

**ON THE GO
FAMILY
DEVOTION**



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Devotional

**FOR FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL
AND ELEMENTARY KIDS**

MATT AND NOEL GUEVARA



To

From

Date





JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Family Devotional

**FOR FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL
AND ELEMENTARY KIDS**

MATT AND NOEL GUEVARA



ROSEKIDZ®



On the Go Family Devotion: Journeying Together Devotional For Families with Preschool and Elementary Kids

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DEDICATION

To Bel, Sof, Z and Josie: Thanks for filling our life with so many stories, and for making this journey an incredible adventure. We love you deeply. And to the children, we met through Safe Families, who crossed our path and then continued: Our journey would be incomplete without you. We remember you always.

NICE WORDS ABOUT JOURNEYING

Matt and Noel get that parenting, like discipleship, is an unscripted lifelong adventure. They serve parents as fellow guides, graciously challenging moms and dads to walk closely with God beginning at home. *Journeying Together* is a creative, practical, and memorable resource that will prompt any family of disciples to grow in faith one step at a time.

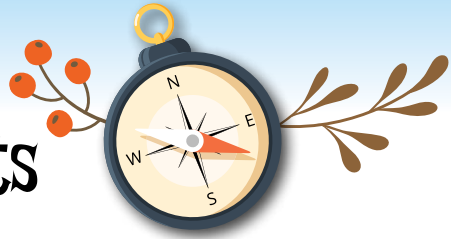
- Dan Lovaglia, Ministry Catalyst at Awana

Matt and his wife Noel have written a fun and creative devotional that every family should utilize. Using their personal experience as parents and children's pastors, they provide age appropriate devotionals that help children encounter God, unlike any other book. - Dr. Chris Corbett, Professor of Religion at Southeastern University

Parents, your good intentions are not enough. You need to have an action plan to help your children love and follow God. There is no time to lose! *Journeying Together* is an action plan to help your children love God with all their hearts. It is doable, flexible, powerful, and fun! - Dr. Rob Rienow, Founder of *Visionary Family Ministries*, www.VisionaryFam.com



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Introduction

There's nothing like a true Adventure. A mountain hike with breathtaking views at the top. An underwater exploration teeming with creatures as mysterious as they are beautiful. A forest trek with winding paths that lead us deep into the unknown. Adventures teach us that preparation only gets us so far. Adventures show us that one step at a time takes us further from our comfort zone. Adventures open our eyes to the unknown, turning us into explorers who learn as we go along the way.

Parenting is a Daring Adventure. And like all adventures, it is as unpredictable as it is wondrous. We lead the way, onward and upwards, our children dependent on us to show them where to go. But at the end of this adventure, the hope is that our child will have everything they need to continue. If we guide them well, they will themselves become a guide on their own Daring Adventure someday, with their own children following behind.

As Guides on this Daring Adventure, we may feel ill-equipped. The stakes are high, the risks are great, and it can be difficult to navigate in the dark.

We, like many parents, felt like faltering guides when our girls were small. We knew that passing on our faith was the most important part of our journey, but we struggled to do that well. We tried out different advice, but it felt like faulty equipment, and we couldn't seem to unpack it right. And then we were struck by the truth that WE aren't the Guides - God is. His spirit is with us, guiding us as we guide our



children. So we began to focus less on plotting out our course and more on following the Spirit's prompting. We stopped using parenting books as our primary road maps and started following God's Word instead. I'd like to tell you our children have transformed into higher spiritual beings, but they are still just as sinful as the parents who passed on their sassy pants. We've had mountain top highs - moments when our kids experienced God in real, life-changing ways. And we've had deep valley lows - nights when we felt we'd led our child so far off course that we'd never find our way back. But while our Adventure sometimes veers off course, we have grown to know our Guide and trust his directions. And we invite you to do the same.

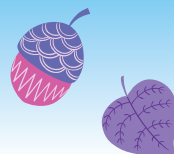
Think of this book not as a map, but as a travel journal, a place to stop and contemplate what God is doing on this adventure. Together we'll spend 52 weeks moving forward together, as we journey into deeper faith and trust in the God who guides us. We hope our vulnerability about our high and low points will connect with you and inspire you to keep moving. And we will always return to God's Word as the perfect answer to all of our questions, pointing to the God who walks with us always. Here's how this Adventure begins.



SECTION ONE

MEET YOUR GUIDE:

Learning God's Names



We start at the beginning – by meeting our Guide. Learning who God is will take us a lifetime, but a great place to start is with his names. Throughout Scripture, we encounter different names for God, some used FOR God by his people, and others used by God to describe himself. These names help us connect with and relate to God as he guides us on our spiritual journey. While the English translations of the Bible are accurate and reliable, they often translate different names of God using God or Lord. Pay close attention so you can learn how to navigate these names as you read the Bible for yourself.



SECTION TWO

FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS:

Discovering God's Commands



We continue by studying what God values, as described by his commands to us, his followers. More than just a list of Shalls and Shalt Nots, these commands keep us on the straight and narrow path, safe from the pitfalls of veering off course. They also keep our hearts close to God, moving forward towards the final destination of our grand adventure – eternity spent with him.



SECTION THREE



USE YOUR GEAR:

Unpacking God's Gifts

As we explore further, we'll take a look at the gifts God has given to enable us to experience and enjoy our journey thoroughly. These gifts give us the tools we need to not only keep moving on our spiritual journey but help others along the way as well. As we use our gear, putting these gifts to good use, we find purpose and meaning in the midst of our travels.



