

50 DAYS

WEEK 3: Unprecedented Family Time

By Beth Lichty

DAY 1

“Look mom, no hands!” I exclaimed as I ran down the face of a rock. I was an adventurous little girl. I wasn’t afraid of getting dirty or heights or trying something a little more on the edge. My mother had been a much more refined little girl. She wore dresses, had tea parties and didn’t push the limits. I attribute my more casual attitude towards adventure to being an only child and having a father who was also exploratory and daring.

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to “trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” My sweet mother put her trust and understanding in Jesus time and again. She placed all my antics (inching my way to the very edge of cliffs, climbing high into trees where the branches become thin, jumping off 30-foot rock cliffs into the lake, etc.) into the hands of her loving God.

She always wrestled within herself not to project her fears outwardly for me to see them. She wanted me to be adventurous and trust in myself to attempt all sorts of activities she wouldn’t have tried as a child. She wanted me to live the truest life I could discover for myself and she would sit back and watch the excitement unfold before her. “Mom, did you see that?” was something she heard repeatedly during my childhood.

Matthew 18:2-3 instructs us to remain childlike in all we do. Jesus called a little child to him and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” My patient mother reminded herself regularly to keep her childlike faith while raising me. She would smile and breathe at the beautiful life before her as I continued to move towards new horizons.

I’m currently struck daily of how my mother felt all those years ago. Since spending non-stop time with my three children and watching their imaginations work overtime, I find myself placing my worries in the hands of Jesus. They are creating obstacle courses with boards and

rocks in the back yard, climbing with ropes on the basketball goal, attempting to cross the Arkansas River in waders, and learning new tricks on the trampoline. The older I become the more cautious I am. I lived to tell exciting tales of my childhood to my kids, and, I trust, so will they.

I, too, need to step back, smile, and breathe at the beautiful life before me as my children move towards new horizons.

1. Read the story provided together as a family.
2. Supplies needed: large pieces of paper, several empty toilet paper rolls or some other small circle that can have paint on it (plastic eggs work well!), different colors of paint.
3. Starting with the smallest arch of the rainbow, select a paint color to dip the circular object into.
4. Paint the smallest arch of the rainbow with the circular object.
5. Continue adding arches to the rainbow. Remember that these rainbows have no order. It's up to the artist to decide what the rainbow's design is.

DAY 2

1. Refer to the story provided as needed.
2. Create an obstacle course together as a family. Each person gets a turn adding a section to the course. Add as many sections as the family desires. Let your creative juices flow for this activity. Outdoor and indoor courses offer their own uniqueness for sections. (Parents may want to consider allowing kids to bend the rules a little for this. For example, use chairs for steppingstones instead of just paper. I've allowed my kids to create a bridge using chairs and the table.)

DAY 3

1. Refer to the story provided as needed.
2. Divide the family in half. Depending on the ages of the children will decide if a parent needs to be on each half.
3. Each half needs to write down all the crazy stunts they have ever done. Parents included!
4. Take turns telling stories about these stunts.

DAY 4

1. Refer to the story provided as needed.
2. Supplies needed: bandana or something else to cover your eyes.
3. This is sometimes referred to as a trust walk. The blindfolded person will be led around by someone. They don't communicate with words, only with touch. The leading person teaches the blindfolded person to go in the right direction, walk up steps, or sit in a chair. Take turns being blindfolded and being the leader.
4. When finished, discuss what trust means in this activity. How do we all use trust daily? Is it challenging to fully trust? Why does God ask us to trust in Him?

DAY 5

1. Refer to the story provided as needed.
2. Supplies needed: a different paint color and paper plate for each person in the family, a large paper.
3. Place enough of each color of paint on a paper plate for the bottoms of one hand to be covered in paint.
4. The person with the largest hand will start by placing their hand in the plate of paint completely covering the bottom of the hand.
5. They will make a handprint on the paper.
6. The next biggest hand will do the same. They will place their hand on top of the previous handprint. There should be two distinct colors of handprints on the paper.
7. Continue until each person has added their handprint to the paper.
8. Have a conversation together as a family about how much trust and faith is put into the family unit. Each hand has a very specific role that contributes to making the family whole.

DAY 6

1. Refer to the story provided as needed.
2. Supplies needed: paper plates, markers
3. One person will be the instructor. Everyone else needs a blank paper plate and a marker.
4. The instructor will give instructions of things that need to be drawn on the paper plate. The others will place the paper plate on their head to draw the picture. Do not remove the plate from your head before the drawing is complete.
5. Example: Draw a house. Draw a sun in the sky. Put a chimney and windows on the house. Draw a line for the ground. Add flowers coming from the grounds. Draw a

happy face on the sun. Draw a tree on the side of the house. Add a person under the tree.

6. Once finished drawing, look at the pictures.
7. Another version would be to have partners. One person has the plate and marker. The partner helps direct the marker to draw the picture. Partners may not talk.
8. Then compare the drawings.

DAY 7

1. Refer to the story provided as needed.
2. Take some time to reflect on all the activities completed during the week. The painted rainbow, the obstacle course, remembering stunts, trust walk, handprint painting, and paper plate drawing. Discuss what was the favorite activity and why. Discuss ways to alter the activity to make it better for your family. Remind yourselves that having fun together and working together is heartwarming.
3. Allow this time, this unprecedented time, to be full of making memories as a family. Never have we been “forced” to have family time all day, every day, for weeks on end. Treasure this time to grow as a family in Christ.