

Fully Alive

Family and Children's Devotional



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WEEK FIVE | Emotionally Alive

Day 1

READ: JOHN 11:33-36

Jesus saw her crying. He saw that the Jews who had come along with her were crying also. His spirit became very sad, and he was troubled. "Where have you put him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how much he loved him!"

SAY: Let's talk about crying. People cry when they are sad, but some people cry when they are happy, like at a wedding. Crying is a way to show we feel strongly about something. Also, babies cry to tell their parents they need something. This is how babies communicate because they haven't learned to talk yet. What do you think when you see someone crying? If you don't cry are you stronger than someone who does? What did people think when Jesus cried? Was he weak?

Crying isn't bad; it can be healthy. When we are upset, letting ourselves cry can make us feel better than trying not to cry. It can be awkward when someone around you is crying, but Jesus' friends didn't feel weird when he cried; they understood that he was crying because of an overwhelming feeling of sadness and love. Crying is sometimes a good response to something that is happening.

When someone cries, we do not always have to try to make them stop crying. Remember, crying has a lot of benefits. Sometimes the best thing we can do when someone is crying is to listen and let them cry. Putting your arm around their shoulder or giving a hug can be helpful too. This may be uncomfortable but this is one way we as a family can support each other in our emotions.

DO: What is one thing you could do for a crying person? As a family, make a promise to be kind to one another when someone is crying. Promise not to make fun of each other for crying, but to take care of each other with kindness instead. Sit with them silently or give them a hug while they are crying.

PRAY: God, help us to show love and kindness to others when they are sad.

Day 2

READ: GALATIANS 6:1-3

Brothers and sisters, what if someone is caught in a sin? Then you who live by the Spirit should correct that person. Do it in a gentle way. But be careful. You could be tempted too. Carry one another's heavy loads. If you do, you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks they are somebody when they are nobody, they are fooling themselves.

SAY: If you have ever caught a brother or sister or a friend doing something wrong, did you tell them to stop, or did you tell an adult first? Which way do you think is better? If you told them to stop doing something bad, how did it go? Did they listen? Even if they don't always listen, it's good to keep reminding one another to do the right thing because Jesus doesn't want us to try to live perfectly all on our own. We should help one another through hard things. If we try to do everything on our own, we will fail. It's important to help each other be like Jesus.

It may make you feel like a tattletale but the truth is that if someone is doing something that is sin and you talk to them about it and tell an adult, you are doing the right thing. In this way of helping someone to be like Jesus, we don't do so because we think we are better than them. We help because we love them and we know it is what Jesus would have us do. When we are part of the family of God we look out for each other like this.

If you're afraid of getting someone into trouble, try to think of the situation differently: gently correcting a sibling, friend, or parent when they sin is one way to encourage them to be more like Jesus.

DO: Let's role-play. Pretend you see someone in your family about to sin. What do you think they might do? Now what would you say to them before they did it? What would you say to them afterward? Try reversing roles.

PRAY: God, we want to be a family that helps others to be more like Jesus. It is hard to talk to someone when they are doing something wrong. Give us courage to be like you and show them how much you love them. Amen.

Day 3

READ: MARK 3:3-5

Jesus spoke to the man with the weak and twisted hand. "Stand up in front of everyone," he said. Then Jesus asked them, "What does the Law say we should do on the Sabbath day? Should we do good? Or should we do evil? Should we save life? Or should we kill?" But no one answered. Jesus looked around at them in anger. He was very upset because their hearts were stubborn. Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand had become as good as new.

SAY: In Jesus' day, people were supposed to rest on the Sabbath. This meant that they couldn't work; they couldn't even light a fire to cook over. To some people, it looked like Jesus was breaking the rules by healing someone on a Saturday; they thought he was working. But Jesus told them their rules were wrong and too hard, and that it was a good thing to do good on a rest day. Have you ever broken a rule because you thought it wasn't fair?

Jesus was angry that they didn't want him to do something good, and he did it anyway. When we get angry over something we think isn't fair, we want the unfair thing to be changed. This is not a wrong feeling! But we have to be careful with our anger because anger out of control is never good.

DO: Write down some unhelpful ways you and other people in your circle of family and friends act when they get angry. Now, together think of some different ways to act when you're angry that are more helpful or constructive. Instead of shouting or using fists, maybe you could speak in a calm voice when you need to express your anger. Or maybe you could get your feelings out on paper by drawing a picture. Put the list of helpful ways to express anger somewhere noticeable where everyone in the family can be reminded of them. Also, the next time someone gets angry, help them talk through how they are feeling and try to find a way to solve the problem.

PRAY: Lord, when we get angry, please help us to remember to use our anger to make things better instead of to hurt people. Most of all, help me to trust you.

WEEK FIVE | Emotionally Alive

Day 4

READ: ZEPHANIAH 3:17

The Lord your God is with you. He is the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you. In his love he will no longer punish you. Instead, he will sing for joy because of you.

SAY: What are some things we do when we are happy? We might dance or sing, jump up and down, even shout or laugh or clap our hands. Whenever someone has a birthday party everyone comes together and celebrates that person by giving them presents, cake, and singing to them. Birthday celebrations are fun days when the birthday boy or girl feels loved and happy. When a new person becomes a part of God's family, did you know that God celebrates in heaven by having a big party? **Luke 15:10** says *"There is joy in heaven over one sinner who turns away from sin."*

God is happy when we love him and follow him. He even gets happy just by looking at us or thinking about us. It's like when your parents see you do something good or simply think about how much they love you and how thankful they are for you. It makes them happy and sometimes it makes them want to celebrate. It's good to celebrate one another like this because this is what God does with us and it's one way he wants us to be emotionally alive.

DO: Have a celebration. Choose one thing you want to celebrate about each person in your family. Get out instruments if you play any. Play a song or find some music on the radio and have a dance party and have a yummy snack to celebrate. Like how you are happy with each other, God is happy with you.

PRAY: God, we want you to be happy with us. Help us to sense all the ways you delight and take joy in us and give us courage and strength to do things that please you. Amen.

WEEK FIVE | Emotionally Alive

Day 5

READ: LUKE 15:11-32

Read the whole Story of the Lost Son, in your Bible.

RE-READ THIS VERSE: LUKE 15:20

So he got up and went to his father. While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him. He was filled with tender love for his son. He ran to him. He threw his arms around him and kissed him.

SAY: The younger son in this story wants forgiveness from his father but knows he doesn't deserve it. He imagines his best chance is to be treated like a servant instead of being a son. Have you ever done something bad and been afraid to tell your parents? The son doesn't believe that his father will forgive him. Can you imagine how he felt when his father actually did forgive him? Have you ever been surprised when someone forgives you?

The father forgives his son and welcomes him home as if he was returning from doing something important rather than running away. Even when we do something we think could never be forgiven, God shows us how much he loves us and forgives us when we return to him.

Forgiveness is not always easy, but we should always forgive like God forgives us. Remember yesterday's celebration? That is just like what the father in the story did for his son, but bigger. He had a party when his son returned to him, just because he could.

DO: Have one person stand on one side of a door while the rest of you stand on the other. Notice how you are cut off from one another. This story is about rejoicing when someone says they are sorry and want to be together again, reconciled with their family. The father is on one side of the barrier and the son is on the other side.

Now, open the door and give each other a hug. When we forgive, we get rid of the barrier between ourselves and other people and we are reunited. This is a time of celebration and a time to feel great joy. It's a moment to feel emotionally alive!

PRAY: God, thank you for forgiving our sins and rejoicing over us when we say we are sorry and ask you to forgive us. Help us to forgive one another and rejoice when we reconcile.