

An artistic illustration of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Adam, a man with a beard and long hair, is in the foreground, wearing a dark, leafy garment. He has his eyes closed and a gentle smile, with his hands held out in front of him. To his left, Eve is partially visible, wearing a purple dress. The background shows a bright, sunny landscape with a large tree and a body of water under a clear blue sky.

UNIT 1 | SESSION 3

# THE FIRST FAMILY

GENESIS 4

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** God had promised that one of Eve's descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. He was sinful like his parents, Adam and Eve. As families grew and sin spread, people waited for God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son, Jesus, to save sinners.

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Who is God? God is our Creator and the King of everything.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Psalm 104:24

**SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE:** Rest



## PLAN the Session

- Pray, asking God to prepare your heart to teach and the hearts of kids to receive His Word.
- Read the *Leader Bible Study* and review the session plan.
- Decide which *Welcome* activities to prepare for the session.
- Familiarize yourself with the *Learn* section enough to teach naturally.
- Organize discipleship groups, including a plan for new kids.
- Print a copy of the *Live* for each discipleship group leader.

## LEADER Bible Study

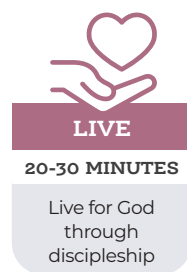
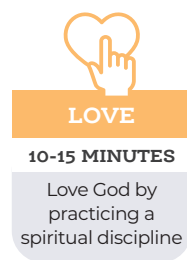
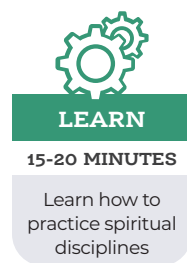
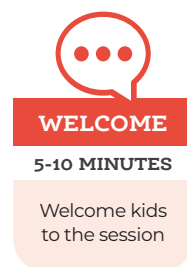
**Rest: to cease activity with the goal of growing both in love for God and the desire to continue serving Him.**

When was the last time you felt completely and utterly exhausted? Maybe it was a certain season that was especially trying or sad. Or maybe it was brought on by something good, like adding a new baby to the family. Perhaps it's this exact moment! Think about how your body and mind feel when you are at that level of exhaustion. It's difficult to see straight, think clearly, and make decisions. Physically and mentally, everything feels more difficult, almost like your thoughts and steps are both moving through cold molasses. That's because we need rest! It is a requirement for our bodies and minds to function in the way that God intends.

The spiritual discipline of rest is a wonderful example of how God cares for our whole self, not just our soul or mind. He cares deeply about the wellbeing of our body. It can be tempting to think that God only desires our heart, but He sent His Son, Jesus, to live in a fully human body to show us what it means to serve, love, and obey God with everything He has given us; flesh, blood, and bones included. This week, to show kids that rest is the only way to truly fulfill the purpose God has called us to, we will be studying a time in Scripture where Jesus rested. As you prepare to lead, read Mark 1:35-39.

In this passage, we see that Jesus got up early in the morning and went to a deserted place to pray. His disciples found Him there and informed Him that, of course, everyone was looking for Him. But rather than show anger or frustration that His quiet time had been interrupted, He said "Let's go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come." (Mark 1:38)

Jesus was fully God, but He was also fully human. He understood that He needed rest to live out the purpose that God had called Him to, so He planned accordingly. And when it came time to go back out and minister to people, He was physically and spiritually in a place to do so. Think about the state of your heart, mind, and body. What do you need to do to be physically and spiritually ready to continue the ministry God has called you to? Ask God for wisdom, time, and a willingness to obey His call to rest, even when it feels difficult.





