from God, we will be empty, no matter how much success we achieve in life.

As Christians, we are called to hear the shepherd's voice.

While there are all sorts of things promising to save us and give us meaning, only Jesus can do that.

In the Bible, he says...

Read John 10:27 (NLT).

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

Here’s the thing you need to know about sheep, they aren’t very smart.

So being called a sheep is not exactly a compliment.

Sheep were known to be so dumb that they would accidentally walk off cliffs.

Also, many of them were blind or couldn’t see because of the other sheep around them.

They weren’t exactly ferocious, intelligent, top-of-the-food-chain animals.

Instead of their cunning or strength, they survived by listening to the voice of their shepherd.

They would learn to recognize the voice of their shepherd, so if some other person came around them, they wouldn’t listen to the other person.

Jesus is saying that we are like sheep. Now, he’s not saying we’re dumb or anything like that. He’s saying we need a shepherd—someone to guide and protect us.

We need to learn to recognize the voice of God.

Because there are all sorts of voices in this world competing for our faith, we need to learn to hear the voice of God in our life.

Popularity, power, athleticism, attractiveness, intelligence, artistry are all voices speaking to us attempting to lead us away.

There is nothing wrong with any of these things if we first and foremost are listening to our shepherd, Jesus.

But if we begin to listen to any one of these voices above Jesus, then we are in serious trouble.

As we discussed in the last several weeks, there are a lot of ways to hear God’s voice.

We can hear it in His Word, we can hear it in prayer, we can hear it through other people, and we can hear it through the different passions we have.

And once we hear God's voice, then we need to place our faith in him and do what he says.

Joseph and Faith

There is a story in the Old Testament about a man named Joseph.

He grew up in a family with eleven brothers.

He was the second youngest, but he was his father's favorite son.

He was considered so special that his father made him a unique colorful coat.

It's sort of like if your parents went to the store and bought you all named brand clothes (Nike, Champion, Adidas, Supreme, etc.) and then went to the thrift store for your brothers and sisters.

Talk about tension.

To make things worse, he had this crazy dream where he was going to rule over his brothers and family.

So, his brothers plot to kill him.

Wow, that went from zero to one hundred real quick.

They end up not killing him and just selling him into slavery.

That's nicer, I guess.

He ends up in a foreign land working as a servant for this rich guy.

Read Genesis 39:3-4 (NIV).

"The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned."

Joseph remains faithful to God, and God stays with him.

God begins blessing Joseph, so he is promoted in his job and starts doing really well.

Things start to look up, but then they take another turn for the worse.

His boss's wife flirts with him, but Joseph says no.

This makes the wife angry, so she lies and tells the boss that Joseph was the one at fault.

After Joseph worked hard and served faithfully, he is thrown into prison, and falsely accused of a crime.

But even sitting for several years in prison did not break Joseph's faith.

He had lived righteously and honorably before God, showing the world his faith.

And God remained by his side in prison.

Read Genesis 39:20-21 (NIV).

“Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.

But while Joseph was there in prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden.”

Even in prison, Joseph maintains his faith, and God continues to be with him. He knows the voice of his shepherd.

He can trust God is working for the best, even though he can't see it.

What Joseph doesn't know is that from prison, God is going to raise him to a place of high authority in the empire, where he will eventually save his entire family.

Faith is when we choose to trust that God is in control and knows what is best.

Joseph could have given up on God at so many points.

When his brothers sold him into slavery, he could have given up.

When he was falsely accused, he could have given up.

When he was rotting in prison for years, he could have given up. But he didn't.

He kept his faith in God even when it didn't make sense.

And God was with him every step of the journey.

Difficulty can deepen our faith in Jesus.

When things get difficult in life, that's when all of the other voices in life start to appear very smart.

But we need to hold onto our faith, trusting God is working things out for our good.

In Romans, Paul promises that God is doing just that.

Read Romans 8:28 (NLT).

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”

This is a powerful promise for all of us.

Joseph discovered that difficulty deepened his faith.

Share a personal story of when difficulty deepened your faith in Jesus.

Joseph endured through years of tough times and difficulty. In these uncertain times, know that, like Joseph, you will endure. Allow whatever tough time you're going through to deepen your relationship with Jesus.

He is with you and will not leave you; all you need to do is hold onto your faith through the storm.

When you learn to hear the shepherd's voice, then it doesn't matter what else is going on around you because you know where he is and what he is telling you to do.

All you have to do is listen and obey.

OBJECT LESSON

Have the perfume/body spray and a piece of paper on hand.

Let's talk a little more about faith.

First, I would like for everyone to close their eyes.

Spray a couple of squirts of the perfume/body spray into the air – make sure that everyone can smell it.

Keep your eyes closed. Faith is a lot like this perfume that I just sprayed into the air.

How do you know that I actually sprayed it in the air, and I'm not just making it up?

Because you can smell it! There is proof of what I did because there is evidence – the smell proves that I'm telling the truth.

When we believe and have faith that God is going to do something, we can't typically see God doing things, but we see the proof that He has.

Many times, we don't see God healing someone, but we know the person that we prayed for getting better.

Think about the things you're praying for right now. You can have faith that God is taking care of everything behind the scenes, and you will see the results as you keep trusting God.

Pray together and then end the lesson.

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who are the people in your life that you trust, or have faith in?
- In your own words, what do you think faith means?
- What voices do you think you are tempted to place your faith in (i.e., popularity, power, athleticism, attractiveness, intelligence, artistry, or something else)?
- Do you think it is easy or hard to have faith in Jesus? Why?
- What do you think Joseph was thinking throughout the difficult times in his life?
- What is the most challenging thing in your life right now?

FAMILY CHALLENGE

Having faith can be challenging, but encouragement goes a long way to help others believe in God.

Using paper and pen/pencil/crayons, write down something/draw a picture that would encourage someone if they were having a bad day.

When you finish what you write/draw, fold it up, and take it with you.

Then, when no one is looking, hide it somewhere in the house where someone will eventually see it. It will be a wonderful surprise and a lot of fun to run across those pieces of paper in the future.