

## MEMORY MINUTE

**Best Use:** As a meal time discussion with children ages three and up

**Nutritional Value:** Gives children a strong sense of family connection and identity

**Advance Preparation:** Bring the following to the dinner table...

- Gather or print out some favorite pictures from past family events, such as a vacation, birth, special celebration, or just fun moments from daily life
- A watch or clock with a second hand
- A Bible

**Serve It Up:** Follow the steps below to serve up a great experience...

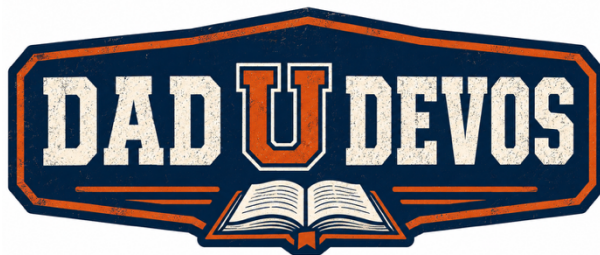
1. Bring a stack of 5-10 pictures to the meal table.
2. Give each child at least one photo to hold up when their time arrives.
3. Read **Psalm 103:2**, which reminds us to bless the Lord for the “benefits” he gives, including the tremendous joy of being part of this family.
4. One at a time, have each child hold up their photo and give the other family members sixty seconds to shout out as much about the pictured scene as they can recall or guess.
5. Now take the picture from the child and tell the story as you remember it, taking special care to affirm the joy and uniqueness of each person pictured by giving a detail about them. For example...

*“I remember this was the vacation where \_\_\_\_\_ created his first sand castle – and was so disappointed the next morning to discover the tide had flattened it during the night.”*

*“I remember how proud we were of \_\_\_\_\_ when she walked up to the front of the class to receive this award.”*

*“I remember how exciting it was to bring little \_\_\_\_\_ home from the hospital and have Grandma and Grandpa taking pictures of our new blessing!”*

6. Take a moment to pray a brief prayer of thanks to God for the “benefits” that come with being part of a family that loves the Lord and one another.



## CREATING IMPRESSION POINTS

**Best Use:** To guide as a dessert date with your younger child(ren) in which you will select ways to share faith discussions together

**Nutritional Value:** Helps you launch frequent faith discussions in order to fulfill the commandment to “impress them on your children” found in Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (NIV)

**Advance Preparation:** Invite each child out for a special parent/child dessert date. You might want to send them a nice invitation in the mail just for fun! Bring this devo with you to guide a discussion in which your child will select the times and questions he or she wants to try as you launch parent/child faith discussions.

**Serve it Up:** Select which time and questions you and your child(ren) would most enjoy...

**Mealtime** – Capture moments while eating together.

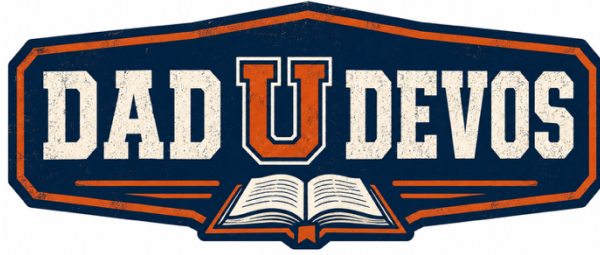
- **What To Do:** After giving thanks for your meal, someone shout “High – Low!” That means everyone around the table must share the high point and low point of their day.
- **What To Discuss:** While eating, discuss any of the following...
  - What Bible story did you learn at church this past weekend?
  - Name a favorite Bible character and tell his/her story.
  - If God wrote a letter to you this week, what topic would He address and what would He say?

