Beyond BASICS

Children's Church

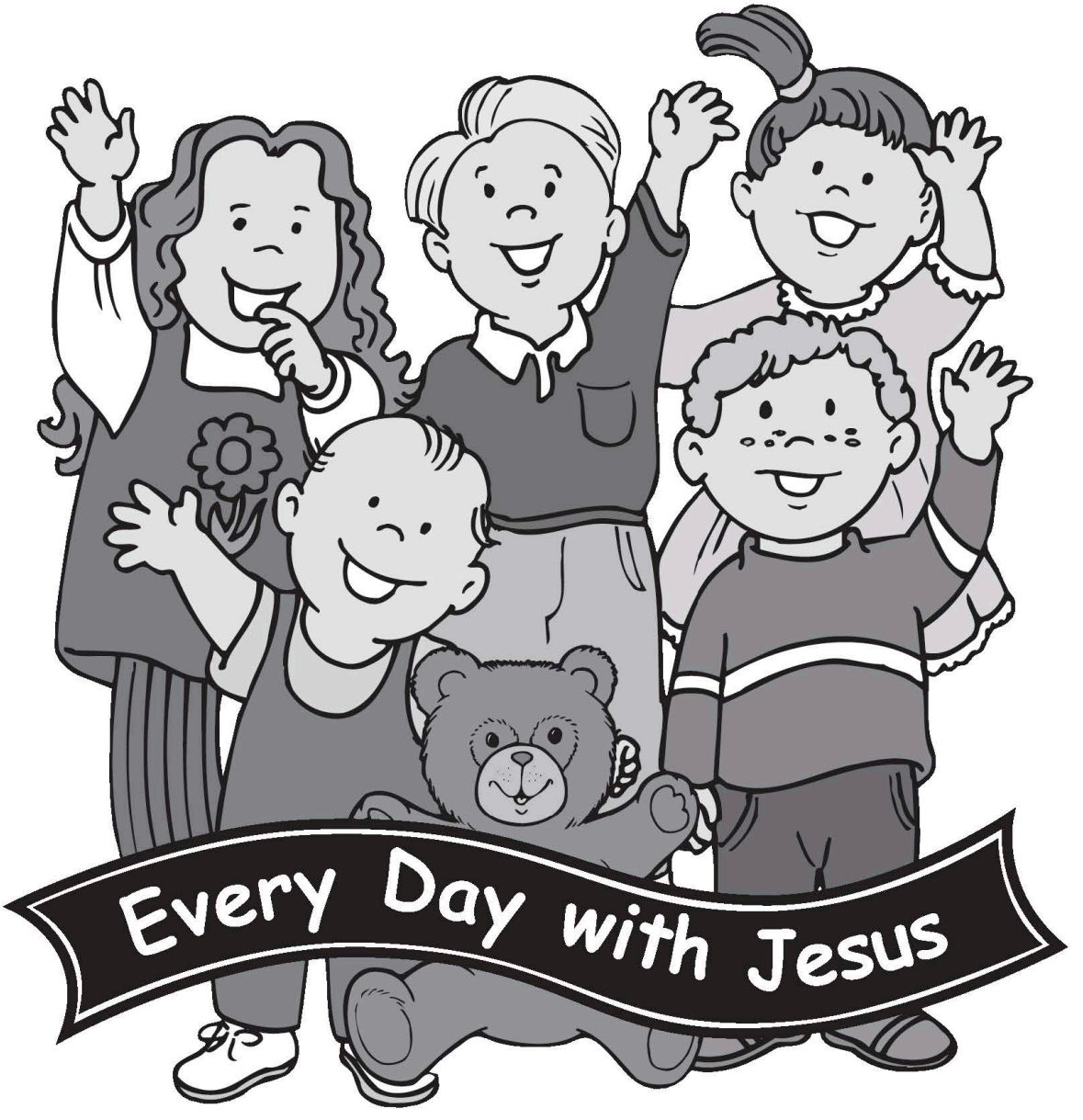
DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Winter 2026

Beyond BASICS

Devotional Guide

Winter 2026-2027



Every Day with Jesus

Read the biographies of some of the most successful and influential people in history. Time after time they attribute their wisdom and success to the principles they learned as children from their time in God's Word with their parents or grandparents. Perhaps you are blessed with a similar testimony.

