

PARENT NEWSLETTER 2 | 2015-16 GEMS SEASON



GOD'S STORY

Have you ever gotten something backward? Maybe it was the way you put on your shirt, jumped to the end of a list of instructions, or backpedaled out of a conversation.

One of the things we can get backward is the way we read our Bibles. And I don't mean starting in the book of Revelation and working back to Genesis! Your story may be different than mine, but when I began reading God's Word I got it flip-flopped. Instead of opening God's Story and seeking Him, I made it a Book about me. Rather than asking, "What does this story teach me about God?" I asked, "How am I supposed to live? What am I supposed to do?" I got it backward!

Here's the story: The Bible is God's Word. It's His story. It's a book about God! When we start there, it can be a true light for our path.

THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO!

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1).

TABLE TALK

In an excellent book by Devi Titus called, *The Table Experience*, she writes, "The dinner table is the only place where a family sits forty-two inches apart, face to face, and talks for thirty minutes to an hour. Relationships are not built at an arm's distance. Invite your family to the table!"

The next time your family gathers around the table, use these theme-related table talk questions to get your family talking about the things of God:

1. Whether it was intentional or not, have you ever done something backward? If so, what?
2. Think back on your life. What is your favorite memory? If you could redo a day, what day would you pick and why?
3. Think about reading God's Story. How important is Bible reading to you and your family? Why? **Note:** If you need a Bible or have questions about God, please contact the Club Coordinator of your daughter(s) GEMS Club. She's eager to help you.

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a theme-related devotional book available for families. It's called the *Choose Truth Object Lessons/Devotional Thoughts* book. It contains 18 short, theme-related devotional thoughts and Family Connection Time questions to help you dig deeper into this theme with your entire family. Contact GEMS Girls' Clubs at servicecenter@gemsgc.org or call 616-241-5616, ext. 2 to learn more.

FAMILY FUN

A Backward Party: Host a Backward Party for your family. You can invite the neighbors, too! Write your names backward on nametags and call each other by these names! Hang balloons upside down from the ceiling, eat dessert first, and create backward relays and games. Conclude the party with a group picture, with everyone facing their backs to the camera, of course!

Stargazing: Choose a clear night to go stargazing. Grab blankets, pillows, and snacks, and find a wide-open space. In between pointing out what you see, get specific and encourage each person by name. Share why they are bright stars in your family!

Acts of Kindness: You will need small slips of paper and a glass jar. As a family, write one act of kindness on each slip of paper that you could do for friends, family, and strangers, too. Fold the individual papers accordion style and place in the jar. Every weekend choose one activity and have fun blessing others together!

