

THE BIGGEST STORY



FAMILY DEVOTIONAL



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 **CROSSWAY**
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The Biggest Story® Family Devotional

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Introduction

God calls all Christians—young and old—to learn, love, and live out his holy word. *The Biggest Story Family Devotional* is designed to help achieve that goal. Based on the stories found in Kevin DeYoung's *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook*, and featuring Don Clark's amazing artwork, *The Biggest Story Family Devotional* is divided into 104 stories—52 from the Old Testament and 52 from the New Testament. Each story features The Big Picture (an overview of the story), Gospel Connection (a summary of how the story connects to the good news about Jesus), a short prayer, and five readings and questions.

The five readings and questions can be done in one setting—perhaps Sunday night! Or, as that might be quite the challenge, you can break them out for a whole week. Do whatever best suits your family. The readings are short enough to have the readers in your family participate and the listeners, Lord willing, listen! And the questions are designed to generate an interesting conversation.

To achieve that goal, some of the questions ask about the content of the text (observations), others about the big ideas and message (interpretation), and some about practical ways to live out what you learn (application). Some questions are difficult (feel free to ask your older children to weigh in; or, please weigh in yourself) but most are simple—designed with the K–5th grade age group in mind. The “yes or no” questions are great for the youngest children. Let them answer yes or no and then, when it fits, follow up with “Why?”

Flexibility is the key word to keep in mind as you work through the devotional. Feel free to go fast or slow. Feel free to read more or less of the Bible readings. Feel free to skip questions or add your own.

May our great God bless your family as you read, discuss, and learn together God's wonderful word.

DOUGLAS SEAN O'DONNELL

Ways to Use This Devotional

This devotional provides a flexible way for families to meditate on God's word together. It is especially designed to help parents and children engage with the Bible text behind each of *The Biggest Story* Bible stories. Here are some options for how to use it with your family.

DINNER TABLE DEVOTIONS • 5–10 MINS • ALL AGES

At the beginning of the week, read The Big Picture and watch the animated story. Then for the next five days, read one of the five Bible readings and discuss the questions together. Close the week with the Gospel Connection and prayer. Each reading is designed to be short and doable for busy families with kids at various ages.

What you need: This devotional, a full English Bible, and a device for watching the animated story

LONGER EVENING DEVOTIONS • 30–40 MINS • OLDER KIDS

Families with older children may wish to do an entire devotion in one sitting, including all five Bible readings. If so, you might consider selecting a different reader for each reading and allowing them to take turns leading the discussion.

What you need: This devotional, a full English Bible, and a device for watching the animated story

