



# PARENT GUIDE

## LESSON THREE: TRUST

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# LESSON THREE: TRUST

**OBJECTIVE:** To help families practice trusting in Jesus and one another so that they can be families who follow Jesus together.

## FOCUS ON FOLLOWING JESUS

We can trust God because he is trustworthy – we should be like Jesus who demonstrated trust in God his Father, and is trustworthy to those who follow him.

*(John 14:1 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God. Believe in me also.”)*

## GRIP ON THE GOSPEL

We can trust Jesus to save us from the things we’re afraid of – but he wants to save us from the scariest things – death and sin!

*(Romans 10:9 “Say with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord.’ Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. Then you will be saved.”)*

## WHAT DO I DO?

- Read the [For Parents](#) article. Spend a few minutes thinking and praying.
- Read over the [Discipleship Lesson](#) and decide when you will do it with your family.
- Gather your family, a Bible and any supplies listed on the lesson sheet. Use the script provided to teach a [Discipleship Lesson](#) to your family, adapting as needed.
- Use the 5 mini-lessons as [Daily Bible Time](#) prompts through the week.
- Select one or more [Discipleship Activities](#) to incorporate into your week.



# FOR PARENTS

We live in a world that is increasingly anxious, worried and fearful. As parents we have more to worry about than ever before – am I a good parent? Will my kids turn out alright? What will my friends at work, church and in my neighborhood think of the choices I make as a parent? Am I balancing work and home life responsibilities? Will my own failures and faults rub off on my kids or is there any way to give them a better life than I had?

You are not the only one who feels this way. Remember that virtually everyone struggles with these things from time to time – perhaps parents most of all! We might suffer from anxieties or habitual worrying – maybe our kids do too. Living a life of worry and fear is not fun. We wouldn't wish it on our children; we long to be free of it ourselves. We're sometimes afraid to share our struggle with other parents. But as we're honest about our fears, they often diminish. When we turn to Jesus we see our anxieties in a new light.

So what can we do as a parent to help our children trust Jesus and worry less?

1. **Be Someone your Child can Trust:** We are our children's first teachers in so many areas of life. Before they learn to trust Jesus, they learn to trust us. Their ability to trust us will affect the ease with which they trust Jesus later in life, so it is of vital importance that we teach them what it feels like to trust completely. Not only this, but their own spiritual future depends on it! If our children can't trust us in daily life, how will they trust our words or our actions when we tell them about Jesus? How can we disciple them if they see us as two-faced or untrustworthy? You probably are already building a great sense of trust with your children, but here are some important things to consider:
  - **Follow Through:** If you say you will do something, do it. If you can't do it, apologize. Let your children know you realize your mistake and it matters. Do not break a promise; do not take lightly how your actions shape your child's expectations of themselves and others. Never threaten something you are not willing to follow through with. You must obey any house rules you set too. We will all fail in this area, but that is where honesty and communication help.
  - **Listen:** This gains your child's trust. When they are young it can be difficult to take seriously the things they want to talk about or share with you, but this is the prime time for developing trust. You want your child to talk to you about important things later on – so listen to the little things now! Work on active listening skills and make space and time to hear what's on their heart.
  - **Keep Confidence:** If your child tells you something, maintain a calm demeanor and work hard to not over-react, tell them what to do immediately or punish them without listening to the whole story. Do not embarrass them in front of relatives, friends or family. If they are having a problem, be the one to support and help them and keep their secrets. When you have to share what they have said – with your spouse, a doctor, teacher, etc. – let them know and help them understand why. Consider the lies you tell your child because it's what parents do sometimes to protect our children – is there a way to be honest instead?



2. **Go to Jesus:** When your family faces trouble or a situation in the world arises which could cause you worry, let your children see you go to God about it. Whether it is a lost set of keys or a lost job, a scraped knee or serious diagnoses, let them know you go to God with everything. Practice this as a family with short prayers in the car on the way to the store or longer prayers before bed listing things that we need help with. If there is terminal illness, addiction, or other serious issues in your family, talk to your kids about them in small ways and demonstrate that you are trusting God in that situation. Your children will be more likely to come to you with big issues later if they know you are willing to talk with them, and more likely to have faith in Jesus themselves if they see it modeled in you.
3. **Fight for Truth:** Satan lies to us every day – and in lots of ways this is the source of some of our most serious worries and fears. We believe we are not good enough, that God cannot love us or that we are failures. In order to change the pattern of our thoughts and combat these lies, we must feed ourselves and our children a steady diet of truth. These truths can be found in God’s Word. When you notice an anxious or worried thought, find a Bible verse to combat it. A great resource for praying truth is “Take Words With you” by Tim Kerr. Memorize truths together as a family. Teach yourself and your children to recognize a lie when they hear it in their head and fight against that lie with a truth. This is the warfare of trusting in Jesus.



