

# BEST SUMMER EVER

## SUMMER SCRIPTURE

**Choosing a summer scripture for your home helps focus on the importance and power of God's Word and allows you to have fun together along the way. The following ideas can help you get started:**

- **Pick:** Work together as a family to pick a summer scripture. Consider choosing a topic in an area in which your family might need to grow. (eg: kindness, gratitude, compassion)
- **Write:** Spend some time writing out the verse in different ways. Use little cards that can be put on bathroom mirrors, computers, in the car, etc. Have kids draw if they are too young to write out the verse.
- **Move:** Create hand motions for each word in the verse. This is helpful for memorization and is great fun creating together.
- **Sing:** Put your verse to a popular tune to sing together.
- **Play:** Use the words in the verse to play a game. For example, sit in a circle and toss a bean bag to each other. The first person starts with the first word of the verse and tosses the bag. Whoever catches the bean bag next says the second word to the verse, and so on.
- **Repeat:** Throughout the summer, choose specific times like bedtime, dinner or in the car that you go through your verse together.

## SUMMER STORIES

**Awaken your family's moral imagination with great stories rooted in Christian values.**

As a place to start, we highly recommend all seven Chronicles of Narnia stories by C.S. Lewis. (age 8 and older) These can be found in both book and audio format. We also suggest the following titles to help you select age-appropriate literature for each of your children.

- **Honey for a Child's Heart**, by Gladys Hunt
- **Honey for a Teen's Heart**, by Gladys Hunt and Barbara Hampton

## SUMMER TRAVEL

**"Are we there yet?" Summer is often a time with hours in a car or plane. Make the most of travel time together with these great ideas.**

### PREPARATION

- To help children get the most from traveling, include them in the preparations for the trip. Get a road map for each school-age child, and find books or search online about the places you will see.
- Pack a special activity bag for each child. Ideas to include in the bag: games, notepad, favorite snacks, a fun craft or activity, or books.

### ACTIVITIES

You can also get creative and work together to make up your own games.

- **Alphabet Thankfulness:** You can play this game out loud or have older kids write out their lists. Starting with the letter A, each person names something that they can be thankful to God for. This can be a person, place or anything! Examples: A-Aunt Peggy, B-Brothers, C-Chocolate. At the end of the game, say a prayer thanking God for all the things He has blessed you with.
- **Car Bingo:** Search online for a free car bingo game printable or make your own. You can draw pictures or use stickers of items you might use.
- **Talk Time:** Travel time is a great opportunity to connect and communicate with each other. Have a list of questions to talk through. Take turns asking questions, letting your kids ask you questions as well. Questions can be as simple and silly as "If you were any animal what would you be and why?" to deeper questions like, "What is one thing you want us to pray for you this next year?"
- **Drive-time Audio:** Hours in the car fly by when enjoying these wonderful stories that reinforce Christian faith and values. Consider listening to Adventures in Odyssey and Chronicles of Narnia.

## SUMMER MOVIES

**Watching movies together as a family can be fun and intentional. Watch together and use the following questions to open up dialogue.**

- What was the "big idea" in the story?
- Who were the main characters and what were they hoping for or trying to achieve?
- What qualities did you admire in the main characters?
- What qualities did not honor God?
- What themes or scenes from this film touch issues of faith and/or morality?
- Did the story affirm our beliefs or undermine them?

## SUMMER JOURNAL

**Kick off an "All About Me" project that can continue throughout the entire summer!**

- **Make A Journal:** Get items to make a small journal for your child. Let them use stickers, cut out items they love in magazines, etc. to decorate their "All About Me" journal.
- **Pose Questions:** Create some questions for them to answer in their journal about themselves, their age, their favorite things, etc.
- **Keepsakes:** Encourage them to collect keepsakes from particular activities that you do during the summer months.
- **Pictures:** Buy a disposable camera for them to take special photos of their summer fun to add to the journal.
- **Celebrate:** At the end of the summer, go through the "All About Me" book and talk about all the wonderful memories that you have made. Celebrate God's goodness for all His many blessings!
- **Share:** This is also a great project for kids to take back to school to share when their teacher asks them what they did this summer.

## BUCKET LIST

**Create a bucket list for intentional times this summer. Consider writing your ideas on a poster board, popsicle sticks or paper to go in a jar. Come up with your own list, or borrow from these suggestions:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read a book                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Camp in your back yard  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a walk together               | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the zoo   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit the library                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Do a service project  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sing a favorite song               | <input type="checkbox"/> Bake something together                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play a game                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Go bowling  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a museum  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a picnic                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Do a puzzle   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch a favorite movie             | <input type="checkbox"/> Play on a playground  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Work in the yard/garden                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Build a fort                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Go through old pictures                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Run through the sprinkler          | <input type="checkbox"/> Put together your family tree                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play in kiddie pool/slip and slide | <input type="checkbox"/> Try a new restaurant  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go on a family bike ride           | <input type="checkbox"/> Write out your home's prayer requests and pray for each other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play frisbee                       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a water balloon fight         |  |

## SUMMER FAMILY TIME

**Take advantage of the warm evenings to plan a few outdoor Family Time activities. Try this one to get started then and discover more Family Time ideas at [heritagebuilders.com](http://heritagebuilders.com)**

**Following The Directions:** Create a map or use a GPS to guide you to a favorite place such as park. Load up the family and let them know you are going for a fun surprise. Have children give directions from the map/GPS device-guiding you step by step. As you get directions, insist you know best and turn the wrong way. Try to end up at some dead end and admit you got lost. Ask the kids what you should do. (Answer: Start over and follow directions!) After you finally arrive at the destination after properly following directions, read **Psalm 119:104-105** and discuss the following:

- What went wrong the first time we drove? (Answer: I ignored the map)
- What is the map for us to make right choices in life? (Answer: The Bible)
- How much fun would we be having now if I kept insisting I knew best? (Answer: None!)

## SUMMER SERVING

Summer is a great opportunity to teach your children about serving and helping others. See if there is a neighbor or friend that has a need. Your project can be as simple as providing a meal to going on a mission trip with your family.

## SUMMER RESOURCES

- **Making Summer Count**, by Joyce Heinrich and Annette Heinrich LaPlaca, includes scriptural devotions, stories, reinforcing activities for the whole family, suggestions for vacations with a difference, and more.
- **Sanity in the Summer**, by Linda Dillow and Claudia Arp. This fun-filled book features easy-to-do, creative activities, games, recipes, and more to help you and your children enjoy the summer months together.
- **The 4:8 Principle**, by Tommy Newberry, is a great Date Night resource for couples to go through together and/or with older children during the summer months to help create a joy-filled culture at home.
- **Adventures in Odyssey:** The Ultimate Road Trip Family Vacation Collection audio (age 8 and older)