

5-SESSION BIBLE STUDY WITH VIDEO ACCESS

LIFEMARK

VIDEOS HOSTED BY

KIRK CAMERON

BIBLE STUDY DEVELOPED BY

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



KIRK CAMERON (host of video sessions) is known by millions as “Mike Seaver” from the 1980s hit sitcom, *Growing Pains*. Since then, he’s invested his time and energy into faith and family-focused films, television shows, and live events. These projects include *Fireproof*—the marriage-centered film that became the number one inspirational movie of the year. Kirk has also produced the documentaries,

Monumental: In Search of America’s National Treasure, *Connect: Real Help for Parenting Kids in a Social Media World*, *The Way of the Master* television series, and hundreds of live events focused on marriage, family, and parenting. Kirk’s new talkshow, *Takeaways*, airs weekly on Monday nights on TBN. Recently, he’s been featured in the national media for his *American Campfire Revival: 100 Day Plan*. ACR urges the family of faith to return to the principles that will bring blessing and protection to America. Kirk’s newest feature film with the Kendrick Brothers, *Lifemark*, is about the value of life in the womb and the beauty of adoption. His newest documentary is *The Homeschool Awakening*. He and his wife, Chelsea, met on the set of *Growing Pains* and have been married for thirty-one years. They have six children and host an all-expenses-paid summer camp for terminally ill children and their families called Camp Firefly.



NIC ALLEN Nic Allen (Bible study developer) currently serves as the campus pastor of Rolling Hills Community Church in Nashville, Tennessee. His undergraduate work was in communications from Appalachian State University, and he holds a master’s degree in Christian education from Dallas Baptist University. His heart is to see God’s Word come alive in people as they mature in faith and make

a difference in the world. He and his wife of over twenty years, Susan, are blessed by two high school daughters and one elementary aged son.

LIFEMARK

HOPE IS AT THE HEART OF EVERY JOURNEY

ABOUT THE MOVIE

David is a young man with the world in front of him, but at eighteen years old, there are unanswered questions about the story behind him. As a happily adopted son, he understands how blessed he is. Yet, presented with an opportunity to better understand where he came from, David leans in. What he discovers is that the mystery of his story wasn't a mystery to God, but His gracious plan all along.

Lifemark highlights the gift of adoption and the way it paints a picture of the gospel. This is a film about healing and hope. It's a portrait of choosing life and then living life to the full. No matter a person's political leanings regarding the great life versus choice legal and political debates in our generation, *Lifemark* reminds each of us that life with Christ is the only way to live. Regardless of our fear or the lack thereof, we are all invited to choose life, value life, live an abundant life, and ultimately be willing to lay down our lives.

Choose life so that you and
your descendants may live.

DEUTERONOMY 30:19

LIFEMARKMOVIE.COM

HOPE IS AT THE HEART
OF EVERY JOURNEY

KIRK CAMERON ALEX KENDRICK RAPHAEL RUGGERO

LIFEMARK

INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY

FATHOMSTEP FILMS, WTA MEDIA and KIRK CAMERON ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A KENDRICK BROTHERS PRODUCTION "LIFEMARK" KIRK CAMERON ALEX KENDRICK REBECCA ROGERS DAWN LONG JUSTIN STERNER
MARISSA HAMPTON AND INTRODUCING RAPHAEL RUGGERO PRODUCED BY BEVERLY HOLLOWAY EDITOR TERRY ANDERLETON COSTUME DESIGNER KYLIE HARRISTON EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ALEX KENDRICK KEVIN PEEPLES AND BILL EDEL
WRITTEN BY GUD DA SCOTT PRODUCED BY LARRY FRENZEL JIM MACBRIER AND CINDY SPARKS DIRECTED BY ALEX KENDRICK STEPHEN KENDRICK SHAWN KENDRICK KIRK CAMERON BILL DEEVES BRIAN MITCHELL AND CHAD PRICE
FATHOMSTEP FILMS WTA MEDIA KIRK CAMERON ENTERTAINMENT KENDRICK BROTHERS
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INTRODUCTION

The opening scene of *Lifemark* will definitely leave a mark. It will most likely elicit one of two internal reactions. Either you will witness the high stakes adventure jumping of the high school friends as invigorating and immediately research nearby places where you might quite literally dive in, or you'll break a cold sweat, anxiously examining how dangerous such endeavors might be.

