

God's Big Idea for May: Savoring Moments

Parents: Before you do this activity with your children, read through this information about Savoring as a spiritual practice. Plan to introduce the concept to your family anytime this month. Hopefully, this practice will become a part of your dinner-time, car-time, or bedtime spiritual conversations. Parents with young children, you can talk about these ideas while your children listen. Bring them into this conversation as an opportunity to share your family story with them.

The spiritual practice of Savoring is slowing down and appreciating special moments in time. Practice it while remembering something from your past. Savoring also helps you stay present in the current moment or when you anticipate your future. You might ask, "What does this do with God?" I'm glad you asked. Savoring is God's idea. He calls us to slow down, enjoy his presence, gifts, and help in our lives. The psalmist reminds us to "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," in Psalm 103:2

Psychologists have written books and articles about how savoring can help our mental, emotional, and physical health. We've uploaded some articles on the website resource page if you want to read further.

Below are ways you can help your family savor moments from the past, present, and future. These are not tasks that must be done by a certain time; rather, these are simple tools you can use to carve out savoring moments in your family for years to come. By holding onto moments and connecting them to God, we help our children (and ourselves!) to draw nearer to God. We pray these ideas will be a blessing to your families as you continue on your journey of family discipleship.

1. Remembering the past

Let's talk about how we savor by remembering. Throughout scripture, God asks his people to remember what he has done for them. In the Old Testament, God's people remembered his help by stacking rocks. In 1 Samuel 7:12, he called these rocks or stones an 'Ebenezer', a stone of help. In Joshua 4:1-8, when the Israelites crossed the Jordan, they set up rocks by the river to remind them to tell their children about God's help.

You will find a color copy of a rock wall in your curriculum. Use this as your 'Ebenezer' to remind your family of the times God has helped you. Write on each rock a time, place, or someone that reminds you of God's faithfulness. Place it somewhere in your home to look at often.

This picture is of the Hunter family, Ebenezer. Our grandchildren like to read the rocks, restack them, add shells and other colorful items to the jar. If your family wants flat rocks to create your own, we have some for you.



God's Big Idea for May: Savoring Moments

2. Slowing down in the present

Your snack bag has different tastes and textures. Slow down as you taste and talk about what you are eating. One way you could do it is by having family members close their eyes while another family member places an individual snack in their mouth. Have them guess what they are tasting.

Another way is to have everyone taste the same food at the same time and talk about what parts you especially like. Instruct everyone to take small bites and chew slowly, experiencing and noticing all the aspects of that snack. Describe the taste and texture.

During your snack time, discuss how savoring food is like savoring the present moment. Have each family member describe the present moment. What do they smell, feel, see, hear, and taste? Do they feel rushed, hoping to move on to the next thing? Or do they feel at peace, calm, simply enjoying this time together? You can teach your children this process during special times they want to remember.

As you practice this ability to savor special times, you can also discuss your day or week by asking each other questions. What has brought you joy recently? What person or experience has brought you closer to God? Savoring can become a regular part of dinner-time conversation, inviting family members to savor and remember special moments.

3. Anticipating God's help in the future

Discuss some of the unknowns in your family's future. Maybe you are anticipating a move, a new baby, a new school for the children, a new calling, or just a new semester. What are the unknowns in your lives? Encourage one another through scripture or prayer. Kids can encourage parents, too. In Matthew 28:20, just before he ascended into Heaven, Jesus told the disciples he would be with them even to the end of the age.

I wonder if hearing those words was a 'rock of help' to the disciples as they anticipated their future. Are there other scripture passages that could help your family? Do you have a story to share with the rest of the family about how God helped you through a difficult time? Write down your family's unknowns in a notebook and take a moment to picture how God will help your family as you pray together. Keep a list to review how God has answered your prayers.

Practice savoring God's help in your family's past, present, and future. Don't stop at the end of the month. Why not make this a regular practice in your home?

*The Ignatian Examen is a way to savor God's help in your life and how he is forming you. A great family resource is a small book titled [Sleeping With Bread](#). The Examen, in short, centers around two daily questions: For what am I most grateful? For what am I least grateful? With these two simple questions, you can trace God's presence, help, and leading in your lives.