ALONGSIDE THE BIGGEST STORY BIBLE STORYBOOK
10–15 MINS • YOUNGER KIDS

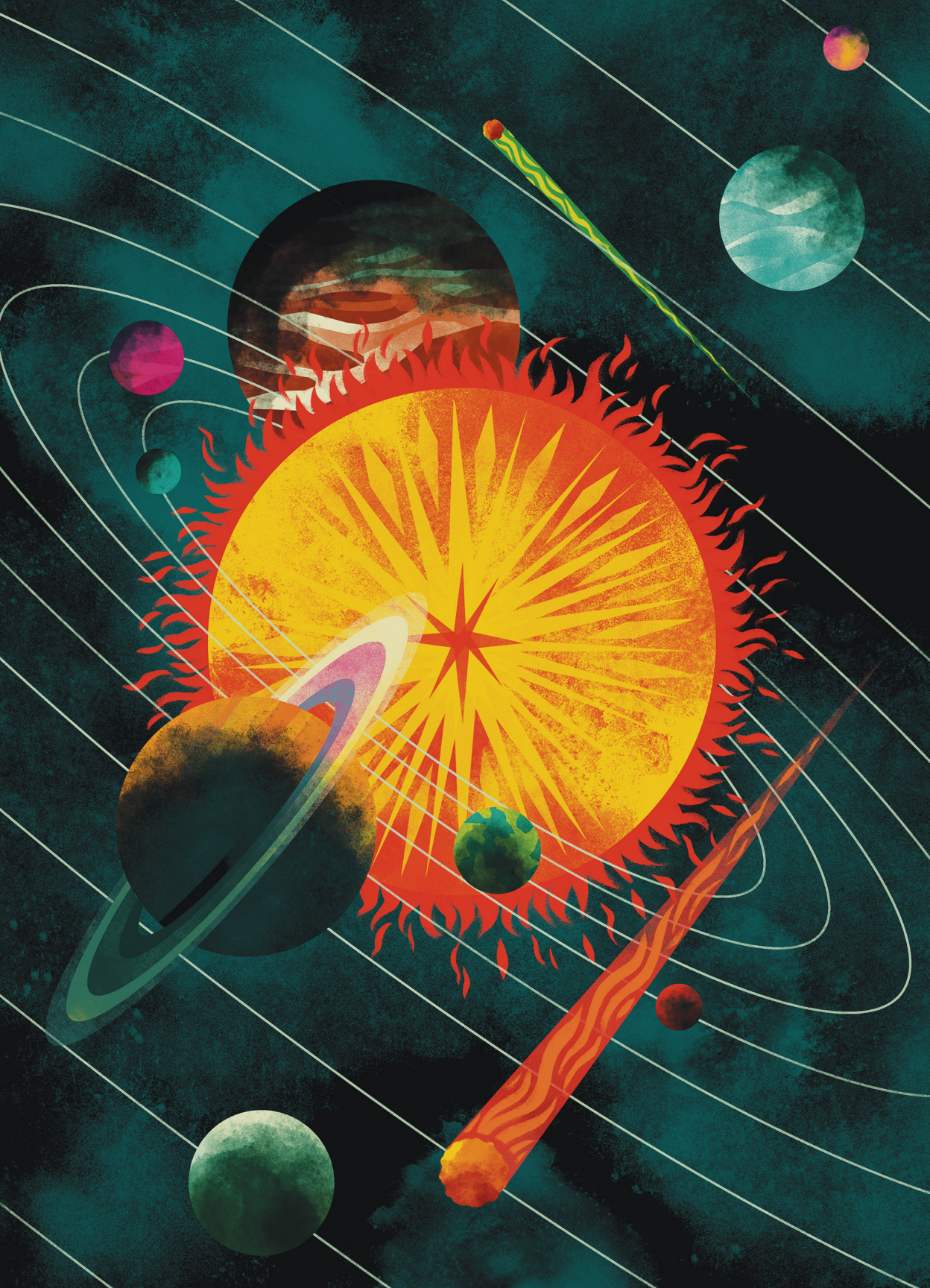
Families with younger kids may prefer to read from *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook* as the main focus of their Bible time together. You can use this devotional as a supplement to the storybook by simply selecting one or two discussion questions and reading the Gospel Connection after reading the story.

What you need: This devotional and *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook*

A note about the lines after each question: The lines provided after each discussion question can be used in different ways. Here are some suggested uses:

- Write down key points from your family's discussion to refer back to in subsequent readings.
 - Mark the date and write down key questions or insights from individual family members. Used in this way, this book will become a family keepsake as you enjoy looking back on the contributions that each of your children bring to the discussion.
-

A screen-free alternative: In each of the use cases above, you may choose to read from *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook* instead of watching the animated video together. The content of the videos is the same as the stories printed in the storybook.



STORY 1

And So It Begins

GENESIS 1–2

THE BIG PICTURE: Genesis begins with God: “In the beginning, God” (Gen. 1:1). That’s the first line of the Bible! Before “God created the heavens and the earth” (1:1), God was. He always was. But what did he do before he created everyone and everything? Was he lonely? No. Bored? Of course not. Scared? Certainly not. Why? God is one God in three persons—Father, Son, and Spirit. The three persons of the Trinity have always been marked by love, and it is out of this love that God created every person, place, and thing.



Watch Story 1 together

READING 1 • GENESIS 1:1–2

The Always Existing

Have you ever thought about the fact that God has no beginning? What questions do you have about that?

.....

.....

.....

.....

READING 2 • GENESIS 1:3–23

And God Said

Why do you think the Bible makes such a big deal of the fact that God created the world simply by speaking?

READING 3 • GENESIS 1:26–27

Made in God's Image

God made us in his image. We are supposed to reflect who he is. What are some ways we can mirror God to the world?

READING 4 • GENESIS 2:4–7, 18–25

Man and Woman

Why do you think God made Adam out of the ground? Why do you think God created Eve from Adam's rib?

Creation and Salvation

John calls Jesus “the Word.” Why is it important that all things were made *through* Jesus?