Whether anxiety inducing or adrenaline producing, cliff jumping is something that isn't neutral. Ultimately, neither is a person's family or their story. Neither is the future. Whether we're jumping out of planes or keeping our feet on the ground, life is an adventure.

No matter how thrilling or how dangerous life gets, true security comes from salvation and that, like the very life we are given and the choices we have, is a precious gift from God. A complete understanding of the gospel includes God as the Author of life. It also includes an understanding of just how dire sin is. For the gospel to have its full impact, however, it can't only be about God granting forgiveness that leads to life; it must also be about God creating a way for wretched sinners to become beloved sons and daughters in God's family.

Enter *Lifemark*.

Based on the true story of David Scotton along with his parents (birth parents Melissa Coles and Brian Nicholas, adoptive parents Jimmy and Susan Scotton) and inspired by the documentary short film, *I Lived on Parker Avenue*, the movie featuring Kirk Cameron and Alex Kendrick is a look at life and what it means to belong.

The group study, with coordinating film clips and individual exercises throughout the week, offers a theology of salvation and an invitation to place exclusive hope in Christ. Participants will walk through foundational texts from the Scriptures and build a true understanding of adoption and what it means to be God's beloved child. Along the way, you will be challenged to write parts of your own story, past and future, knowing that your life truly is a gift from God and understanding that the way you live it can be a gift to others.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

The *Lifemark Bible Study* provides five lessons that can be used for group or personal Bible study. Each lesson contains four elements: Start, Watch, Engage, and three days of Personal Study. Allow forty-five to sixty minutes for the group sessions.

START. Each study begins with opening discussion questions to introduce the topic and get the conversation going. This section is designed for use in a group setting but can also be adapted for individual study. Read this section and answer the introductory questions together if you're in a group.

WATCH. The Bible study contains five short clips from *Lifemark* with a brief introduction and teaching from star and producer, Kirk Cameron. Each clip is supported by a summary of the clip and discussion questions based on the truths illustrated. Instructions to access the video sessions through the Lifeway On Demand app are located in the back of this book.

ENGAGE. This section is the primary focus of each week. Leaders should spend the majority of the group session teaching while using the verses and questions provided in this section.

PERSONAL STUDY. After attending the group session, members should complete the three days of personal study at home before the next group session. Through this personal study, group members will explore biblical content and application that support the concepts introduced in the movie clips and group discussion.

As you complete the study, you'll be asked to list and pray for others in your life who might benefit from the material. As you conclude the five sessions, you'll be encouraged to consider inviting those people God laid on your heart to join you. Living life in the gospel means inviting others to know Jesus and find life, too.

SESSION 1

ADOPTION

For through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus.

GALATIANS 3:26

START

Welcome to session one of *Lifemark*. If this is a newly formed group, take a few moments to share basic introductions and get to know each other. Share the simple stuff and a few lesser-known facts, such as:

- Your name and where it came from
- Occupation or main way you spend your day
- Spouse, family, or significant relationship(s)
- Lifelong dream
- Favorite food (Don't discount this last one. It could come in handy on birthdays or if you are a group with a potluck snack rotation.)

Next, think about a significant “what if” in your life. What if things turned out differently? What if you didn't attend that school or have that roommate? What if you didn't meet that someone or move to that city?

Imagine the type of “what if” in your life that would have affected just about everything else and write that in the space provided.

Without diving too far down each narrow trail, take a few moments to move around the group, giving a chance for everyone to share at least one of the possible changes that might have occurred because of that one variable.

Everyone battles “what if” ideas in life. Some of them are related to curiosity and the wonder we have over certain decisions. Some of them are linked to regret when the choices you make bring less optimal or even sinful outcomes. Some of them offer relief because you sense the script you avoided. Regardless of the feelings invoked, each of your “what if” recollections is an invitation to trust the sovereignty of God with “what actually is” and what can be next when you focus on following Him.

As you transition to the film clip together, pray as a group and ask God to speak clearly as you seek Him in this gathering.

WATCH

To access the video sessions, use the instructions at the back of your book.

Take time as a group to view the first clip in this Bible study small group which unveils the key theme of adoption present in the film. Following the clip, discuss the material using the prompt provided.



