



*Exploring Our
Baptismal
Promises*

A Lenten Devotional for Families

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Explanation of Baptismal Promises

When your child was baptized, the pastors read the following promises, or something like these:

“As you bring your children to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with them among God’s faithful people,
bring them to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach them the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in their hands the Holy Scriptures,
and nurture them in faith and prayer,
so that your children may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.”

(ELW, p. 228)

Baptismal promises come down to five basic promises.

They are:

- *To live among God’s faithful people*
- *To hear the Word of God and Share in the Lord’s Supper*
- *To proclaim the Good News in Christ through word and deed*
- *To serve all people following the example of Jesus*
- *To strive for justice and peace in all the earth*

These are the promises that teenagers are asked to affirm when they affirm their baptism (when they are confirmed) and often times they are the promises that some churches use when welcoming new members.

Through the next several weeks, you are invited to explore these promises. Each week, we will look at a different Bible story and a different promise. You are asked to read the same story each night during the week. Often times, we see different things when we hear the same story over and over. We also start seeing different ways the story may apply to our lives. Take your time. Enjoy telling to story in different ways.

You and your family are invited into an intentional exploration of these promises. It is easy to think about baptism only in relation to our children. How often have you thought about it and your faith life? When the children have grown up and left the house, will you still feel connected to church and to the people of God?

It is also easy to compartmentalize faith into an activity that we do on Sunday morning. However, we are called to be Children of God every day. And through God's grace, we are invited to a new start every day! Sunday morning activities are an important part of our faith life, but it is not the only part. Worshiping together and sharing the Lord's Supper with your faith family are a good place to start when living out baptismal promises. We also can do Faith 5 at dinner or bedtime or even in the car! Living out the promises can be doing devotions by yourself, with your family, or in a group. It can be participating in Together in Faith events at the church. It can be doing service projects together. It can be praying for a family member, a friend, or a neighbor. There are many options and opportunities. Choosing to live out the promises with some intentionality speaks volumes about what is important to you and your family.

God's blessings on you and your family as you walk this walk together. Enjoy your family time together and watch faith blossom and grow, not only in your children, but in yourself as well.

Baptismal Promise: To Live Among God's Faithful People

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: "Jesus Chooses His Disciples" (p. 308 Beginner's Bible), Matthew 4:18-22, 9:9, 10:1-4, Mark 1-3, Luke 5-6

Talk about how this story relates to this baptismal promise.

Pray: Dear Jesus, Just as you chose to spend time with your disciples, help us to choose to spend time with our faith family. Help us to grow with them in faith and love. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make the sign of the cross on the forehead say: "(name), Child of God, Jesus loves you and so do I!"

Ideas for activities: read the Bible together, worship with your faith family, talk about offering and tithing, care for and encourage one another, pray, renew the promise with water and a sign of the cross on your forehead.

Baptismal Promise: To hear the Word of God and Share in the Lord's Supper

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: "Jesus Teaches on a Mountain" (p. 318 Beginner's Bible), Matthew 5:1-12, 6:25-34, Luke 6:17-23, 12:22-31

Talk about how this story relates to this baptismal promise.

Pray: Dear Jesus, Just as the people flocked to the mountain to hear you teach, help us to "flock" to church to hear your teachings and to learn to pray. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Alternate prayer: The Lord's Prayer

Bless one another: As you make a cross on the forehead say: "(name), Child of God, You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized." (ELW, p. 230)

Ideas for activities: listen to the Word from the Bible and in the sermon in worship, devotions, sacraments, experience the arts, participate in Sunday School and Christian Education events, forgiveness of sin, meal time prayer

Baptismal Promise: To proclaim the Good News in Christ through word and deed

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: “A Captain’s Faith” (p. 324, Beginner’s Bible), Matthew 8:5-13

Talk about how this story relates to this baptismal promise.

