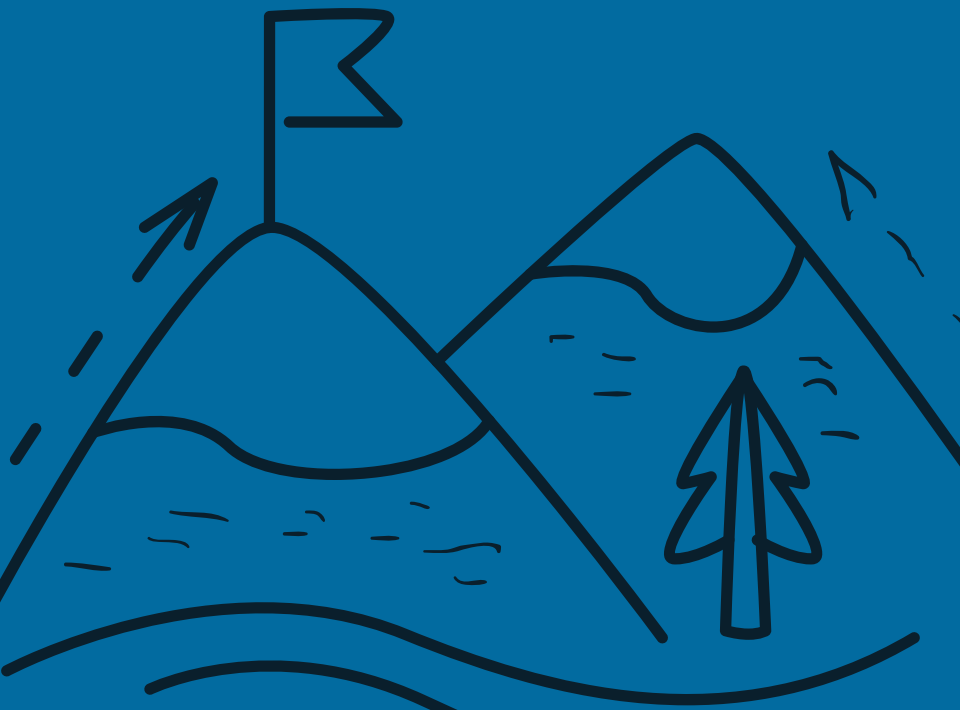


CHOOSE JESUS

PRAYER AND FASTING GUIDE

2021



DEAR FRIEND,

Are you ready to go on an adventure with God? That's right, God wants to take you on an adventure with him right now! Let's see what kind of adventure you're about to go on!!!

Have you ever made space in your closet to make room for new clothes? Or maybe you just cleared out some old toys to make room for your new Christmas gifts? What did you have to do to make room for a new gift that someone wanted to give you? **You had to get rid of something to make room for a new gift!**

For three weeks you are invited to take an adventure through prayer and fasting and throughout this adventure God wants to give you new gifts! Fasting is just a fancy word for making a different choice so you can have more space in your mind or in your schedule for Jesus! Jesus wants to give you something new! He may want to give you more love for your brothers and sisters, he might want to give you patience with your parents, the list could go on and on.

Before you close this guide, pray and ask Jesus to be super duper close to you, ask him to be your absolute best friend in the whole wide world, and tell him this..."I want whatever gift you want to give me." Use this guide every day to help you practice listening to God! Let the adventure begin!

Pastor James

- NEXT GENERATION DIRECTOR



Week 1

CLOSER

CHOOSE JESUS

THIS WEEK IS ALL ABOUT GETTING CLOSER
TO GOD, YOUR LORD AND FRIEND.

THE IMAGE OF GOD

READ

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.” Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened. Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

Genesis 1:27-31 NLT

TALK

When God created the world, at the end of each day, he said that it was good, but the day he made the first person, he said it was VERY good! We are God’s very good creations and he delights in us! What do you think it means to be created in the image of God?

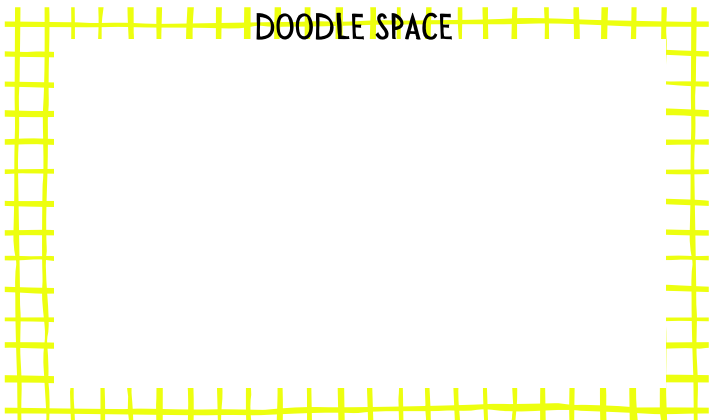
THE IMAGE OF GOD

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for creating me in your image and delighting in me. Please help me to remember that I'm your very good creation. Amen!

