

For the Week of March 4, 2012

Good Questions, Straight Answers

Life Notes for Families

## Introductions

There's nothing better than learning about Jesus together as a family. I know, it may seem like going to movies or having friends over or playing outside are better, but they really aren't. When we spend time together learning about Jesus, the rest of our lives are changed. Tomorrow is different from today. And that's pretty amazing.

## The Word: John 3:22-36

***After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized. (This was before John was put in prison.) An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."***

***To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less.***

***"The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."***

## Getting Started

Have someone in your family read John 3:22-36 or pass a Bible around and take turns reading the verses. After you read, see if you can remember key words or ideas that caught your attention. Talk about those.

## Jesus Above Everything Else

*Who would you say are the most popular or well-known celebrities, bands or public figures today?*

*What makes these people so popular or well known?*

*In our society, what usually happens to a really popular person? (Note: I heard an interview with a well-known actor who had a disguise made for himself so he could go out in public without being noticed. He said the disguise worked really well, but he didn't like it. Why? Because people didn't treat him specially.*

*What are the results of being popular or being well known or a celebrity?*

*Now think about people you really look up to...people you know personally that you really like. Discuss what attracts you to that person? Do you like them because they show an interest in you or because they're popular or because they really care about others? What makes you like this person?*

*How does it feel when someone thinks about you and puts you first?*

*How do you think it feels to the other person when you put their needs before your own?*

*How does it feel when someone doesn't even notice you or used to be your friend but isn't being friendly anymore?*

*When did you want something really bad - like attention or a gift - and not get that attention or that gift? How did that feel?*

*When did you want something really bad - like attention or a gift - and decide to let someone else have the gift or the attention instead? How did that feel?*

An interesting thing happened to one of Jesus' friends. We know this guy as "John the Baptist," but that wasn't really his name. His name was John, and he baptized people with water while he was waiting for Jesus to show up and announce himself to the world. Here's what happened. John was really popular, but once Jesus showed up, people began to follow Jesus instead. And that was weird for John's friends. They didn't like it. They felt like they had to defend John or get the followers back. But John knew he was doing exactly what God wanted him to do.

Has that ever happened to you? If so, tell your family about a time you've felt like you were doing exactly what God wanted you to do.

John cared so much about Jesus that he wanted everyone to follow Jesus instead of him. He told his friends that Jesus had to become greater and he had to become less - not a very common goal in our society or among our friends.

Think about your friends at school or at church for a minute.

*Is there someone you need to help feel better about himself or herself?*

## The Bible, the Truth and Jesus

Pastor Mark's taught us this week that God loves us so much that he sent Jesus into this world to offer us forgiveness forever. Do you know what that means? Do you know why we need forgiveness?

Talk as a family about our need for forgiveness and how God loved us by sending us Jesus.

Read this well-known verse and make sure you understand it together as a family.

***"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."***

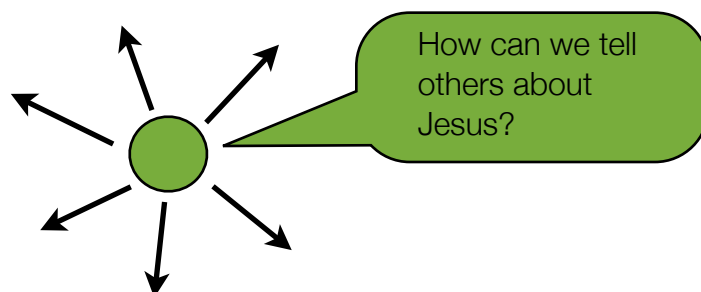
God loves you. That's the most important thing to remember.

Some people do not believe in Jesus, and you probably know some people who aren't Jesus-followers. Not everyone turns to Jesus for love, for answers, for forgiveness. But the Bible tells us that following Jesus is best for us. The Bible teaches us that Jesus is our truth-teller, our Savior, our forever-friend. We follow our parents and listen to them, our parents follow Jesus and listen to him and then our parents teach us how to follow Jesus. God takes care of us this way because he loves us so much.

What about those who don't know Jesus? How do other people learn? Sometimes we can tell others about Jesus with our words, but sometimes we may not be able to use our words or we don't know what words to use. So brainstorm a bit together as a family.

*How can we tell other people about Jesus? What ways can we use to let other people know how much God loves us?*

Talk about this together as a family. Maybe complete this "mind map" - use it to help you think about lots of possibilities! Or draw pictures or make a game. How can we tell others how much God loves us?



What did you come up with? A few ways we can tell others about Jesus are through the choices we make, the attitude we have and the way we treat other people.

Now make a list of special friends or other people in your life that you want to know about Jesus. Pray together as a family about these special friends and other people in your life and think of ways you can reach out in love to these people.

*Who in my life needs to hear about Jesus?*

*What would I tell this person or these people? (What does Jesus mean to me?)*

*How can I help tell Jesus' story to this person/these people?*

Create a special family list of people that you want to pray for together. And pray for the people on your list. If you think of something special to do for that person, write it down so you can remember.