## Consider these Questions:

- What ways have you seen God prove himself trustworthy this week?
- What verses do you use to fight against lies with God’s truth? How can you share these with others?
- What situations in life do you find it most difficult to trust God? When do you struggle with worry?
- Was there a time as a child that you lost the ability to trust your parents? How did that affect your relationship with them going forward?
- Has something happened in your life that has caused you to lose trust in God? Have you worked through that yet, or do you need help?



# DISCIPLESHIP LESSON

## Instructions:

- Read or teach the text using your own words
- *Text in italics is a note to the adult leading*
- This icon  indicates a question you should ask
- This icon  tells you there is a Bible verse to read
- **Text inside a grey box is a tip or idea for you!**
- **Text inside this box is a short activity or task**

The lesson should take about **45 minutes** to complete

## Supplies Needed:

- **Bible**
- 2-3 sheets of paper
- Crayons, markers or preferred drawing materials

## SUPERHEROES!

*Gather your family for the family Discipleship Lesson. Remind your family that this is something exciting to do together, to look at the Bible and Jesus and learn what it means to be a disciple!*

Today we're going to talk about a really SUPER topic, but we need to think creatively!



### Mess with Meaning

*Many children learn well when they can create something with their hands and work through ideas and questions physically. If your child prefers another artistic media that you have on hand (clay, playdough) or to just talk through their idea or act it out, do what works best for your family!*

*If you have a larger family, divide into 2-3 groups, with one adult or older child per group. If your family is smaller, each person can complete the activity together, or an adult can help each child to complete it.*

*Hand out pieces of paper and drawing materials.*

*On that piece of paper, have teams create a super hero or rescue person. They should have 3 abilities or special pieces of equipment that make them awesome at rescuing. You get to decide what they look like, what abilities and equipment they have, and what they are called. They should be an original character. Ready?*

*Give groups 5-8 minutes, share them when they are done.*

We created some fantastic heroes! If we were in trouble, I would sure love to be able to count on these guys and their special stuff to save me.



**Do you think we could trust these heroes to rescue us?  
What kind of dangers would these heroes help us with?  
What would we have to know about them to be able to trust them?**

That's right, in order to trust someone, they need to show us that they can be trusted. We need to see with our own eyes that they can do what they say they will. Afterall, anyone could just say they are a superhero!



**Would you believe me if I said I could fly?**

No, probably not – unless you could see me do it! You might be skeptical!

You probably wouldn't trust a friend who said they had a pet unicorn. You might not trust someone who said they were really a princess. You would have to have some evidence for those things. But there are people in your life you do trust, right?



**Do you trust Mom/Dad?  
Why do you trust them?  
What do they do for you? How can you be sure they will do those things again?**

You can trust that mom and dad will take care of you, make sure you have breakfast and clothes and a safe place to live and lots and lots of hugs and love because we have done those things your whole life. You can trust that mom and dad will tell you the truth because they have always told you the truth.

God gives us families to help us, protect us, teach us and love us. In a family we trust each other – kids trust parents, and, hopefully, kids learn to earn their parents trust too!

*(You may choose to have a brief conversation of the other people in your life that have shown your children that they are trustworthy, mentioning that all people make mistakes and there is only one person who is totally trustworthy – that's Jesus)*



*Take answers from children – especially what we need to know about them to trust them. Have they saved someone else before us? Have they showed us that their equipment works? Do they have a special hero award? What would prove to you that they could do the job?*



*Ask for examples of what moms and dads do that show they can be trusted. Emphasize things they do.*



*Make adjustments as necessary to accommodate your family composition – single parents, grandparents, or other caregivers will have to change titles here. If your child has had untrustworthy people in their life, focus on those who have been trustworthy.*



## TRUSTING JESUS

Jesus said something really important about trust when he lived on earth. He knew his friends worried a lot, just like most people. He said that when we worry it's like we aren't trusting God. If we trusted that God could rescue us or protect us, then we would have nothing to be afraid of.



**Read:** John 14:1



**What does it mean to have a troubled heart?**

Lots of us have a troubled heart sometimes. We think of what might happen that is scary or what we're not sure about, and we begin to worry. Jesus was telling his followers that they should not worry, but instead trust in God and in him to take care of all the bad things and enemies we might worry about.

