

**NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:  
Love Like Jesus!**

**Children's Discussion Guide January 2014: STUDY!**

The NE MN Synod faith practice focus for January is "*Study*." You are encouraged to use this discussion guide with younger children in your home or as part of a Sunday school class or church children's event. As a family you might do this after a meal, for nightly devotions, 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.

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 help younger children grow in their discipleship to Christ our Lord!

For more information and resources on the Discipleship Challenge:

**[www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship](http://www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship)**

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The bible is an amazing gift. It is also a very challenging one! The bible is a library of books and letters that come to us from very different contexts and cultures than our own, yet God is able to use these words to speak to us today. What a gift! When we study the bible with children, we often have to approach some parts of the bible with caution and help guide them through scripture that is often unclear and a mystery to us as well. Do not give up! Do not worry if you

do not have answers to the questions children often ask. Studying the bible is often more about living in the questions and listening to one another and God as we wrestle with these ancient words than coming away with answers and clear direction. Blessings on your wrestling!

**Introduction:** Show the children a bible. Ask: *How many books am I holding?* (Really is 66 books! Wow, I must be strong!). Talk about how the bible is a whole library of resources that tell us about God and God's people through stories, letters, poetry, history, and prophetic books. Share other things you know about the bible and/or invite other adults/youth to share their bibles with the children and tell why they enjoy reading their bible.

**Story/Bible Reading:** Read **Psalm 119:105** from the bible you brought. For older children, have them look up this verse and highlight it in their bible.

Ask: *What do you think this verse is talking about?* (Talk about trying to find your way in the darkness...what helps us see where to go? The light can help us see things that could make us fall or get hurt. The light can help us find others or things that we need.) Ask: *How is the bible like a lamp for us?* (Helps us see Jesus, helps us know God's will for our lives, helps us know that God loves us)

### **Craft/Activity Suggestions:**

Use air-dry clay to create candle holders for tea lights or votive candles. Give each child a ball of clay to shape around a candle. Press sequins, beads, or rhinestones into the clay. Then let them dry. Children can light the candle at home with their families when they read their bible together as a reminder that God's word is a light unto our path as disciples.

Make bookmarks out of cardstock with Psalm 119:105 written on them. Have everyone make one extra to give to someone else to remind them to study God's word daily.

**Closing Prayer:** Dear Jesus, thank you for the gift of the bible which tells us how much you love us. Help us to take time to read it every day. Amen.