**Bed Time** – Give each other a brief blessing at bed time.

- **What To Do:** While tucking in for bed, parent or child says, “What do I love?” The other person must then guess what the person is thinking in one of the following categories...
  - A fun moment they shared that day
  - Something nice about the other person
  - Something they appreciate that person did today
- **What To Discuss:** Before falling asleep, ask and answer the following...
  - How did we experience God’s goodness today?
  - Did we need to ask God’s forgiveness today?
  - What do we want to give thanks for before falling asleep?

**Drive Time** – Explore God’s creativity while in the car.

- **What To Do:** Take a short drive and play a game of “I spy” together, naming several things God created (flower, cloud, bird, cow, etc.) that you must spot before your destination.
- **What To Discuss:** On a longer drive discuss any of the following...
  - We know that God knows our future. What do you hope he sees in your future at age \_\_\_\_\_?
  - What do you think God wants you to do this week to prepare for such an exciting future?
  - How will you use that future experience as a way of worshiping God with your life?



## DINNER BY DESIGN

**Best Use:** At any family meal where you can sit down at a set table

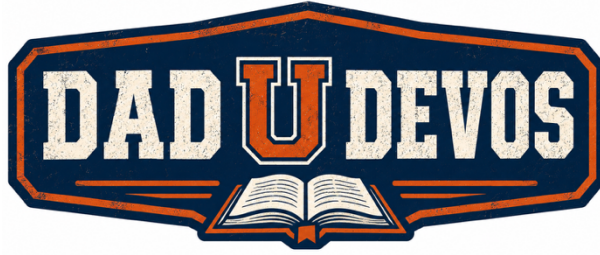
**Nutritional Value:** Playfully reinforcing the truth that design points to a Designer using everyday examples of order and complexity

### **Advance Preparation**

- Set the dinner table at a time when none of the kids will see you.
- Gather a few objects to use as clear examples of design/purpose, such as an analog watch, a smart phone, a paperclip, or even a stack of ABC blocks.
- Serve a meal that involves mixing ingredients.

### **Serve it up**

- **SAY:** During dinner, say you have something amazing to share... "I had stacked the plates, napkins and silverware on the table for dinner, but we left the window open and the wind blew through and set the table like this!"
- **ASK:** "Do you believe me? What if I said that our meal cooked itself and all the ingredients were measured, mixed and baked with no one's help. What would you think?"
- Depending on your kids ages, you can continue to develop this line of reasoning ("Can tables set themselves? So even if you didn't see the table being set, you know a person did it?", etc.)
- **DISCUSS:** "Do things we use in the world (cars, buildings, computers, etc.) ever design themselves without a person(s) involved? What can we learn from this?" (i.e., Design points to a Designer)
- **SHARE:** Bring out the examples you selected and talk about their intended purpose. If using the blocks, you can stack them in an orderly fashion and ask, "Suppose you hadn't seen me stack these, but just walked into the room and saw them on the table. Would you ever think that they stacked themselves?"
- **OPTIONAL:** Discuss other examples, like the complexity of DNA, the way our body can repair itself after a skinned knee, or the planets and stars (maybe even go outside and look).
- **READ** Psalm 19:1 together: "*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*"
- **DIG DEEPER:** Romans 1:18-20 also teaches this principle. Read it and discuss together.
- **PRAY TOGETHER:** "*Thank you, Lord, that we can see you in the beauty of the world you made, from a lovely sunset to an intricate leaf or a tiny cell. Everything points to a wonderful Creator. Thank you for our time together. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.*"



## EGGS-CUSE ME?

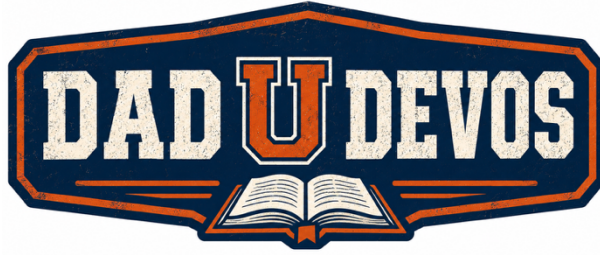
**Best Use:** As a breakfast meal chat (or “breakfast for dinner”)

**Nutritional Value:** Illustrating the Gospel and discussing our true status without Christ

**Advance Preparation:** Have enough eggs to make omelets for everyone, including whatever ingredients you want to add (cheese, mushrooms, bacon, etc.). Set apart one egg that will be your “rotten egg” (you can use a regular egg, discolor one yourself, or find an actual rotten egg).