GOSPEL CONNECTION: The story of creation is just the first story of the Biggest Story. In Genesis we will learn that, because of sin, people aren’t very good mirrors. We don’t reflect God very well. But “the Word” (John 1:1) came as “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). He perfectly showed what God is like, and he made a way for our broken mirrors to be repaired so that we could again do the job God created us to do. But the Son of God isn’t just our Savior. He, with the Father and the Spirit, created everything. Our Creator saves!

PRAYER: Dear God, we love to see all the good things in your creation. Thank you for making this world and for making us to be like you. Amen.



STORY 2

A Very Bad Day

GENESIS 3

THE BIG PICTURE: One day Satan, in the form of a snake, slithered into the garden. He wanted to get Adam to eat from the off-limits tree by tricking and deceiving Eve. His plan worked. Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. The first sin. The worst sin in the world! Adam and Eve knew it. God too. It was a bad move and very bad day. God sent them out of the garden. And he cursed his perfect world. The ground would be hard. Work would be hard. Marriage would be hard. Having babies would be hard. And death would soon come to everyone.



Watch Story 2 together

READING 1 • GENESIS 3:1–5

Twisting God's Word

Would you be tempted by what Satan said? Why or why not?

READING 2 • GENESIS 3:6

The First Sin

The Bible teaches that Adam, not Eve, committed the first sin (see Rom. 5:12–21). Why do you think Adam is held responsible?

READING 3 • GENESIS 3:7–13

The Blame Game

Who did Adam blame for his sin? Do you ever blame others for your sin? Why do we do this?

READING 4 • GENESIS 3:14–24

Crime and Punishment

How did God punish the serpent, the woman, and the man? As a boy or girl, is there anything that scares you about those punishments?

The Promise of the Snake Crusher

How are Adam and Jesus alike? How are they different?

GOSPEL CONNECTION: Genesis 3 records a very bad day. God cursed the snake, the man, and the woman. He promised that hardship and death would come to every human. (And it has!) But he also promised a fresh start. Adam and Eve would die, but not right away. Eve would have children. More than that (much more than that!), one of her offspring would deal with the snake (Gen. 3:15). Let's call him the Snake Crusher. We know him as Jesus. Satan would "bruise" Jesus (Jesus died). And yet, when Jesus died, he actually destroyed Satan. He crushed the snake! Yes, Jesus's worst day was our best day.

PRAYER: Dear God, we are sorry for all the lies we believe and all the bad stuff in our hearts. Thank you for the Snake Crusher, who gives us a new beginning. Amen.



STORY 3

From Bad to Worse

GENESIS 3–4

THE BIG PICTURE: Genesis 3 teaches us how sin and death came into the world. It also gives the wonderful promise that God would send the Snake Crusher to crush, well, the snake! But before we talk about that good news, we need to look at Genesis 4, which tells us about some very bad news and sad news. Life outside of Eden goes from bad to worse. Adam and Eve have two boys—Cain and Abel. That sounds great! But the problem is that neither one of them is the Snake Crusher. The bigger problem is that Cain crushed his own little brother. He murdered him. How terrible!



Watch Story 3 together

READING 1 • GENESIS 4:1–2

Cain and Abel

Who was born first? What different jobs did they have?

.....

.....

.....

.....

READING 2 • GENESIS 4:3-7

Cain's Offering

Hebrews 11:4 teaches us that Cain's offering was sinful because it wasn't offered with faith in God's promises. Why is it wrong to make an offering to God without faith?

READING 3 • GENESIS 4:8-16

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

When God asked Cain where his brother was, how did Cain respond? Was that the right response?

READING 4 • GENESIS 4:17-24

East of Eden

Cain's pathway leads to Lamech. Did he sound like a good person? Why or why not?

The Way of Cain

According to the apostle John, why did Cain kill Abel?

GOSPEL CONNECTION: Adam and Eve must have missed Eden. Now they lived without God’s daily presence and with sin and death everywhere. But what hope did they have? Could they just fight the mighty angel and return to the garden? No. Could they fly to heaven to be with God? Of course not! All that they could do was trust God’s promise. God would not leave his people in this curse forever. Yes, God so loved us that he sent Jesus, the Snake Crusher. And Jesus so loved us that he paid for our sins by dying on the cross. Now, if we believe in him, we can walk with God and talk with God. A return to Eden! Better than Eden.