DO

Take a walk outside. What do you see that God called good? What do you see that God called very good?



WALKING WITH GOD

READ

It was by faith that Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying—“he disappeared, because God took him.” For before he was taken up, he was known as a person who pleased God.

Hebrews 11:5 NLT

When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. Enoch lived 365 years, walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.

Genesis 5:21-24 NLT

TALK

Enoch liked to spend time with God and followed God's directions. He spent his very long life choosing to get close to God and that made God happy. God is so happy when we choose to walk close to him because God loves to be close to us! How can you walk closely to God today?

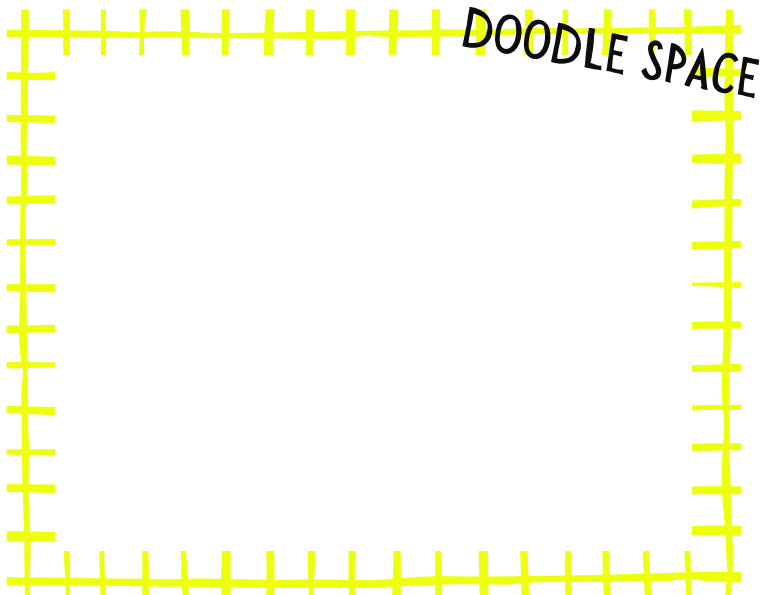
PRAY

Dear God, I love you so much! Thank you for being close to me. Please help me choose to get close to you every day. Amen!

WALKING WITH GOD

DO

Take some time to write a letter to God and listen for him to speak to you.



CLOSE TO JESUS

READ

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

John 15:5-8 NLT

TALK

If we try really hard to be good on our own, it won't work. Instead, we can get close to Jesus and he changes us to be more like him. Then, people will know we belong to Jesus through our actions and our answered prayers! What are some things that can get in the way of you drawing closer to Jesus?

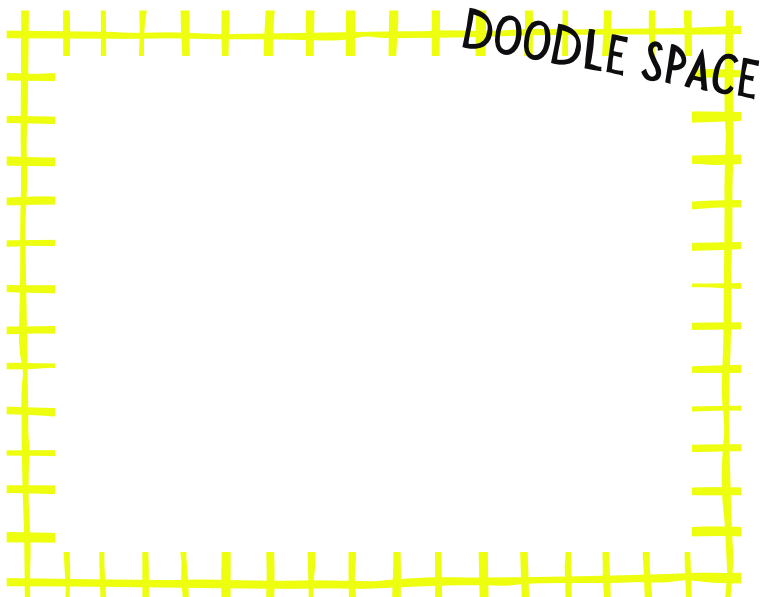
PRAY

Dear God, thank you for being so close to me. Help me to depend on you and not myself to do your will. Amen!