Pray: Dear Jesus, Just as the captain had faith and asked for Your help on behalf of his servant, help us to share our faith in word and deed – reaching out to those that have less than we do. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make a cross on the forehead say, “(name), Child of God, let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (ELW, p. 231)

Ideas for activities: Invite friends and family to church, confess the faith through word and song, offer encouragement to friends who are ill or in need, talk about faith with family and friends, and live joyfully, thankfully, encouragingly, and hopefully

Baptismal Promise: To serve all people following the example of Jesus

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: "A Hole in the Roof" (p. 328, Beginner's Bible), Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26

Talk about how this story relates to this baptismal promise.

Pray: Dear Jesus, Just as these people helped their friend get to you for healing, let us reach out to those that are hurting or in need. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make a cross on the forehead say, "(name), Child of God, May the God of all grace, support you and make you strong." (ELW, p. 233)

Ideas for activities: Serve in the home, the church, the community, visit the sick or send cards and pictures, feed the hungry, respond to disasters, walk alongside others, give of resources.

Baptismal Promise: To strive for justice and peace in all the earth

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: “The Good Samaritan” (p. 379, Beginner’s Bible), Luke 10:25-37

Talk about how this story relates to this baptismal promise.

Pray: Dear Jesus, just as the Good Samaritan helped a beaten man that he found on the side of the road, help us to reach out to those in need even if they are different from us. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make a cross on the forehead say, "(name), Child of God, love and serve God, rejoicing in your baptism."

Ideas for activities: Pray for peace, “Go Green” initiatives in churches or communities, forgive each other, marches and walks for social issues such as violence against children, Collect food for the local food shelf, volunteer at a homeless shelter, pray! Love all of humanity, respecting everyone, and seeing differences as a gift from God.

Holy Week: Palm Sunday

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: "The True King" (p. 427 Beginner's Bible), Mark 11:1-11

Talk about how this story relates to your life.

Pray: Dear Jesus, We want to sing, shout, and praise you. Help us keep you as king in our everyday life. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make the sign of the cross on the forehead say: "(name), Child of God, Jesus loves you and so do I!"

Ideas for activities: Bring palm branches home from church or make some. Have a parade around the house, sing, shout, play instruments, & praise God together.

Holy Week: Maundy Thursday

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: "The Last Supper" (p. 442 Beginner's Bible), Mark 14:12-25

Talk about how this story relates to your life.

Pray: Dear Jesus, Thank you for food to feed our body. Thank you for Holy Communion to feed our hearts. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make the sign of the cross on the forehead say: "(name), Child of God, Jesus loves you and so do I!"

Ideas for activities: Shop for some of your favorite foods at the grocery store. Then bring them to the food shelf. Thank God for all the gifts God has given your family.

Holy Week: Good Friday

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: "Jesus is Arrested and Crucified" (p. 446 Beginner's Bible), Mark 14 & 15

Talk about how this story relates to your life.

Pray: Dear Jesus, It is sad that you suffered and died. But it is good that you did it for us. We are glad your death is not the end of the story. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make the sign of the cross on the forehead say: "(name), Child of God, Jesus loves you and so do I!"

Ideas for activities: Talk about why this sad day is called Good Friday. Worship together. Get ready for Easter by dying Easter eggs. Make extra to share with a friend.

Easter Sunday

Share highs and lows of the day.

Read a Bible Story: “Jesus is Risen” (p. 453 Beginner’s Bible), Mark 16:1-10

Talk about how this story relates to your life.

Pray: Dear Jesus, Happy Day! You came back to life! Thank you for new life in EVERYTHING. (add petitions as needed re: highs and lows) In Your name we pray, Amen.

Bless one another: As you make the sign of the cross on the forehead say: "(name), Child of God, Jesus loves you and so do I!"

Ideas for activities: Have fun with Easter eggs. Open a plastic egg...it is empty like Jesus’ tomb. Go on a walk hunting for signs of new life. Talk about...Is anyone you love living in heaven with Jesus now?