## PREPARE

FOR THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



### WELCOME

#### Option 1: Roll a brain break

- ☐ dry erase board
- ☐ dry erase marker
- ☐ dice, 2 in different colors

#### Option 2: Really restful

- ☐ "Really Restful" printable

#### Option 3: Key passage creatures

- ☐ Key passage poster



### LEARN

#### Group demonstration: Charged up

- ☐ cell phone
- ☐ charging cord

#### Group game: Recharge tag

- ☐ sandglass timers, 4-5



### LOVE

#### Option 2: Stretch like a giraffe

- ☐ soft music



### LIVE

#### Get everyone talking

- ☐ toy microphone or item to represent a microphone (optional)
- ☐ inflatable beach ball (optional)
- ☐ permanent marker (optional)

#### Discuss Learn time

- ☐ poster board or large sheet of paper (optional)
- ☐ blindfold (optional)

#### Praise the Lord together

- ☐ worship music



## WELCOME Kids

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Choose one or all of these activities to engage kids as they arrive. You may choose to prepare all activities to repeat throughout the unit or prepare a different activity to use each week.

### ☐ **OPTION 1: ROLL A BRAIN BREAK**

Prior to the activity, write the following numbers and actions on a dry erase board: 1–jumping jacks, 2–toe touches, 3–lie on the ground and count to 10, 4–spin around, 5–give someone a high-five, 6–hop on one foot. Lead kids to form a circle. Give one kid the two different color dice to roll, one color will determine the action and the other will determine how many times kids will complete the action. Continue playing, giving different kids turns to roll the dice.

### ☐ **OPTION 2: REALLY RESTFUL**

Prior to the session, print and cut apart the “Really Restful” printable. Give each kid one of the cards and challenge the group to line themselves up according to which activities they consider least restful to most restful. Play additional rounds with added challenges such as no one can talk, the cards are taped to the kids’ backs so they don’t know what activity they have, or they must act out the activity on the card.

### ☐ **OPTION 3: KEY PASSAGE CREATURES**

Show the key passage poster and read it as a group several times. Call out an animal and then challenge the kids to say the key passage as that animal would, for example a sloth would say the verse very slowly. Some other animal ideas include elephant, cat, parrot, frog, fish, snake, and bumblebee.



## LEARN

### LEARN about rest (15–20 minutes)

#### 1 REVIEW SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

**SAY** “ This is the time of week that we come together to learn about and practice spiritual disciplines. ”

**Who can remind us what a spiritual discipline is? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ A spiritual discipline is an action you must practice to grow in love for God and godliness. You might discipline yourself to get better at all sorts of things, like sports or music. It always takes hard work to grow, but there is something unique about the work involved in spiritual disciplines which we are going to learn more about today. ”

#### 2 REVIEW THE DISCIPLINE OF REST

**There are several different spiritual disciplines. Who can tell us which one we have been focusing on lately? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ That’s right, we’ve been learning about and practicing the spiritual discipline of rest. This is much more than a good night’s sleep or having a day off from school or work. Rest is ceasing, or stopping, activity and our normal schedule with the goal of growing both in love for God and the desire to continue serving Him. ”

**Each week we have learned a different reason that we practice rest. What are the two reasons we have learned so far? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ We rest because God rested and we want to follow His example, and we rest to grow to know God better. Today we are going to learn that we rest to be both physically and spiritually refreshed. Let’s get started! ”

#### 3 GROUP DEMONSTRATION: CHARGED UP

Show a cell phone. Ask the kids to name some ways the cell phone can be used. Then ask if the cell phone is missing anything. The kids will probably be confused. Allow them to guess, then pull out the charging cord.

**SAY** “ A cell phone can be used for lots of different reasons. It can be used to make phone calls, send text messages, write emails, get directions to an address, take pictures, catch up with friends and family, and lots more. ”

**But what happens if the phone hasn’t been charged recently or long enough? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ Eventually the battery will run out of power and it won’t be useful at all. Its purpose hasn’t changed, the phone still exists to help people stay connected with each other. But it’s not able to





## LEARN

fulfill that purpose because it hasn't been connected to a power source. And much like a cell phone is designed to need to be charged on a regular basis, God designed us to need rest as a normal part of our schedule. God created each of us with a specific purpose to fill for His glory, but in order to live out His plan, we must regularly take a break from our normal schedule and connect to Him through rest. Rest is good for our bodies, minds, and souls. We rest to be physically and spiritually refreshed. If we don't rest, like the phone, our purpose doesn't change. But eventually we will become run down, exhausted, and overworked, which is not how God wants us to live. ”