CLOSE TO JESUS

DO

Take time today to read the Bible on your own. God loves to spend time with you.



GOD'S PRESENCE

READ

One day Moses said to the LORD, “You have been telling me, ‘Take these people up to the Promised Land.’ But you haven’t told me whom you will send with me. You have told me, ‘I know you by name, and I look favorably on you.’ If it is true that you look favorably on me, let me know your ways so I may understand you more fully and continue to enjoy your favor. And remember that this nation is your very own people.” The LORD replied, “I will personally go with you, Moses, and I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you.” Then Moses said, “If you don’t personally go with us, don’t make us leave this place. How will anyone know that you look favorably on me—on me and on your people—if you don’t go with us? For your presence among us sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth.” The LORD replied to Moses, “I will indeed do what you have asked, for I look favorably on you, and I know you by name.” Exodus 33:12-17 NLT

TALK

Moses didn't want to go anywhere if God wasn't coming with him. Just like God was happy with Moses' desire to stay in his presence, God is happy when we want to stay in his presence too. God never left Moses and he will do the same for us. Can you think of a time when you felt God really close to you?

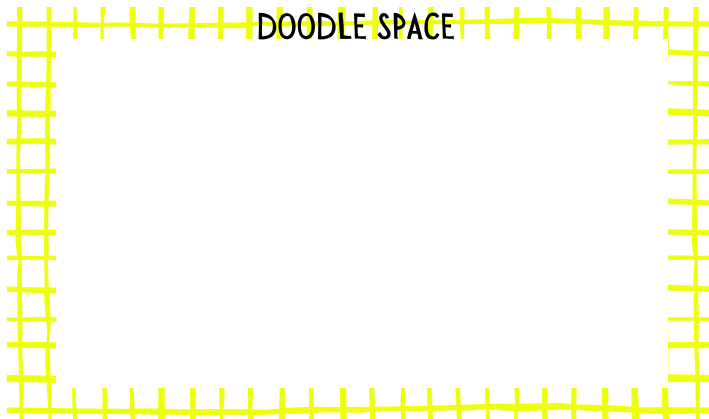
GOD'S PRESENCE

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for being so close to me. Help me to remember your promise to be near. Build my desire to be in your presence. Amen.

DO

With adult permission and supervision, make a small mark on the inside of your shoe to remember God's presence is with you wherever you go.



BE STILL

READ

It was Moses' practice to take the Tent of Meeting and set it up some distance from the camp. Everyone who wanted to make a request of the LORD would go to the Tent of Meeting outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the Tent of Meeting, all the people would get up and stand in the entrances of their own tents. They would all watch Moses until he disappeared inside. As he went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and hover at its entrance while the LORD spoke with Moses. When the people saw the cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, they would stand and bow down in front of their own tents. Inside the Tent of Meeting, the LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Afterward Moses would return to the camp, but the young man who assisted him, Joshua son of Nun, would remain behind in the Tent of Meeting.

Exodus 33:7-11 NLT

TALK

After Moses left his meetings with God, Joshua, his aide, would stay behind to be with God longer. He wanted to build his own relationship with God. God wants to have relationships with each one of us and loves when we make extra time for him. Why do you think God enjoys it when we spend time with him?

BE STILL

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for wanting to spend time with me. Help me to put all distractions away and stay in your presence a little longer. Amen!

DO

Choose one thing that you will spend less time doing to make extra time for God. Use that time to read your Bible, worship, or pray.

DOODLE SPACE



TIME WITH GOD

READ

But despite Jesus' instructions, the report of his power spread even faster, and vast crowds came to hear him preach and to be healed of their diseases. But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer. Luke 5:15-16 NLT

TALK

Jesus was busy with all that he was called to do, but he knew he needed to get alone with his Father. Sometimes, it might be hard to find a quiet time with God, but it's important to never be too busy to connect with God. Why do you think it is important to spend some quiet time with God?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for always being available to listen to me. Help me never feel too busy to spend time with you. Amen!

DO

Find a quiet place in your home to read your Bible.

CLOSER AND CLOSER

READ

O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water.

