

**Read: Exodus 34:5-9**

## Way Better Than You Imagined!

### **Exodus 34:6,7a**

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Sarah Kate was excited but also scared. She was finally picked for the select volleyball team. Her excitement turned to nervousness after her teammate Ella called and said, "My dad heard we may be getting that new coach." The girls were not sure they wanted to play anymore. Coach Wilson was very tall and had a scary voice. He was not the kind of coach they were hoping for.

The team was invited to the park for a cookout and a team meeting so everyone could get to know each other and meet their new coach. As they arrived, Coach Wilson was even taller than they expected. He greeted every player by name, handing them a gift bag as he welcomed the whole team. This was going way better than they imagined. After the meeting, the girls were no longer afraid. Coach Wilson was going to be a great coach. They would all work hard together, not because they were afraid of the coach, but because they respected him.

Moses was called by the LORD to lead his people to the promised land where the Savior was to be born. Moses was very nervous because he knew he couldn't accomplish this huge task by himself. The LORD promised to go with him. Moses then asked the LORD to show him his glory so Moses could know him better.

So God described himself. There was some scary bad news and there was some exciting good news. The bad news is that God scares us because he threatens to punish children when they misuse his name, disrespect their parents, and disobey him. He promises there is hell to pay. Yikes! That's scarier than Coach Wilson!

Now listen to the good news: "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin." This is the best news anyone could ever hear! The LORD is awesomely powerful and holy, but who could imagine that he is also equally loving and compassionate! God decided to forgive us of all our sins because he is amazingly compassionate and gracious!

All those times you misused God's name without even thinking about what you were saying, Jesus paid for all those sins with his blood. Now, he asks you to keep God's name holy and to love, honor, and respect him more than anything.

It's true! The LORD's love for you is way better than you could have ever expected!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Have you ever felt afraid of God? Tell us why.
- What did Jesus do so you wouldn't have to be afraid of God?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- What does God mean when he describes himself as compassionate and gracious?
- How can you be certain that God is compassionate and gracious to *you*?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- How can God at the same time punish all sin yet promise to forgive us?
- Describe how different you might be if your parents never shared the good news of Jesus with you.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Lord, thank you for loving us unconditionally and giving us the faith to trust in your loving care. Amen.