PRAYER: O Lord, please help us to turn away from evil. We want to learn to trust you. Save us from our sin and from ourselves. Amen.



STORY 4

Rain, Rain, Go Away

GENESIS 6-9

THE BIG PICTURE: *Good. Good. Good. Good. Good. Good. Very Good.* Remember those words? God said them at creation. But ever since Adam and Eve ate from the off-limits tree, the words *bad, bad, bad, bad, bad, bad, very bad* best describe what happened next. It was bad that Eve got tricked by the serpent. Bad that Adam disobeyed God. Bad that Cain killed his brother. And by Noah's day, people were so very bad that God sent a great flood to wipe out everyone evil from the face of the earth. Only Noah and his family were spared, because they trusted in God's word and hoped in his promise.



Watch Story 4 together

READING 1 • GENESIS 6:5-10

What God Saw

When God looked down upon the earth, what did he see? What did he decide to do?

READING 2 • GENESIS 6:11-19

The Ark

What did God ask Noah and his family to do? Do you think that would have been hard or easy to do? Why?

READING 3 • GENESIS 7:11-24

Two by Two

Who shut the door to the ark, and why is that important? How many days and nights did it rain, and what do you think that would have been like? Who was in the ark with Noah? Would you have liked being in the ark?

READING 4 • GENESIS 9:8-17

God's Covenant

Do you like rainbows? What can your family do to remember God's covenant whenever you see a rainbow?

By Faith

Did you recognize any of the people or events from our readings in Genesis? How did those people show faith?

GOSPEL CONNECTION: Our day is not so different than Noah’s day. Some people ignore God. Other people hate God. And lots of people hate one another. Well, God does not like this, and he has promised to judge all sin. One day, he will destroy all that is not good—not with water (remember the rainbow?) but with fire. But there is the good news—what the Bible calls the gospel. If we come to Jesus, we will be saved from the coming judgment, just like Noah was saved. And we too will have a new beginning.

PRAYER: God, we know you have a right to be angry with us when we sin. We are glad you haven’t given up on us but have sent Jesus to save us. Amen.



STORY 5

A Table and a Tower

GENESIS 10-11

THE BIG PICTURE: Why are there so many nations? And why are there so many languages? Over six thousand today! And why do so many Chinese people speak Mandarin, so many Russians speak Russian, and so many Saudi Arabians speak Arabic? The Bible shares a story about how God created the nations, gave people different languages, and scattered them around the world. It might sound like a fun story. But it's actually another sad story. Or, it starts fun and ends sad. It starts with God's image bearers keeping God's command to be fruitful and multiply. But it ends with God's image bearers' wanting to make themselves as great as God, instead of showing how great God is.



Watch Story 5 together

READING 1 • GENESIS 10:1, 32

The Sons of Noah

After you read the first and last verse of Genesis 10, look at all the names found in between those verses. Maybe count the names and try to say a few of them. What were the names of Noah's three sons?

READING 2 • GENESIS 11:1-4

Let Us Make a Name for Ourselves

What are two reasons the people wanted to build the tower?

READING 3 • GENESIS 11:5-9

Its Name Was Called Babel

What did God think of this plan? What did he do about this plan? Why?

READING 4 • GENESIS 11:10, 29-30

Over the Face of the Earth

After you read the beginning and end of this genealogy, look at all the names found between those verses. What was Abram and Sarai's sad struggle? Do you know anyone who has that same struggle?

Behold, a Great Multitude

In Acts 2:1–8 what did God do differently from what he did in Genesis 11:1–9? In Revelation 7:9–12 how many people praised God in a loud voice? Were they from just a few nations, speaking just a few languages? What did they all shout?

GOSPEL CONNECTION: When Jesus came, he didn't just save his own nation (the Jews), but people from every language and tribe and nation (the Gentiles). This is what happened: First, people from Jerusalem believed in him. Then, people from the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. Then, people from the Americas and Asia. From the North Pole to the South! And it's still happening today. Someday, in heaven, God will be praised by people from every nation in languages that all God's people will understand. And, then and there, we will finally work together to show just how amazing God is.

PRAYER: O God, sometimes we like to think we are bigger than you. We're sorry. Thank you for caring about people from every nation on the earth. Amen.