Psalm 63:1 NLT

TALK

David had a close relationship with the Lord and he still wanted to be even closer. The closer he became with God, the more he wanted to be even closer. Spending time with God gives us a desire to spend more time with him. We just can't get enough of being with God and getting closer to him. Why do you think we can never get enough of God?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for filling my need to be close to you. Help me to always want more and more of you. Amen!

DO

Write down Psalm 42:2 on a small piece of paper or notecard. Keep it in your pocket and read it every time you drink a glass of water.



Week 2

CLEANING OUT

CHOOSE JESUS

THIS WEEK, YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT CLEANING OUT YOUR HEART AND MIND FROM IDEAS OR FEELINGS YOU HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE WORLD AND NOT FROM GOD.

I AM PROTECTED

READ

Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. "I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them," the devil said, "because they are mine to give to anyone I please. I will give it all to you if you will worship me." Jesus replied, "The Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'"

Luke 4:5-8 NLT

TALK

Satan was trying to trick Jesus! Jesus just taught us something by how he responded to Satan; the word of God protects us! Now that you know that the word of God can protect you from Satan's tricks, what can you do when Satan tries to trick you by telling you a lie?

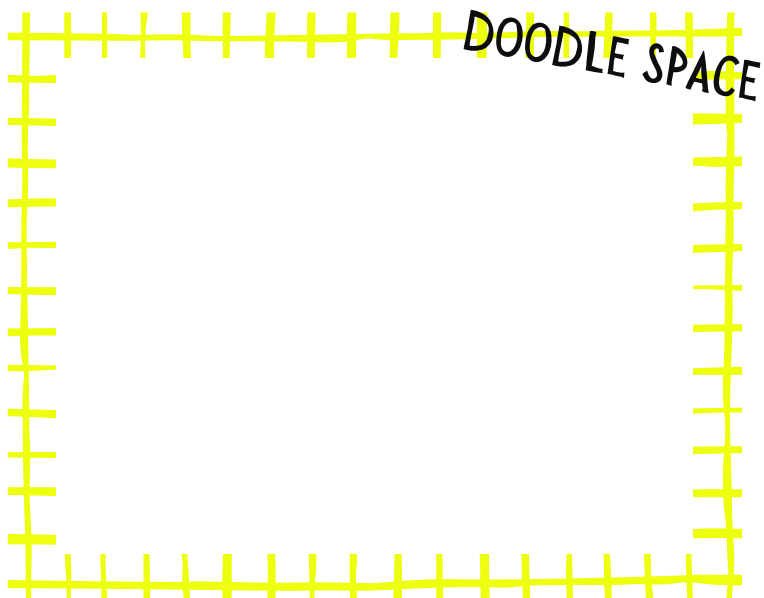
PRAY

Dear God, thank you for your word that protects me from Satan's tricks and lies. Fill my mind with the truth that comes from your word. Amen!

I AM PROTECTED

DO

Pick one memory verse and write it down on the largest paper you have at home. Post the verse wherever you will be able to read it often. If needed, ask an adult at home to help write down the verse and you can draw a picture to go along with it!



I CHOOSE PEACE

READ

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."

John 14:27 NLT

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

2 Timothy 1:7 NLT

TALK

Fear is giving something or someone the green light to stop you from doing good things. Sometimes fear also stops you from receiving the good things God wants to give you. Fear is not from God, peace is from God! What fears can you bring to God?

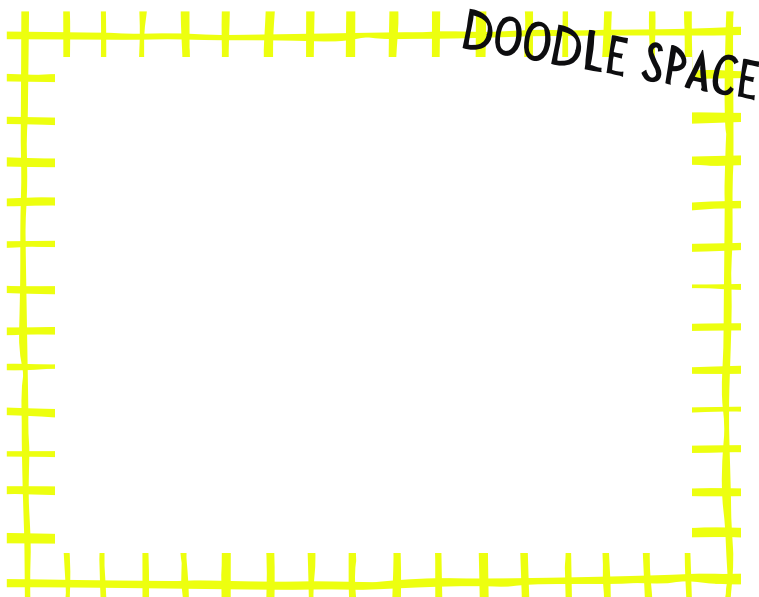
PRAY

Dear God, thank you for being my friend. Thank you for your gift of peace, power, love, and self-discipline. Remind me of your perfect peace when fear tries to enter my heart. I love you Jesus, amen.