### **Serve it up**

- **SAY:** Share that you have something to confess about the omelets – “I discovered that one of the eggs was rotten but used it anyway to make sure we would have enough food for everyone.”
- **ASK:** “Who still wants to taste their omelet first?” (Wait for reactions and then reveal that you were just kidding and have everyone begin eating).
- **ASK:** During the meal, hold up your designated “rotten egg” and ask what they would have thought if your attitude had been, “I’ll just mix this rotten egg in with all the good ones and no one will know the difference.”
- **READ** James 2:10 together: *“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”*
- **SHARE:** Explain that every sin is like one rotten egg in an omelet, it ruins the whole person.
- **DISCUSS:** Ask if anyone knows the solution to our rottenness (i.e., Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross pays the penalty for our sin).
- **DIG DEEPER:** For a further study together on how sin impacts us, see Romans 3:23-24.
- **PRAY TOGETHER:** *“We thank you, Lord, that even though we are sinners, you have provided a cure for our rottenness. Thank you for your death on the cross and for providing the way to heaven. And thank you for our time together. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.”*



## FACE YOUR FEAR!

**Best Use:** When trying a brand new dish or style of food

**Nutritional Value:** Learning about facing our fears by trying out new foods, talking about personal challenges and learning how God's love conquers all

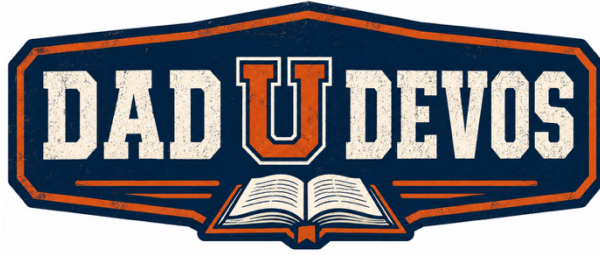
### **Advance Preparation**

- Option 1: Ask your family what new foreign food or dish they would like to try.
- Option 2: Surprise your family with a new meal or foreign dish (the weirder the name the better). You can even decorate the dining room to match the culture of the new food you are trying.
- Think of a story where you conquered a fear.
- Have enough 3x5 cards for everyone.

### **Serve it up**

- **DISCUSS:** Why do we sometimes resist trying new foods? What are we usually afraid of?
- **ASK:** What is one of your biggest fears right now? (i.e., Afraid of the dark, trying to ride a bike, failing at something, standing up for what's right, speaking up, dying, etc)
- **DO:** Take everyone's fears seriously by noting them & praying for them.
- **SHARE:** Think of a time when you conquered a fear (especially if it's related to one mentioned) and share it with the family.
- **READ** 1 John 4:18 together: *"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear."*
- **ASK:** How do you think God's love drives out fear? (i.e. We know He is always in control, always looking out for us, always with us.)
- **READ** Mark 4:40 together: *"[Jesus] said to his disciples, 'Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?'"*
- **ASK:** Why do you think faith conquers fear? (i.e., Because trusting that God is our powerful protector means we don't have to be afraid.)
- **ACTIVITY:** Have everyone write out their own **Victory Verse** on a 3x5 card to carry with them throughout the day or to put somewhere as a reminder. You can pick one verse for the whole family or let everyone pick their own (some great fear-conquering Victory Verses include: Dt 31:6; Josh 1:9; 1 Chron 28:20; Ps 4:8; 27:1; 34:4,7; 56:3-4; Pr 29:25; Isa 12:2; 41:10,13; Mt 10:28; Rm 8:15, 31; 1 Cor 16:13; 2 Tim 1:7; Heb 13:6; Jas 4:7; 1 Pet 3:13-14; 1 Jn 2:14)
- **PRAY TOGETHER:** *"We thank you, Lord, that we don't have to fear people or our circumstances because we know you are always with us. Thank you for our food, our time together and your promises in the Bible. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen,"*