Here's something we have to figure out though. Our superheroes that we created in our families on paper look like they would be really amazing at rescuing us. The problem is they aren't real and we don't know if they could actually do what we need them to. We can't trust them.



**How do we know we can trust Jesus?**

We said before that people need to show us they can do what they say they can do. Jesus says we should trust him. Let's look at some evidence that he is trustworthy!

*(Read one or two verses if your children are short on attention, and summarize the points listed here instead of reading each)*



*Have older children read these passages and figure out what Jesus did that was remarkable.*



Matthew 10:14 (healed Peter's mother in law just by touching her)

Matthew 15:29-31 (healed people who could not speak, walk, see)

Matthew 15:32-39 (Jesus heals 4,000)

John 11:1-3, 32-35, 38-44 (Jesus brings Lazarus back to life)





In all of these passages, Jesus does something amazing that no one else could do! He healed people who no doctor could heal, he made people who died come back to life again, he fed thousands of people with a tiny bit of food – he did all of these things for a reason. Let's take a look at a couple other verses to see what that reason was!



**Matthew 8:25-27** tells us about a time when Jesus and his friends all got into a boat together to go across the lake.

The weather was great when they started, but it quickly turned stormy. Some of you might be afraid of storms, of thunder and lightning. Imagine what it would feel like if you were in a boat instead of your house! Well, Jesus' friends got scared. What was Jesus doing? He was taking a nap!

So his friends said to him – Jesus, don't you care about us at all? That's a really great question. Last week we talked about asking great questions. Well, here the disciples wanted to know, if Jesus really loved them, why was he letting this storm come? What was Jesus' response? Let me read it for you:

"The disciples went and woke him up. They said, "Lord! Save us! We're going to drown!" He replied, "Your faith is so small! Why are you so afraid?" Then Jesus got up and ordered the winds and the waves to stop. It became completely calm. The disciples were amazed. They asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

Jesus asked them why they were afraid. Why they were worried. Why they didn't trust him. See – Jesus had been showing them that he was someone they could trust to be their rescuer and helper and hero. But when they got into a scary situation, they lost their trust!

**One of the reasons Jesus came to earth and did all the amazing things he did was to prove that we could trust him.** Jesus said in **John 10:37-38** that we shouldn't trust him unless he shows us that he can be trusted – that his miracles were done so that we would trust him. But sometimes we're still like Jesus' friends in the boat. We get scared and afraid.



**What are things you are sometimes afraid of?**

**We have a lot of really big fears. Sometimes being a little afraid or cautious is a good thing – it helps us to stay safe! But little fears turn into worries when we can't stop thinking about them, or when we don't trust God.**



*You can choose to summarize the story as we have done here, or to read the whole passage. You can still have your Bible open to these verses to show your children these truths can be found there.*





Our verse today talks about having a troubled heart. Do you have a troubled heart? Do you trust in God to help you with all the things that worry you?



*This is one way to explain the Gospel to your children. Even children who have made decisions to follow Jesus need to be reminded of the Gospel. If they have not made a decision to follow Jesus, and confessed their belief and repented, you could invite them to do that today.*

**Jesus wanted people who followed him to trust him, because he has proven that He is able to rescue us and save us. Trusting Jesus means that when we have worries, we make ourselves remember that Jesus can rescue us, that He is taking care of us and we don't have to worry.**

**Jesus came to be our rescuer – to save us from living lives that are broken and made messy from disobeying God. When we tell him we believe he can save us, we believe that he is God's Son, the rescuer, and we tell him we need his help – we get it! We become Jesus' friends, the people he saves and rescues. This is what it means to be a Christian. We don't have to fight our worries all by ourselves – we get help from Jesus! We don't have to get rid of our sins – the bad guy – Jesus our hero has done it! Isn't that great news? In fact – we call that the Gospel!**

***Close by praying together. Pray that God would help your family to be disciples in the way they trust Jesus.***



# DAILY BIBLE TIME

Take a few minutes each day this week to spend some time together reading from God's Word and discussing it together. Questions and verses are provided for you below. Use the Bible version your children are used to. NIV is a good one for very young children. Spend time praying together too!