I CHOOSE PEACE

DO

Share with someone in your family one thing that brings you the most fear. Pray with that person and ask God to give you peace, power, love, and the self-discipline you need to live without worry and fear.



I CHOOSE TO OVERLOOK

READ

Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs.

Proverbs 19:11 NLT

TALK

God can help you look past a wrong someone has done to you through his gift of patience. If God can pass over your wrongs, how can you respond when someone wrongs you?

PRAY

Dear God, I choose to let go of the people who have wronged me. Give me your heart for them, help me to be more like you. Thank you for helping me be patient with others like you have been patient with me. Amen!

DO

Think of the most patient person you know. How would you describe them?

I CAN GIVE THANKS

READ

Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NLT

TALK

You can be thankful, even in challenging times, because you belong to Jesus! God always helps his children! Can you think of a time that you showed a thankful heart even though it was tough?

PRAY

Dear God, help my heart to give thanks more and more instead of complaining. May my thankfulness show my friends and family the love of Jesus. Make me shine for you today! Amen!

DO

Draw a picture of all the things you are grateful for and share it with someone in your home! Ready, set, go!

I'M WITH JESUS

READ

Many people did believe in him [Jesus] , however, including some of the Jewish leaders. But they wouldn't admit it for fear that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue.

John 12:42 NLT

TALK

The Pharisees hindered the people who loved Jesus from being 100% devoted to him. That's so sad! Living your life to please Jesus will give you the greatest joy you could imagine. No person will ever be able to give you that joy. Are you afraid of losing friends if they knew how much you loved Jesus?

PRAY

Dear God, I love you so much. Please search my heart and forgive me if I am trying to hide how much I want to know you. Rescue me from trying to please other people instead of pleasing you. Amen!

DO

Act out this part of scripture! This time instead of showing fear towards the Pharisees how would you show that you belong to Jesus?

THE BLAME GAME

READ

Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked." "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?" The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it."

Genesis 3:9-12 NLT

TALK

Adam had a hard time admitting he did something wrong and blamed Eve. Have you ever had a hard time admitting you did something wrong? Did you try to blame someone else for what you did? Let me tell you a secret, admitting when you have done something wrong and apologizing heals your relationships and makes them stronger, it really does!

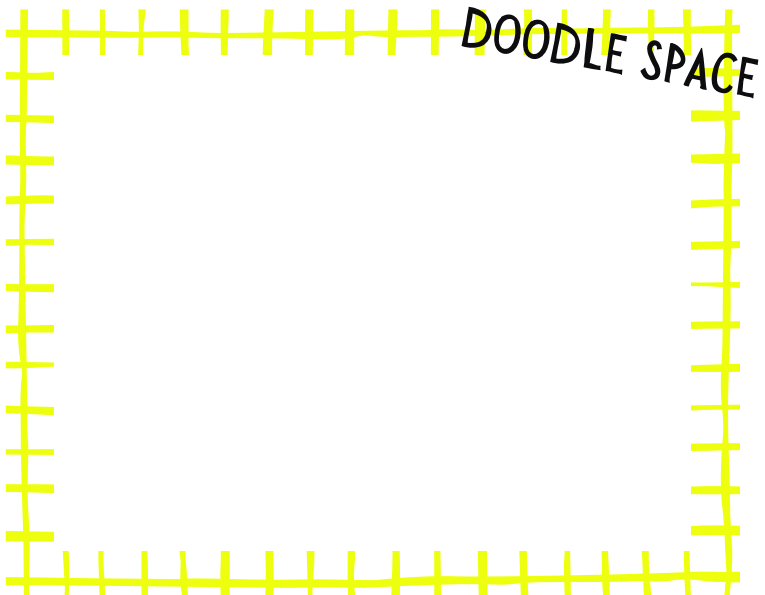
PRAY

Dear God, I do not want to play the blame game. Help me to be honest so that my relationships can be deeper and stronger with you and those around me. Only you have the power to change my heart. Amen!