## God's TIMING

**Best Use:** As a morning activity and dinner-time faith chat

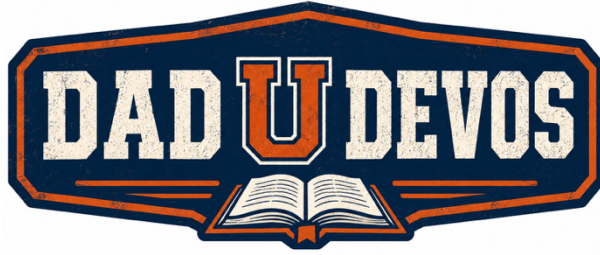
**Nutritional Value:** Learning about God's perfect timing

**Advance Preparation :** You'll need a slow cook crockpot and the following ingredients for taco soup...

- |                                                                          |                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pound ground beef                             | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 cups water                                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 onion, chopped                                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 (14.5 ounce) cans peeled and diced tomatoes        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 (16 ounce) can chili beans, with liquid       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 (1.25 ounce) package taco seasoning mix            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans with liquid       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 (4 ounce) can diced green chili peppers (optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 (15 ounce) can whole kernel corn, with liquid | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 package ranch-dip mix (optional)                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 (8 ounce) can tomato sauce                    |                                                                               |

**Serve it up:** Start this activity in the morning, at least 8 hours before dinner.

- **SAY:** "Tonight we are going to have a warm, yummy soup for dinner! But, I need help because it takes a long time for this soup to be just right."
- **DO:** In a medium skillet, cook the ground beef until browned over medium heat. Drain, and set aside. Place the ground beef, onion, chili beans, kidney beans, corn, tomato sauce, water, diced tomatoes, and taco seasoning mix in a slow cooker. Mix to blend, and cook on the LOW setting for 8 hours.
- **READ** Psalm 5:3 together: *"In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly."*
- **SAY:** "We have put all the ingredients together and now we must wait expectantly for our yummy meal. God's Word says to bring our requests to Him and wait expectantly for Him to answer."
- **ASK:** "Does God always answer our prayers immediately?"
- **ANSWER:** "Sometimes God's answer is for us to wait. He knows best and has the best plans for us."
- **READ** Psalm 40:1 together: *"I waited patiently for the LORD; He turned to me and heard my cry."*
- **DINNER PRAYER:** Before you eat, pray together and thank God that He is in control and knows perfect timing: "We thank you, Lord, that you are in control. Help us to be patient as we wait for your perfect timing. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen."
- **DISCUSS:** During the meal, talk about how long it took to cook the dinner. What if you had rushed the meal and eaten it before it was ready? In the same way, we have to wait patiently for God's timing. We don't always get everything we want when we want it. We can trust that God knows best.



## FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS

**Best Use:** As a family cooking activity

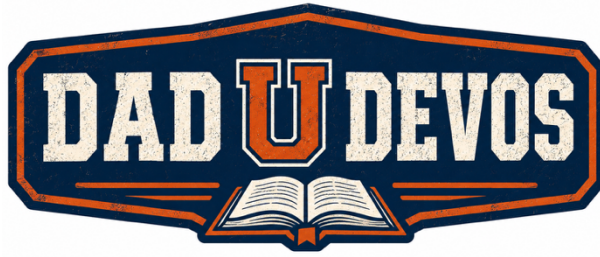
**Nutritional Value:** Use this activity with any recipe to have fun making a special meal and fostering intentional conversation about the instructions God has for our lives..