1	<u>Philippians 4:6-7</u>	<p>Talk about plans and strategy. Do you play a board game and have different strategies? Or do you have plans or strategies for sports? What makes a good strategy?</p> <p><b>What are some things that we worry about as a family? How do we know when we are worried?</b> (What happens in our mind, heart, body that shows us that we are worrying? – an upset tummy and not falling asleep are clues – what else?)</p> <p><b>What does this Bible verse tell us we should do with those worries?</b></p> <p><b>How does telling God about our worry help us? How does thanking God help us?</b></p> <p><i>The Bible doesn't just tell us not to worry, it gives us some important strategies too. A strategy is a plan! If we have worries, we need a plan when they show up. Come up with a plan for worry together. How will you remember as a family what to do?</i></p>
2	<u>John 14:1</u>  <u>Matthew 15:21-28</u>	<p>Some people say you can't trust anyone but yourself. Some people say never be too trusting of other people. <b>Who did Jesus say we should trust?</b></p> <p>In the Bible, we read about a woman from Canaan, who wasn't one of God's special family, who asked Jesus something.</p> <p><b>What did she ask him to do for her? Why did she believe Jesus could help her?</b></p> <p>We can hear about Jesus' miracles, too, when we read the Bible.</p> <p><b>Did God only help people and do amazing things in Bible times?</b></p> <p><b>Can you think of some ways God has helped our family recently?</b></p> <p>Consider sharing something God has done for you.</p>
3	<u>Zechariah 8:16-17</u>	<p><b>What does it mean to be someone who is trustworthy? What would a trustworthy person say or do?</b></p> <p><b>What happens when someone lies to you or doesn't do what they promised?</b></p> <p><b>What do you trust the other people in your family to do?</b></p> <p>Read the verses here and make a short list of the things a trustworthy person does. When we are a family that follows Jesus, we will work to be trustworthy, faithful, truth-tellers so that our family and others can trust us. We can show others what following Jesus is about by being trustworthy and showing others they can trust us and Jesus.</p>



4	<p><b><u>Luke 16:10</u></b></p>	<p><b>What are some kind things people in our family have done for each other this week?</b> <b>What would happen in our family if no one did the things that were difficult or yucky?</b> <b>What are some of the difficult and yucky jobs?</b> God tells us that doing things to help one another, even if they are not very important to everyone else in the world, is good practice for doing big important jobs someday. That makes those small jobs important to God. <b>What does God think of someone who does a job well?</b> Share with your children how childhood chores or first part-time jobs helped you have the skills to do the important work you do now. <b>Is there a chore you don't do yet that you think you're ready for?</b> <b>Is there a chore you could try to practice being trustworthy?</b> <b>How would it help our whole family if you took on a new chore and was trustworthy?</b> Discuss as a family some new ways everyone could help each other and be trustworthy.</p>
5	<p><b><u>Psalms 71:14-18</u></b></p> <p>Also <b><u>Psalms 145</u></b> if your children are older</p>	<p>Review "God Sightings" for this week. <b>Where have you seen God be trustworthy?</b> <b>What is your favourite celebration? Why do you like celebrating it?</b> Psalms are poems or songs that were written to God. They are like reminders to God's people of all the ways that God can be trusted. <b>What are some of the things listed in the Psalms that God has done?</b> <b>If you were going to write a Psalm, what things would you want to include to tell everyone?</b> Together as a family, think of a way to share with other people how God has helped us. Write your own Psalm together, write a letter or call a relative to tell them what you have seen God do, make a family social media post, etc.</p>



# DISCIPLESHIP ACTIVITIES

Use any of the following activities to extend the learning and disciple your child in everyday life.

- **Pray Together:** Pray that God would help you with your worries and fears, thank him for being trustworthy and ask for help being trustworthy to your family. Then praise God when Jesus helps us with these things!
- **Memorize:** John 14:1 or Philippians 4:6-7 together as a family.
- **Missions:** Share a story about how God has helped a missionary in their work (if you receive missionary prayer letters or updates from missions organizations like TWR you will have lots you can share!). Talk about how life is hard in different parts of the world and everyone needs Jesus.
- **Daily Life:**
  - Set up a “God Sighting Board” in your home. It can be a chalkboard, area for sticky notes, string with clothes-pegs and pieces of paper, etc. On it, collect evidence of God helping your family. Record answers to prayer, blessings, things that God has given to you, or you have heard about. Recording these things builds faith, and helps your children see God is living and trustworthy!
  - Create a poster of your memory verse, along with a ‘plan’ for what to do when we are having trouble trusting God (worrying). Talk about this plan together and work as a team.
  - With older children, play games like Cheat (a card game), team Uno, Jenga, or other team games. Talk about how it is necessary to trust others and how it feels to not be trusted.
  - Celebrate faithfulness in your family! Make awards for faithful chore completion or just applause around the dinner table for jobs well done. Positive recognition helps reinforce desired behaviour.