THE BLAME GAME

DO

This week, try using a new phrase with an adult or friend when you feel like playing the blame game. “I made a mistake today; can you forgive me?” If you played the blame game a few days ago, find that person now and practice this phrase!



LIVING FOR ETERNITY

READ

Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity.

John 12:25 NLT

TALK

Your life, when lived for Jesus and what he cares about, brings a full and eternal life that is far better than the life you live here on earth. Think about some of the people from the Bible who followed God. How did they live? How did they spend their time? Guess what, although they are not here today, they live in heaven for eternity.

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for teaching me today. Sometimes, I spend more time enjoying the things you have blessed me with than I do with you. I give you my heart today and I choose to live for you alone. Amen.

DO

Ask a parent to call a person that you both notice really loves Jesus and people. When you get on the call, ask that person how do they get to know Jesus better and how do they serve him.



Week 3

WHO I AM

CHOOSE JESUS

THIS WEEK, YOU WILL DISCOVER WHO GOD SAYS YOU ARE
AND WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE AS A CHILD OF GOD!

MY WORDS HAVE POWER

READ

The tongue can bring death or life;
Proverbs 18:21a NLT

TALK

Words are powerful! This passage tells us that we have the power to either build people up or tear them down with our words. Think of a time when someone said something kind to you. I'm sure that made you happy. How can you build people up with our words?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for teaching me how to live. Please help me to use my words to build people up. Show me how to speak kindly to my family, friends, teachers, and even strangers. I want to show your love everywhere I go. I love you! Amen.

DO

Practice speaking life! Write a letter or make a phone call to someone you love and tell them why they are special.

SPIRITUAL EYES

READ

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

Romans 8:9-11 NLT

TALK

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives inside of us when we accept Jesus into our hearts! Yes, it's true! That means that even though the world is broken and full of sin, the Spirit of God guides us and gives us the power to overcome sin. How has God guided you this week?

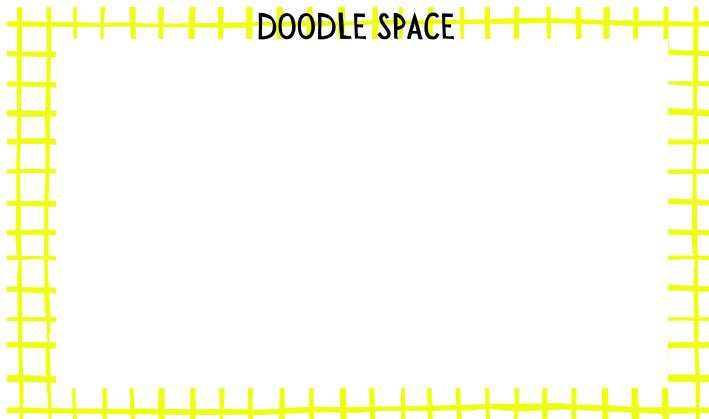
SPIRITUAL EYES

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for living inside of us. Help me to see the yucky sins in my life and guide me in how to overcome them. I want to live for you every second of my life! In your name, amen.

DO

Think about a time God has helped you overcome sin. How did you overcome it?



SONS & DAUGHTERS

READ

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.
Romans 8:14-17 NLT

TALK

Did you know that we are God's children? God adopted us as sons and daughters. God chose us! Yes, he chose you! God even has many special things planned for us because we belong to him and nothing we do will ever separate us from his love. How does it make you feel to know you are a child of God?