SECTION FOUR



SEEK SHELTER:

Trusting God's Promises

Our journey wouldn't be complete without considering the harder parts of our journey - the rocky paths and passageways that are the result of a broken world. These difficult areas of the journey often make us want to run for cover, maybe even choose a less unrelenting path. But by knowing and trusting in God's promises, we can find shelter through the darkest of times, while staying the course and pursuing the adventure God has for us.



Throughout each devotional, you'll grow in your faith and find tangible ways to help your child grow in their faith as well. You'll journey through one devotional per week for 52 weeks, and at the end of your yearlong journey, you and your child will have adventures to celebrate, and stories to tell. There are four elements to each weekly devotional:



Passage of Scripture to read and for responding. This section will include a key passage of one or two verses, as well as a suggested extended passage for further study. Take time to not only read this passage each week but meditate on it, so its words will take root in your heart.



Reflection questions to help set the tone for the journey. These simple questions will prepare your heart and focus your thoughts so you can get ready to fully engage with God and your child. Take a few moments to reflect on these questions, examining your heart and answering transparently.



Honest stories from our parenting experiences, good and bad. These stories will remind you that we are all on this journey together. Often we compare ourselves with other parents at their best moment and feel ill-equipped for the journey ahead. Other times we witness setbacks and families who have lost their way and we worry that we don't stand a chance on such a narrow road. By sharing each others' stories and viewing them in the light of God's Word, we can find encouragement that we are not alone on the journey, and that together we can spur each other along the way.



ON THE ROAD



An engaging application of the week's study for you to do with your child. There are four types of activities, designed to help you integrate your faith into the natural, everyday rhythms of your family life. These activities provide opportunities for you to create intentional space for God to guide you and your child into a deeper faith, and are based on Deuteronomy 6:7 "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Rather than scrambling for extra time in your busy schedule, these activities will help you impress God's Word onto your children with the time that you've already been given.



TIPS FOR Kids

Each week we will offer suggestions in these boxes to help your children learn the same truth you have been reflecting on that week. Here you will find age-appropriate ideas to help your preschooler and elementary-age child grow closer to God as you all journey down the same path together. Let the Journey into this Adventure begin.



FAMILY Fun and CHAT Prompts

Each week find fun family activities and chat prompts for interactive ways to reinforce the learning with your children. Look for opportunities in the normal course of your week to talk together and enjoy the journey.





CHAPTER 1



Elohim



MEDITATE

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. - Genesis 1:1-3

Extended passage: Genesis 1:1-31



ANTICIPATE

- What does wake up time look like at your house?

- How do you wake up every morning?



RELATE



Waking up in the morning looks different at every age. As babies, children cry out in the night - alerting mom or dad to come and address a need. Waking up is initiated by the child during infant and toddler years because no one in their right mind would ever, EVER wake a sleeping child. All of that changes when your children start to attend preschool or elementary. The responsibility for beginning the day falls on parents. And here's where the fun begins.

ALARM CLOCK

Using an alarm clock to wake up my children lacks both creativity and ingenuity. Once I needed to help my kids start the day, I tried some creative ploys. Kneeling next to them and patting their back, slowly leading them away from sleep. Walking into their room in a court jester costume and telling jokes. Playing "Good Morning" from Signing in the Rain and tap-dancing on the carpet. Releasing a younger sibling or pet in their room (or directly on their face). Placing smelly diapers next to their heads.

IN THE BEGINNING

I told you this is fun. If I'm going to be responsible for starting my kid's day, I'm going to do something dramatic. And when I read Genesis 1:1, that's what God does. The very first sentence of the Bible is an introduction to the story, and it's primary character. "In the beginning God..." You may not realize that in the original language the Bible was written in, many names have been used for God and each one has a unique meaning. In Genesis 1:1, the name used is "Elohim." This name occurs 2600 times in Bible and speaks to the power and strength of God, which is on display throughout the rest of Genesis 1 as the world is created. The use of the name "Elohim" is unique because while it is translated as God, "Elohim" is a plural word, meaning it covers more than one identity. Bible scholars have used this fact to show how the very first mention of God in the Bible gives us a picture of God as Father, Son, and Spirit. So even as the world is waking to life at the outset of the Bible, God reveals himself to be more than just a singular being but "Elohim."





ON THE ROAD

WAKE UP God is the creator of the heavens and the earth. And we are part of his creation! This week, point your family to the beautiful truth that God made us and everything around us. By his voice, God spoke rivers and stars, mountains and valleys, birds and fish, zebras and alligators into existence.

PRESCHOOL Kids

This week, wake your kids up by reading different verses from Genesis. On Monday, read Genesis 1:3 (on the first day). On Tuesday, read Genesis 1:4 ("on the second day..."), and repeat throughout the week. Remind your kids how God reveals himself through the creation story. Ask them, "What is God doing on this day of creation? What is created and how is it made?" Reflect together on God's creativity and power.



FAMILY Fun

Go online and search for unique animals. Try and find animals, birds, or fish you have never seen before or have recently been discovered. Take time to explore these unique expressions of God's creative power. Ask your kids, "What do you notice about these creatures? How did God come up with so many different animals?"





CHAT Prompts

Ask your child, "If you had the power to create anything, what would you make? What would it look like? What would it be able to do?"

ELEMENTARY Kids

This week, wake your kids up in different ways. Get creative! Try reading verses from Genesis 1 in various voices. Cuddle them. Tickle them. Bring them breakfast. Or try a foghorn. Have fun with this! As you wake them up, ask: "What do you think it sounded like when God woke up the world? What did it look like? What happened?" As they go through their morning routine, prompt them to be mindful of God's creativity and power.