### **Advance Preparation**

- Select a simple recipe.
- Write out a recipe card with ingredients listed on the front and instructions on the back.
- Purchase/gather ingredients

### **Serve it up**

- **SAY:** "See what I have here? It is a list of ingredients to make our meal/special treat."
- **DO:** Read the ingredients together aloud.
- **ASK:** "Do you think we could put these ingredients together to make a good meal? Should we just guess how much we need to use of each ingredient and how long we need to cook them? Would that be easy? Would it taste right? What might make cooking easier and the meal taste better?"
- **DO:** Point out the section of the recipe that gives measurements and instructions.
- **SAY:** "With the instructions, we can put all the right amount of ingredients together to make something wonderful. Just like these instructions on how to make a yummy meal, God has given us instructions for our lives called the Bible. Since God made us, He knows us best. When we follow the instructions for this meal, it is much easier and will taste better. In the same way, when we use the Bible and follow God's instructions, it is much easier and it always turns out better. When we have to make tough decisions, the Bible helps make it easier. When we wonder what we should do, God's Word gives us the recipe."
- **READ 2 Timothy 3:16** together aloud, which explains that *"all scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."*
- **READ Psalm 119:105:** *"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."*
- **EXTRA:** You may want to fix a second, smaller portion of the recipe making a point of **ignoring** the instructions. Ask which they would rather eat when done. Remind them how much better life "tastes" when we follow God's instructions.
- **PRAY:** *"We thank you, Lord, for your special instructions for our lives. Help us to read the Bible often so we know how to make good choices. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen."*



## IN HIS IMAGE

**Best Use:** As an activity while baking cookies together

**Nutritional Value:** Understanding how we are created in God's image, yet each of us is unique and special

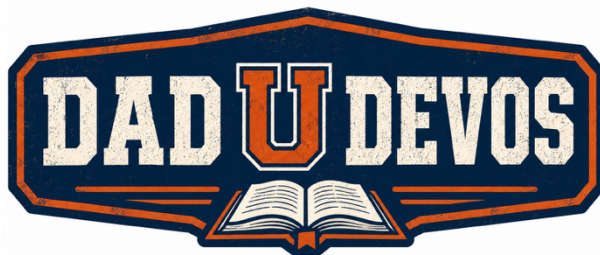
### **Advance Preparation**

- Gather supplies for baking cookies. (You can choose to make from scratch or use store bought)
- Cookie-cutter
- Optional: Gather supplies for decorating the cookies

### **Serve it up**

- **SAY:** "We are going to bake some cookies together. We have a fun shape (cookie cutter) to make our cookies with."
- **DO:** Roll out the cookie dough and start using the cookie-cutter to cut out the cookies.
- **SAY:** Notice that the shape of the cookie cutter is the shape of our cookies.
- **DO:** Put the cookies in the oven to bake.
- **READ Genesis 1:27:** *"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."*
- **SAY:** "We used this cookie cutter to make the same shape over and over again. It says in this verse that God created us in his image or likeness. The dictionary gives this definition of image: *a physical likeness or representation of a person, animal, or thing, photographed, painted, sculptured, or otherwise made visible.* We used the cookie cutter to make a certain shape, but it isn't the same as the cookie cutter. In the same way, we are created in the 'image of God.' We are not God, but created to be like Him and reflect what He is like."
- **DO:** Take the cookies out of the oven and let them cool.
- **OPTIONAL:** Decorate the cookies together. You can use this time to talk about how we are created in God's image, but that He has created us each as individuals with different gifts and talents. Read **Romans 12:4-8** together.
- **DO:** Get your yummy cookies, a glass of milk and enjoy eating your treat with your family.
- **PRAY:** Thank God for the gift of each member of your family. *"Thank you, Lord, for bringing us together. Help us work together as a team to complement each other better than ever before. In Jesus Name, we pray, Amen."*