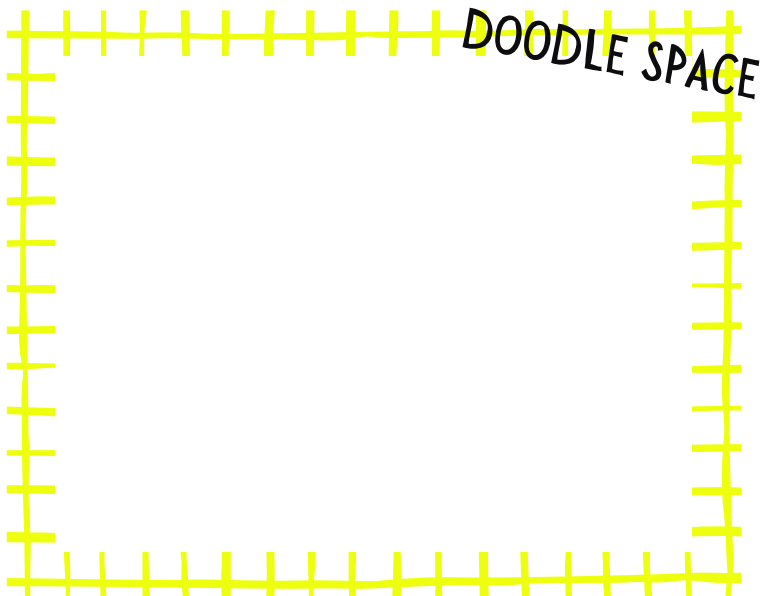
PRAY

Dear God, I am so happy you chose me to be your child. Thank you for loving me more than I can ever imagine. Help me to follow you everyday. Amen.

SONS & DAUGHTERS

DO

Hold up one hand. For each finger name a person you know that is a son or daughter of God. Now try two hands!



LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

READ

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

Romans 8:18-21 NLT

TALK

In this passage, glory is referring to the wonderful, amazing, and magnificent presence of God! In life, we will face difficult situations and maybe you have already been through something difficult. We can be hopeful because the glory that is coming is better than any of our sadness! How does having hope in Jesus help us in difficult times?

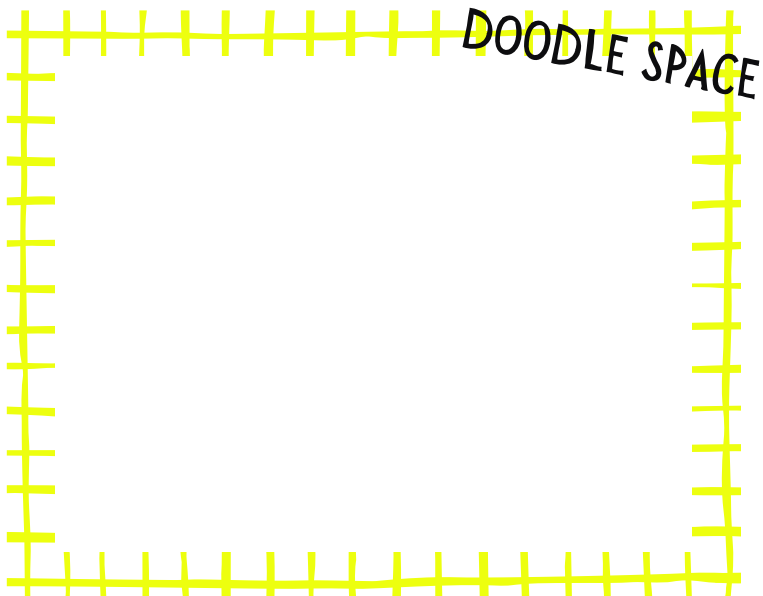
PRAY

Dear God, thank you for the promise of your glory coming soon! Help me to live as a reflection of you. In your name, amen!

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

DO

Pick a song of praise and worship to the Lord. Now go ahead and sing it at the top of your lungs!



GOD HAS A PLAN

READ

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. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.

Romans 8:28-30 NLT

TALK

God has a very special plan for our lives. He uses all of the good and even all of the bad for the good of those who love him. He can take a really sour situation and turn it sweet. God is so powerful! How do you feel knowing that God has a great plan for your life?

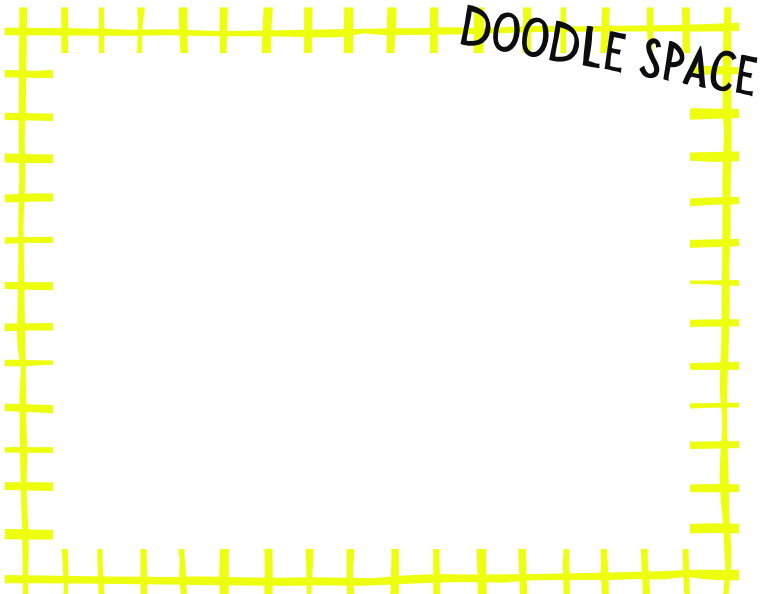
PRAY

Dear God, Thank you for making a special plan for my life and using everything for your good. You are such a good Father. I love you so much! Amen.

