

February 5 – February 11, 2012
Tough Questions, Straight Answers: “Seeing is Believing”
Life Notes for Families

Your children are being taught wonderful lessons about God in their respective programs at MISSION, and we’d love to encourage you to continue the conversation from Pastor Mark’s sermon throughout the week. A great way to continue the conversation is to simply ask questions and listen to your child’s response. Some great times to ask questions during the week include mealtimes, car rides (when you’re not competing with iPods and the radio), during play moments or maybe at bedtime. Questions provide us with amazing opportunities to know our children better, no matter what their age, and we’re hoping you’ll share with us some of what your family learns together. We are praying that 2012 takes each MISSION family farther down the road of loving Jesus.

This week: The following suggestions are various discussions you can have together throughout the week. These discussions will lead you down lots of different paths, and the end result will be learning more about Jesus, about following Jesus and about each other. There isn’t an order to the discussions – so look through and choose what interests you most!

Miracles all around us...and in us

Those who write dictionaries do not consider spiritual realities. They just present the facts...the plain facts, as they understand them. So here is dictionary.com defining “miracle.”

1. an effect or extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers and is ascribed to a supernatural cause.
2. such an effect or event manifesting or considered as a work of God.
3. a wonder; marvel.
4. a wonderful or surpassing example of some quality

As believers, we’d have to add something...something seems missing. What do you think?

Maybe...

5. the inexplicable, inward transformation of a follower of Jesus

As a family, discuss the idea of a miracle. Remember, as Pastor Randy said, a miracle isn’t just God doing what you want him to do because he is able! A miracle is God doing what he does naturally, just because he loves us and because, at that moment, God sees his action (or inaction at times) as the best thing for us. Think about your life and everything you experience. You might come up with a very long list.

In your own words, what is a miracle?

Have you ever seen or experienced a miracle first-hand? Think about every aspect of your life – what happens outside, what happens in a friendship or family relationship, what happens in your own heart, what happens physically, what happens through decisions that get made by others, what happens through prayer – see how many things you can think of together and talk about the miracles you've witnessed.

"Seeing is Believing"

This weekend, Pastor Randy read us the account of the very first public, recorded miracle! And it all happened at a wedding.

What's the best wedding you've ever been to? Why? What did you like about it?

What do you think weddings are supposed to be like?

What makes weddings fun? What makes them feel like a celebration?

Now read the following together as a family.

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

"Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

It's a great story. Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding – and that would have been fun.

There's something to this story that we don't often talk about. And here it is.

Did you know that Jesus is called a bridegroom?

He is. Jesus is referred to as a bridegroom in several places in the Bible, but let's focus on Revelation 19: 6-9.

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

“Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

Interesting, yes? One day, when we are all together in eternity, there will be this big wedding feast and it will be Jesus marrying all of us – the “C” Church – followers that he loves so much. That will be a party like none other.

Secret Gifts of Love

Start this discussion reading the passage together from this week's sermon.

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If you didn't notice, Jesus does this miracle sort of in secret. Not many people know what he's done, but they are all blessed or happy as a result of his action.

Have you ever done something nice for someone and they didn't even know you'd done it? Have you ever secretly made someone happy?

If you have, talk about it.

How did it feel to do something for someone without them even knowing?

Has someone ever done something special for you without taking the credit?

This might be harder to think about since, technically, you wouldn't really know!) If you're aware of something, talk about how you felt receiving a gift from someone else.

Is there someone who you could make happy right now by doing something special for him or her without the person even knowing? (Kids in the Orange program...this is honor!)

Maybe your family can help you think of fun ways to bless someone in your life.

Pastor Randy's Homework

Pastor Randy gave us an assignment, and here it is. He asked us to pray this prayer every day and then talk about what we see God doing.

"God, show me your glory. Please open my eyes to see all you are doing."

A great way to connect as a family this week is to pray this prayer together every day and then talk about all that God is doing.