



***A seven week family devotional
for the season of Lent.***

By:

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FOOLISH THINGS

Family Devotional

Week 1: Look At The Fool

Play:

Play the game "Look at the fool!" It starts by asking each person what they would rather do- walk around the house three times walking and clucking like a chicken or go out on the sidewalk and howl like wolf at the moon for two minutes. Then take turns doing whatever you chose!!! (Feel free to be creative and come up with your own version of the game, but don't wimp out-- the goal is to look foolish!)

Read:

1 Corinthians 1:18 says "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

Say:

To be a follower of Jesus means to aspire to live your life like he did. Of course, if you think about it, this is sort of strange. It's one thing to want to be like a great football player, or a successful teacher. It's one thing to want to start a business and successfully grow a company. It's one thing to see an actress who hones her craft and wins an oscar and to want to be like her. But Jesus?-- he was a convicted criminal who was laughed at, mocked, and ultimately executed. As we will see over the next seven weeks, in many ways following Jesus will look and feel very foolish. But the hope of Easter is that this foolishness is actually the best way to live your life.

Chat: (For older kids and adults)

1. In what ways does following Jesus seem foolish? Have you ever been made fun of for being a Christian?
2. As we enter the season of Lent we are encouraged to give up things that we enjoy and make us feel better. Doing so may seem unnecessary, pointless, or silly. But the hope is that in doing so we will look more and more to God as our source of peace and joy and will serve as a general reminder that in all things God is what we need more than anything else. Is God calling you to give something up this season?

Pray:

Dear Jesus, thank you for your willingness to become a fool for our sake. Please give us the strength to follow you even when doing so seems foolish.

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Week 2: **Shame**

Play:

Have each person go around the room saying one thing they really appreciate about each other. Then ask if anyone wants to share a time when someone hurt their feelings with something they said.

Read:

1 Corinthians 4:3-5

Say:

It is only natural for us to care what others think about us. When they say nice things we feel good. When they say things that are critical or mean it can really make us feel lousy. But in this letter to the church in the city of Corinth we are reminded that what matters the most isn't what other people think of us, but what God thinks of us. We should love and be kind to other people not because we want them to like us, but rather because loving other people pleases God. This is freeing because people are very very unpredictable and we can't be sure how they will respond even to our loving acts. But God is perfectly loving and unchanging. There is no mystery when it comes to pleasing God. And we can relax knowing that even when we mess up he still loves us.

Chat: (For older kids and adults)

1. Is there a good reason to care about what other people think? Why? Why not?
2. Think of a time when someone really hurt you with something they said. How does this perspective the Bible gives change the way you think about that?
3. If you lived your life not worrying about what other people think but focusing instead on what pleases God, what are some immediate ways this would change your everyday life?

Pray:

Dear God, we know that you alone are the one who has the right to judge others because only you can see the heart and understand the entire situation. Help us to be careful not to judge others too quickly but to leave it in your hands. Help us to see that the only one we need to please is you and that we can relax knowing that you love us even when we mess up.

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Week 3: **Freedom**

Play:

Play the game "Free Punch." If you think you can handle it tell your child that while you don't usually allow hitting, this time, if they want to they are free to punch you in the shoulder as hard as they can. Then hold up a pillow and let them know they are free to punch the pillow as hard as they can. Then have them stand by the wall (find the hardest wall in the house) and tell them that they are free to hit it as hard as they can. Ask them why they didn't hit the wall (or if they did why they didn't hit as hard as they can).

Read:

1 Corinthians 6:12 and Titus 2:11-12

Say:

We often think that any restrictions or rules will hinder our ability to have fun. We think that the best kind of life is one where we are free to do anything. But here we are reminded that just because we can do something doesn't mean we should. (Just because you are free to punch a wall, doesn't mean it is a good idea.) And this is true with many other things in life. Of course this isn't always easy. Often-times we find ourselves unable to stop doing something that isn't good for us (like eating too much ice cream). Fortunately, in Jesus God's Grace has come to help us. Grace includes both forgiveness and power. God forgives us of our mistakes and gives us strength to live in ways that are truly good for us and are honoring to Him.

Chat: (For older kids and adults)

1. Can you think of any rules or boundaries that others have put on you (parents, boss, government) that have proven to be beneficial?
2. What are some personal boundaries that you've established because you have found that too much freedom in those areas isn't a good thing?
3. Are there any other areas in your life where you think restricting your freedom might be more helpful?

Pray:

Dear God we know that you want what is best for us and know even better than we do what that looks like. Help us to see where we have been living with too much freedom and need more boundaries. We know that we can't do it by ourselves so we also ask that you would give us your strength to do so.

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Week 4: **Temptation**

Play:

One night this week before the kids go to bed tell them you are all going to try something different the next day. Tell them that you are going to see if they can go all day without eating any candy. Then in the morning put candy all over the house (or cookies or whatever. But don't go out the grocery store to get it. I think this is a good illustration-- but it's not that good!) Then at the end of the day see how everyone did and how hard it was not to eat the candy.

Read:

1 Corinthians 10:13

Say:

There is nothing wrong with eating candy, this was just an illustration. But throughout life we will often be tempted to do things that aren't good for us or for others. We will be tempted to eat too much candy. We will be tempted to spend money on things we can't really afford. We will be tempted to treat people in ways that aren't kind. On our own, it is virtually impossible to resist temptation. Fortunately God loves us and wants to help us. Whenever we face temptation we can always turn to God for help and he will give us the strength to do the right thing.

Chat: (For older kids and adults)

1. What are some of the temptations that you struggle with or have struggled with in the past?
2. The verse just read suggests that if God didn't come to our aid we could very easily find ourselves in situations where it would be impossible for us to withstand temptation on our own strength. Is that encouraging or discouraging to you? Why?
3. The verse says that God will "provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." What do you think it means practically to "stand up under it"?

Pray:

Dear Lord, it is so easy for us to be tempted in our thoughts, in our words and our actions to give into behaviors that are not helpful to us and can hurt others. We praise you that you love us even when we fail. Please help us to see areas in our lives where we tend to give into temptation and give us the strength to make the right choices instead.