These devotionals are written to help parents with the most important facet of their parenting responsibility—implanting God's Word into their children's lives. They are written in a way that the children can understand what the principles mean to them. For example, a child might not relate to Zacharias and Elisabeth's, an elderly couple, having a baby. To them it is just another Bible story. They can understand, however, that God honors their unconditional obedience and love just as He honored Zacharias and Elisabeth's obedience.

The devotionals relate to the corresponding Beyond Basics session. They equip the parents to reinforce Sunday through Saturday what the children have learned in Beyond Basics. They help unite parents and teachers as a team. Most important is that the children learn that their relationships with God are constant, not just for Sundays.

How To Use the Devotionals

Remove the page of devotionals for the current week. Copy the page front-to-back, one copy for each family. With Monday's, Tuesday's and Wednesday's devotionals facing up, fold the right side so that the edge of the paper is between Monday's and Tuesday's devotionals. Fold the left side so that the left edge is even with the fold on the right side. Sunday's devotional should be on the front, and Friday's and Saturday's devotionals should be on the back.

Personally give these devotionals to the parents. Explain how to use the devotionals. Encourage the parents in their faithfulness in leading their families in daily devotionals. Included is a letter to the parents explaining how to use the devotionals. Give a copy of this letter to the parents when you give them their first copy of the devotionals. It will only be necessary to give the letter the first time.

Use these devotionals yourself. Refer to them in your conversations with the children. This will reinforce the unity and continuity of home and church. You will see your children's ministry become your family ministry.

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Dear Parents,

Along with this letter, you received a page of devotionals for this week. Please take the time to read through the devotionals. There is a devotional for each day of the week beginning today. The devotionals are written to reinforce the principles your child learned in *Beyond Basics* today. They will help the entire family better understand what God's Word means.

A different set of devotionals will be sent home each week. Some of the devotionals suggest activities. Others challenge each member of the family to a more intimate, productive relationship with God. They are all written on a level that four- and five-year-olds can understand. Yet, they challenge the children by introducing and defining words or terms that might be new.

Your greatest challenge will be time. Most of the devotionals will only take a few minutes. Some of the suggested activities will take longer. Remember that every minute you spend together with your family in God's Word is building a relationship with your child and with God. That relationship will mature and last through eternity. Nothing else on which you spend your time will count then. So find the time that works best for your family. Schedule everything else around this most important appointment. Keep this appointment no matter what. You can be sure that you will be tested. Commit this important appointment to God. He will honor your commitment.

God commands us to teach His Word to our children. Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," Mark 10:14. Our prayer is that your entire family will see God's Word in ways that you have never seen before, leading you all to a deeper relationship with God. God will bless your family throughout eternity.

Some of the devotionals require preparation. Read them ahead of time to adequately prepare.

Monday, December 7

I Can

Begin learning 1 John 4:9.

(Think of something you can do well such as crochet, play the guitar, draw or tell stories. As you demonstrate your talent, explain how you learned it. Tell a little about how you do it.)

If I just told you that I could do this, you might not believe me. Or you might misunderstand what I was talking about. But you know that I can do this. You have seen me do it. You can tell others about it because you saw for yourself.

Someone can tell you that God loves you. But how can you know for sure that this is true? Help your family think of ways God demonstrates His love every day. Our Memory Verse for this week tells us that God showed His love by sending His Son into the world. That is God's greatest way of showing His love for us.

(Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for loving you and your family so much that He sent His only Son into the world.)

Tuesday, December 8

You Can

Continue learning 1 John 4:9.

(Think of something your child can do well such as color, turn flips or build with blocks. As your child demonstrates his talent, ask him questions about it.)

You did a good job. You proved to me what you can do. Now I know for sure because I saw you.

That is what manifest means. God manifested His love for us. What does that mean? (Help your child answer proved or showed.) God could have just told us that He loved us, but He did more. He sent Jesus into the world for us. That really showed His love for us.

Can you name some other ways God shows His love for us? (Encourage everyone to think of different ways God shows His love.) God shows His love to us every day.

(Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for manifesting His love to us by sending Jesus into the world to take the punishment for our sin and teaching us how to know Him.)

Wednesday, December 9

Speak My Language

Continue learning 1 John 4:9.

(If you can speak in a language that your child does not understand, say, "God loves you very much." Make up a language if you do not know a real language.)

Did you understand what I said? How can I help you understand what I said? (Lead to the answer—speak in a language I understand. Say the phrase so that your child understands.) What was the difference? I spoke in your language.