SUMMARY

Jimmy and Susan Scotton lost two young sons, John and Michael. While the details of that loss aren't shared in the movie, the reference sets the specific stage for their choosing to adopt David. Being chosen by a young birth mom, Jimmy receives the call that his son has been born and the subsequent montage of David's homecoming and early years paints a portrait of delight experienced by any adoptive or biological parent of a beloved child.

DISCUSS

Describe the emotions you noticed in Jimmy and Susan in this clip.

ENGAGE

Read Galatians 3:26–4:7 aloud in the group.

The letter to the Galatian church was written by the apostle Paul. The church or group of churches the letter addresses was established during his first two journeys and this letter was written between AD 48 and 56. The word *Galatians* could have referred to both an ethnic group (north central Asia Minor in the regions of Phrygia and Galatia mentioned in Acts 16) or a political one (southern part of the Roman Empire in a province also known as Galatia which includes other areas where Paul planted churches, that is, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe) making exact geography a puzzle. Galatians is one of Paul's earliest letters and came in response to a false gospel being preached in the region that was causing the young believers to stumble.

According to verse 26, what allows us to be sons and daughters of God?

Describe what it looks like to come to God through faith in Christ.

What are the hallmarks of being the child of a loving and benevolent father?

What privileges do we enjoy as sons of God?

Spiritually speaking, all of us begin life as orphans. We have been born into a sinful world with a sinful nature and are in need of God's grace and adoption. Thankfully Paul tells us "through faith you are all *sons* of God in Christ Jesus" (3:26). Those of us who have realized we are spiritual orphans and appealed to God's grace now relate to God as *sons*. Paul's language here is intentional. In the ancient world inheritance and family privilege passed through the father to the firstborn son. Through Christ we have become sons of God. All the rights and privileges of a first born son belong to us.

This week, in your personal study, you'll discover the joy God takes in being your Father. You did not earn your adoption, and you can't lose it—it is a gift of God's grace. You are God's child, not because you are worthy, but because you placed your faith in the only One who is worthy.

DAY 1

GOD DELIGHTS IN YOU

He will rejoice over you with gladness.

He will be quiet in his love.

He will delight in you with singing.

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

On a scale of one to ten, with one being nearly impossible and ten being extremely likely, how easy is it for you to believe God loves and delights in you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Think about the ways Jimmy and Susan celebrated and received baby David. Consider for just a moment that imagery or a similar experience from your own life.

What does it look like when a parent or grandparent takes delight in or enjoys a child? Describe that interaction in the space provided.

Contextually, Zephaniah 3:17 finds itself embedded in a prophecy concerning the wickedness of God's people. And yet, in His goodness, God removes wickedness and gathers worshipers. Humble and low, yet chosen and clean, God takes pleasure in His people.

Examine each of the following phrases from Zephaniah 3:17, and write what they indicate about you and your relationship with God using the prompts provided.

He will rejoice over you with gladness.

The NASB 1995 uses the word *exult* where we read *rejoice* in the CSB. Both are translations of the Hebrew word that means to “display joy.”

What does it look like to “display joy”? What might that look like in God’s relationship to you?

He will be quiet in His love.

In God’s family, adopted children are beloved children. English translations of this verse vary, some indicating that God, Himself, is the one being quiet. Others offer the idea of God making us quiet. Either way, the silence speaks. There is no accusation or condemnation. If God is silent, He isn’t stating His case against us. Instead, He is lovingly receiving us. If we are quieted by His love, it means we owe no proof. We can bring no answer. We only need to come and rest.

What does the word *quiet* mean to you as it relates to God?

He will delight in you with singing.

Whether it’s a pregnancy post, gender reveal, baby shower, or a delivery day, we’re accustomed to the idea of celebration when a baby is expected. The God of this universe made you and celebrates you. In the next session, you’ll be reminded that His delight isn’t because you deserve it, but because He chooses it.

How does God’s delight in you prompt even greater delight in you for Him?

End this session in prayer praising God and expressing gratitude to Him for loving and adopting you.

DAY 2

FAITH IS A . . .

A person blinded by pride might compose a lengthy list of everything that makes them special. Others hindered by low self-esteem might be hard-pressed to name even a few good traits they possess. One of these approaches minimize Christ's sacrifice, assuming worth based on inherent goodness, the other rejects His gift, denying the possibility of His love altogether. Both are misinterpretations of the gift of salvation.