### 4 READ THE BIBLE

**SAY** “ Today we are learning that one of the reasons we rest is to be physically and spiritually refreshed. God designed our body, mind, and soul to need rest. In fact, even Jesus needed rest during His ministry on earth. Let's open our Bibles to Mark 1:35-39 and read about a time when Jesus rested. ”

**What did you notice about how Jesus decided to rest? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ Jesus chose to get up early in the morning and He went out to a deserted place, which means He was all alone. And then He prayed. This is a good example of what rest can look like for us. We need times of being alone and connecting with God. If Jesus, God the Son, needed to get away by Himself and be with His Father through prayer, how much more do we need to do so? When we choose to practice rest, we are choosing to follow God's design for our life. ”

**Let's read verses 38–39 again. What do these verses tell us Jesus did next? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ Once He had finished resting, He got up and went to the villages so that He could preach. He even said, 'This is why I have come.' He was recharged and ready to continue with the purpose He had been given by God the Father. We are not meant to only rest or only work. God created us to have a balance of both. We rest to be refreshed and to connect with God, and then we go out to continue the work He has called us to. ”

### 5 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ In our Bible story this week, we saw that Cain sinned and was punished. Part of his punishment was to leave the presence of God and become a restless wanderer. (Gen. 4:14) We only find true rest when we are in the presence of God, but the punishment for sin is to be out of the presence of God. However, from the very beginning God had a plan to bring us hope through sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus came to earth, lived a perfect life, and then died on the cross and rose again so that we can once again be in the presence of God and find true rest. ”

### 6 GROUP GAME: RECHARGE TAG

Choose one kid to be It. Her goal is to tag the other kids. When a kid is tagged, he will go to the Recharge Zone. He will take a sandglass timer and flip it over. Once the sand has run out, he can rejoin the game. If a kid enters the Recharge Zone and there are no timers available, she must



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wait for another kid's timer to run out of time and then flip it over and wait another cycle of time before re-entering the game. Play several rounds as time allows.

**What happened when you got tagged? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ That’s right, when you were tagged you had to go rest in the Recharge Zone. The only way to get back out was to wait for your timer to run out. And sometimes you had to sit for an extra-long amount of time, because you had to wait for a timer to become available. We all need different amounts of rest during different seasons of our life. So, sometimes we may need more rest than other times or we may need more rest than other people. But we all need to rest regularly, even if it’s not the same amount of time. ”

**How did it feel to sit and wait for the sand to run out? [Allow responses.]**

**SAY** “ For some it may have felt difficult, because you were ready to jump back into the game. For other people it may have felt nice to sit and wait, because it gave you a chance to take a break from running around. This is how rest can feel too, sometimes it is easy to rest and we look forward to it, but other times it is difficult to quiet our minds and keep our bodies still so that we can experience true rest. But the more we practice the spiritual discipline of rest, the easier it becomes and the more we look forward to it. ”

### 7 FOLLOW UP ON LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE

**SAY** “ Last week, the challenge was to ask an adult in your life about how they practice the spiritual discipline of rest and how it helps them connect with God. ”

**How did it go? What are some of the ways that people in your life rest? [Allow responses.]**

### 8 INTRODUCE THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

**SAY** “ This week, our challenge is to sit in silence for two minutes each day. You might pray, think about a Bible verse, or reflect on what’s happened in your day. At first, it might feel difficult, but as the week goes on, it will probably feel easier and easier! ”

### 9 CLOSE IN PRAYER

Use the scripted prayer below or pray in your own words.

**SAY** “ God, thank You for the gift of rest. Help us to choose to rest, even when it feels difficult or unfamiliar. Remind us that true rest is found in Your presence. Amen. ”



## **LOVE** God by practicing rest (10–15 minutes)

Choose one of these two options as a way to lead children to practice the spiritual discipline of rest.

### ☐ **OPTION 1: LISTEN TO DIFFERENT PSALMS**

Lead the kids to find a comfortable spot in the room, either laying down or sitting. Encourage them to close their eyes and listen as you read from the Bible. Read several psalms about rest, such as Psalms 3, 23, 91, or 100. Afterward, ask the kids what they noticed or what stuck out to them. You might help them pick up on similarities or differences between the psalms, interesting word choices, or word pictures that the verses painted.

