

NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge: Love Like Jesus!

Family Discussion Guide April 2014: ENCOURAGE!

The NE MN Synod faith practice focus for April is *“Encourage.”* You are encouraged to use this discussion guide after dinner, as you drive from one activity to the next, on a Sunday afternoon – whenever or wherever you have the opportunity to dwell on and discuss what it means for us as individuals and as a family of faith to Love Like Jesus! There are no right or wrong answers, no right or wrong way to do this...the point is to make room in your lives for thoughtful and deliberate faith conversations.

This guide is based on the “Faith 5,” a 5 step way of having caring conversation, reading the bible, praying and blessing one another. It was developed by Rich Melheim and the team at Faith Inkubators (www.faithink.com). You might make this process part of your daily family discipleship practice as you become comfortable with the “Faith 5” steps. There is also an activity to do together as a family to help you live the faith practice on a daily basis, which is what the Discipleship Challenge is all about!

Remember – our spiritual hunger to grow and deepen our faith has nothing to do with success, getting the “right” answer, or works. It’s all about living – fully living – into the grace of God as God’s children...as discipleship, following Jesus in our daily life!

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel and for your willingness to grow as a family in your discipleship to Christ our Lord!

For more information and resources on the Discipleship Challenge:

www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship

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Something to Think About:

One of the gifts of a family is that you have people around you who can encourage you when you are having a bad day or can celebrate accomplishments with you. When we gather as the family of God for worship and other activities, we can encourage one another as well. God has given us the gift of community and family so that we might be encouraged especially when times are tough to keep trusting in God's promises. How has the church encouraged you or your family? How are you encouraging others?

Faith 5 Family Time

SHARE: Do a check-in with everyone in your family. Share highs and lows of the day or week with each other. Share a memory you have of someone encouraging you.

READ: Read together Matthew 5:13-16.

TALK: What do these words of Jesus say about the Christian community? What does it mean to be salt and light? How do these things make life better? What happens to our faith life when no one is encouraging us to believe (trust God) or practice our faith daily?

PRAY: Pray for each other's highs & lows. Thank God for those people who encourage us in our faith life.

BLESS: Say a blessing for each person. You can make the sign of the cross on their forehead and say: "(Name), you are salt and you are light. May God use you to bless and encourage others this week."

Family Discipleship Action Idea:

Have each person in your family choose a different person they could give encouragement to each week this month or work together as a family to bless a different person each week. Think of ways encouragement could be offered (a note, phone call, text message/email, a special gift, a meal together) and what might work best for the person you chose. Your family can help shine the light of Christ into the lives of others this month! Your family could be the salt that helps make life "taste" better for someone this month!