In the space below, write down Galatians 3:26.

Underline the word or phrase in the verse that secures sonship.

Given the choice between salvation being something you earn by good behavior or something you'll never achieve no matter how hard you try, where are you most tempted to lean?

Self-worth emerges in early childhood and follows people through adolescence and into adulthood. This is the concept of being worthy, lovable, and earning affection from others. While this type of transaction works when it comes to making a team, getting a job, or joining a musical cast, the idea of unconditional love and acceptance isn't something people embrace or exhibit easily. The oldest theological heresy is that human beings can somehow earn the favor of God through their works.

Read Ephesians 2:4-9. Of all the phrases or statements Paul makes in this pivotal passage, which one stands out most to you?

Based on the passage you just read:

Did God wait for us to be lovely in order to love us?

Where does salvation come from according to Paul?

From what or who do people derive faith?

Specifically, what does Paul exclaim faith to be in verse 8?

God's affection for His people surpasses the affection of the best earthly father. God loves us because He chose to. In *Lifemark*, David didn't earn Jimmy and Susan's favor. They chose to adopt him and love him. He wasn't their son because of his character, abilities, or resume. They chose to love him and grant him a place in their hearts and home. That is God's plan of grace for His children. And by an extravagant gift of faith, He alone allows us to see, believe, and receive that home.

Think specifically of someone who wavers in faith and has rejected Jesus. What reason or reasons do they cite for disbelief? What makes God's gift of faith so hard for people to believe?

Read the verse provided below.

The Spirit himself testifies together with
our spirit that we are God's children.

ROMANS 8:16

What role does the Holy Spirit play in our sonship?

As another part of God's incredible gift, the Holy Spirit testifies and confirms a person's place in God's family. Through the Word of God and the internal witness of the Spirit, believers are assured and reminded of God's love for them not because of our godness, but because of God's sonship isn't earned but received in faith. We don't create, grow, or manage this gift, we simply receive it as a generous gift from God the Father.

Thank God for that gift today and ask Him to help you keep in balance the knowledge of where your salvation comes from.

DAY 3

DAUGHTERS & SONS & HEIRS

If you have biological children, who looks most like you and what similar traits do they possess? If you know your biological parents, answer the same question. Who do you resemble most and what traits were passed to you?

Beyond just dominant hair color or recessive eye color, there are also personality traits shared from one generation to another. Those are transmitted both in nature, the complex biology of birth, and nurture, the circumstances surrounding the way a person is raised.

Who are you most like in your family? What makes you similar?

Go back and read Galatians 3:26–4:7. Write verse 7 below.

According to Galatians 3:29, what Old Testament connection does a believer's relationship with Christ help him or her make?

Read Genesis 15:5,18-21. What did God promise Abraham in verse 5? What does God promise Abraham's offspring in Genesis 15:18-21?

Little mattered more in antiquity within a family structure than the land and inherited blessings passed from one generation to the next. Even Gentiles unfamiliar with the Abrahamic covenant would have understood generational inheritance. In this case, the blessings belong to the children of God, even those adopted into the family and not Jewish by blood.

Faith in Christ is what makes a person God's child and if a person is God's child, he or she is God's heir. For disciples of Christ, their likeness, characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, responses, values, and disciplines are all pieces of an incredible legacy.

This next question isn't an opportunity to brag, but how is the Spirit of God conforming you into the image of Christ? Where are you demonstrating the nurtured fruit of Christlike character?

This isn't an invitation to self-deprecate or abuse yourself. What in areas do you need the Spirit's help to grow in Christlikeness?

Read Hebrews 12:28-29 below.

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom
that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful.
By it, we may serve God acceptably, with reverence
and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

HEBREWS 12:28-29

God promised Abraham that his children would receive land and dominion. As Abraham's seed through adoption by faith in Christ, we're benefactors of a royal kingdom and incredible blessing that we can't imagine. Before the foundation of Abraham's family, God provided the promise of inheritance. Before the foundation of the world, He provided a Son and Savior to ensure our rights as children. It is by faith that we receive salvation and by faith that we receive the eternal blessings of being God's children and heirs to His promise. We cling to grace because only grace can establish us.

Compose a prayer of thanksgiving below, expressing gratitude to God for choosing, loving, and blessing you as part of His family.