God needed to speak to us in our language. Jesus was a person like us. He was born as each of us was born. He grew up as each of us grow up. But Jesus was perfect. That meant He could take the punishment for our sin. His blood could cover our sin. Jesus did all that in a way that we could understand. He wanted us to know God the way He knows God. When we know Jesus, we know God.

(Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for communicating His love in a way that you could understand.)

Thursday, December 10

What's Your Language?

Continue learning 1 John 4:9.

People from different countries all say I love you. But they all say it in a different way. They understand, but others cannot understand. It is in a different language. The message is the same. It just sounds different.

People also have different ways of showing love. Some people show love by doing things. Some show love by giving gifts. Others show love by listening and spending time together. God understands exactly what we are trying to show. He helps us understand each other.

We have different ways to show you that we love you. What are some of the ways that we show you how much we love you? How do you show us that you love us? Take time to hug each other. A hug is a wonderful way to show that we love each other. Spending time together also lets each of us know that we are loved.

(Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for each individual's way of expressing love and for loving each in His own personal way.)

Friday, December 11

God's Language

Continue learning 1 John 4:9.

God knew that we needed a Savior. We needed someone we could understand. We needed someone to help us understand Him.

God wants to bring the people He has created back to Him. He wants to teach His creation how to love His way.

Jesus was exactly who we needed to teach us how to love God. Jesus was exactly who God needed.

What are some needs that Jesus meets?

(Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for Jesus who meets all needs.)



Saturday, December 12

Rewind

Take turns saying 1 John 4:9.

(Talk about the different ways you have explored showing love this week. Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for manifesting His love by giving Jesus to be your Savior.)

Week 1

Sunday, December 6

How Do You Know?

Read 1 John 4:9.

The word *manifest* means to show. God showed His love to us. We are sinners. Our sins separate us from God. Even though we sin, He still loves us.

God sent His only Son, Jesus, to us. Jesus taught us how to really know God. He died to take the punishment for our sin. When we trust Jesus, He gives us life in God.

God showed His love by giving us what we needed—a Savior. God showed His love in a way that we could understand. Jesus was a person like us except He did not sin. God wants us to know Him and love Him.

Let's think of other words that mean manifest. (Some synonyms are show, demonstrate, make known. Use the word manifest as many times as possible in the next twenty-four hours.

Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for showing His love by sending Jesus into the world.)

Monday, December 14

Our Names

Read Luke 1:59-64. Begin learning verse 63.

(For this devotional, be prepared to tell how your child's name was chosen, what the name means and any family history connected to the name. Be prepared to tell about your own name, also. Show pictures of the person for whom each of you was named.)

The angel told Zacharias exactly what to name his baby—John. God had a job for John. It was important for Zacharias and Elisabeth to obey God exactly. Part of that obedience was to give their baby the right name.

Many parents give their children family names. Sometimes God leads parents to a special name for their child. Each person makes his name special.

(Take the time now to talk about your names.

Lead your family in prayer, thanking God that He knows each person even before that person has a name.)

Tuesday, December 15

His Name Is John

Read Luke 1:59-64. Continue learning verse 63.

The time had come. Elisabeth gave birth to a baby boy. Zacharias and Elisabeth's friends were happy for them. The time came to name their baby. The friends expected them to name the baby Zacharias.

Would Zacharias and Elisabeth name their baby Zacharias? That would be easy to do. But that was not what the angel had told Zacharias to do. What did the angel tell him? (You shall call his name John.) The friends had not heard this. Only Zacharias heard the angel's instructions. What did they do?

Elisabeth said he would be called John. Then Zacharias wrote, "His name is John." They did obey God.

Sometimes we know what God wants us to do. But it would be easy to do something else. God wants us to obey Him all the time.

(Lead your family in prayer, asking God to help you obey Him all the time.)

Wednesday, December 16

A Special Job

Read Luke 1:59-64. Continue learning verse 63.

As soon as Zacharias wrote, "His name is John," Zacharias could talk again. He could have told about the angel, but he didn't. He could have talked about how beautiful his baby was, but he didn't. He praised God. He began to prophesy. That means to tell what is going to happen before it happens. He told what John would do.

How did Zacharias know what was going to happen? (The Holy Spirit told him.) God had chosen him and Elisabeth for an important job. That job was raising John and teaching him God's ways.

God has given us an important job. That job is to raise you and teach you God's ways. He has given you the important job of listening to us and obeying us. How can we all know what God wants us to do?

(Lead your family in prayer, thanking God for trusting you to teach your child His ways. Ask Him to help each of you to obey Him.)