GOD HAS A PLAN

DO

Think of a time when God turned a sour situation into a sweet one!



VICTORIOUS

READ

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

Romans 8:31-37 NLT

TALK

We are conquerors through Jesus! We have the victory over sin and death and the battle has already been won by the Lord! Think of a time when God helped you overcome sin.

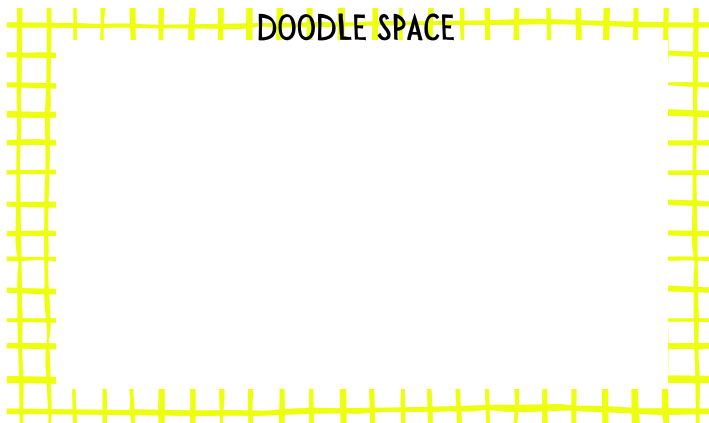
VICTORIOUS

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for winning the battle over sin and death. You fought the battle for me and I am so grateful. Help me to remember that the battle is won and we are victorious. Amen.

DO

Knowing that I am a conqueror and nothing can separate me from Jesus makes me want to worship the Lord. Two days ago you picked a worship song, do you know another one? Great! Sing this one even louder!



DEEPLY LOVED

READ

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39 NLT

TALK

God promises us that absolutely nothing can separate us from God's love. Nothing you ever do, say, or think will ever come between God's love for you! What a gift! What are some ways that God has shown you his love?

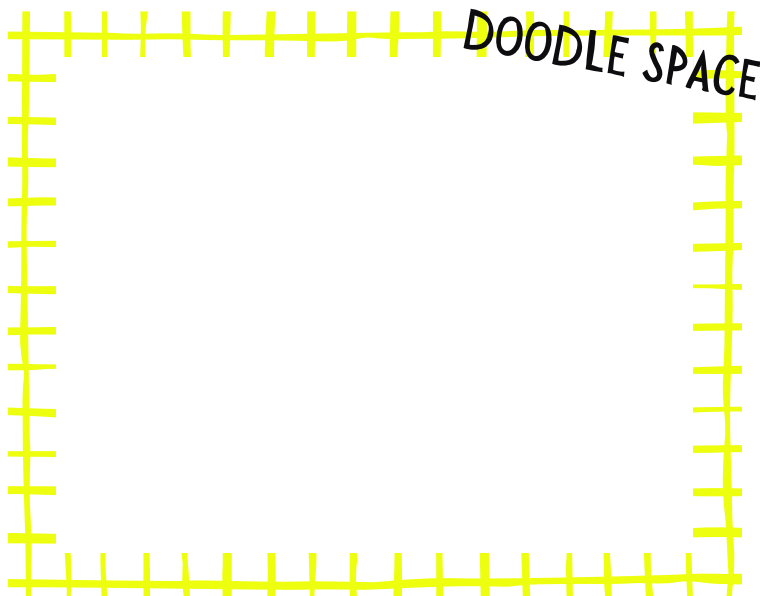
PRAY

Dead God, thank you for loving me so much that nothing can stop your love. Help me to receive your love so I can pour it out onto others. Amen.

DEEPLY LOVED

DO

Find a quiet place in your home to be alone with Jesus for at least five minutes. Can you do ten minutes? You can tell him you love him and want to spend time with him. Sit quietly and listen to what he wants to tell you.





"AND I WILL BE YOUR
FATHER, AND YOU WILL BE
MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS,
SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY."

2 Corinthians 6:18