### ☐ **OPTION 2: STRETCH LIKE A GIRAFFE**

Put on soft music and ask the kids to spread out around the room. Call out different ways to move their bodies, such as stretch up tall like a giraffe, get as small as an ant, walk like a bear, stretch like a cat, wave like tree branches, flicker like a birthday candle, flutter like a butterfly, or slither like a snake. Afterward, discuss how it felt to stretch and move quietly. Ask what their favorite movement or stretch was. Explain that sometimes rest looks like keeping our body still and sometimes it looks like moving our body.





## **LIVE** for God through discipleship (20–30 minutes)

Form discipleship groups to provide a safe environment for kids to share with one another. Limit groups to ideally no more than five children and one adult leader. Prioritize forming groups according to gender first, then age. Adult leaders should never be alone with children.

### **1 EMPHASIZE GOSPEL SAFETY**

Explain that discipleship time is a special time because we share the deep things in our hearts with one another. All must work together to create a safe place. Consider these three rules:

1. Listen when someone is talking.
2. Only comment when the person sharing invites you to do so.
3. In general, what is shared in the group should stay in the group. The only exception is talking with a trusted adult if it would help either you or the person who shared.

Note: Be sure to follow local laws and ministry policies concerning any report or suspicion of abuse or neglect.

### **2 GET EVERYONE TALKING**

Choose one of the options below to encourage children to engage with one another.

#### ☐ **OPTION 1: SHARE HIGHS AND LOWS**

Sit in a circle. Share a high point and a low point of your week. Model honesty and vulnerability in an age-appropriate way. Then go around the circle, inviting each child to share his or her high and low for the week.

#### ☐ **OPTION 2: PASS THE MIC**

Use a toy microphone or another item to represent a microphone. Ask a question, such as “What is your favorite color and why?” “What is something you do most Saturdays?” or “If you could be an animal, which one would you choose?” Ask and answer the question yourself and then pass the microphone to a child to answer. After answering, that child will pass the microphone to another child and so forth.

#### ☐ **OPTION 3: TOSS A BEACH BALL**

Inflate a beach ball before the session. Use a permanent marker to write a question in each section of the ball. Toss the ball to a child. Invite her to answer the question in the section that her left thumb touches. Continue tossing the ball until each child has a turn.



### 3 DISCUSS LEARN TIME

Choose an option below to engage kids with the following questions.

1. What is something you learned today?
2. How did Jesus rest?
3. How do you think God is calling you to respond to what you learned?

#### ☐ OPTION 1: PICK A CARD

Write each question on an index card. Fan the cards in your hand where kids cannot see the questions. Invite a kid to pick a card and answer the question.

#### ☐ OPTION 2: DRAW A QUESTION

Write each question on a slip of paper. Fold the papers and place them in a basket or bin. Invite children to take turns drawing a question and answering it.

#### ☐ OPTION 3: PIN THE FINGER ON THE QUESTION

Write the questions on poster board and display them on a wall. Invite a child to wear a blindfold or close his eyes. Spin him around three times and guide him to touch the poster board. Remove the blindfold. Lead him to answer the question closest to his finger.

### 4 PRAISE THE LORD TOGETHER

Read Psalm 150:6. Explain that it is important to worship God when we are alone and when we are together. One reason we worship God when we are together is that it can encourage us and grow our understanding of God to hear others praise Him and talk about the wonderful things He has done. Use one of the following ways to lead kids to praise the Lord in community.

- Lead the kids in a popcorn praise prayer. Explain that you will start the prayer, and then at any point, they can call out a characteristic of God that they are thankful for. It might help to give some examples of God's characteristics and traits before starting. After the prayers have slowed down for a minute or so, close the prayer by thanking God for who He is.
- Invite everyone to share praise reports from their week. Explain that these are the ways they saw God provide or the exciting ways they saw Him work in their lives over the past few days.
- Put on some worship music and encourage kids to sing along, draw a picture of what the words make them think of, or write a letter to God. After a couple of songs, invite some of the kids to share.