## ONE OF A KIND

**Best Use:** As a family cooking activity

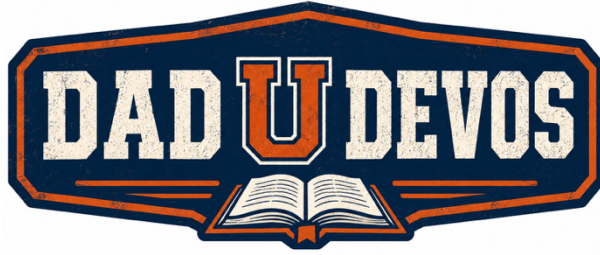
**Nutritional Value:** An intentional time to talk about how God has made each one of us unique and special for His glory

### **Advance Preparation**

- Get one index card per person and write the name of a family member across the top of each.
- Purchase/gather ingredients listed below:
  - Individual pizza crusts for each person in your family (make your own or use store bought)
  - Tomato sauce
  - Shredded mozzarella cheese
  - Toppings: Pepperoni, peppers, mushrooms, pineapple, sausage, etc.

### **Serve it up**

- **SAY:** “God made each one of us unique and special. We’re going to have fun creating our very own pizzas.”
- **DO:** Preheat the oven to 400 degrees and then put the pizza crust on cookie sheets and lay out all of the ingredients in small bowls. (If making your own crust, create different shapes.)
- **SAY:** “You can pick and choose what you would like on your pizza. Each pizza will be different. You can even make funny faces or use toppings to spell out our initials.”
- **DO:** Once your pizzas have been decorated, place in the oven for about 10 minutes or follow the recommended cooking instructions if store bought crust.
- **DISCUSS:** While your pizzas are baking use the time to talk about how different each pizza turned out. “In the same way, God has created each of us with different strengths and talents. We have different color hair and eyes. We have different talents and gifts. He made us each a one of a kind?”
- **DO:** Take the index cards and go through each family member. Talk about what makes that person unique and why they are special. Be sure that these are all positive and encouraging. Write the items on the index card for them to keep.
- **READ Psalm 139:13-14** aloud together which talks about how God “*knit us together*” and how we are “*fearfully and wonderfully made.*”
- **DO:** Take the pizzas out of the oven, let them cool and enjoy!
- **OPTIONAL:** Announce contest categories for the pizzas and award each pizza for a different reason such as “Most colorful” or “Funniest” or “Most veggies”, etc. Take a picture of each family member with their winning pizza.
- **PRAY:** Thank God for your meal and for His creativity in each member of your family. “We thank you, Lord, for creating each one of us special and unique. Help us use the gifts and talents you have given us to give you glory. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.”



## TOGETHER WE'RE STRONG

**Best Use:** As a family cooking activity

**Nutritional Value:** Use this activity to make a family spaghetti meal together and discuss how God gives us strength as we stand together

**Advance Preparation:** Gather items to prepare a spaghetti dinner. Be sure to get one box of dry spaghetti. You can do a can of spaghetti sauce or make your own.

### **Serve it up**

- **SAY:** "Tonight we are going to make spaghetti for dinner! I need some help getting the spaghetti ready."
- **DO:** Give each child one piece of dry spaghetti. Ask them to break the spaghetti in half. It is easy to break one piece of spaghetti when it is all alone.
- **DO:** Now take the whole box of dry spaghetti and ask if someone can break the spaghetti all together. Let each child try. It is very difficult to break. Even if they succeed at breaking the stack, focus on the point that it is much harder than breaking just the one.
- **READ Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** together: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him – a threefold cord is not quickly broken."
- **SAY:** "When we stand alone, it is easier for us to fall or make bad choices. God has given us our family and other Christian friends to stand strong together with."
- **ASK:** What are some ways that we can help each other stand strong? Answers might include praying for each other, using our words to encourage each other, memorizing God's Word together when we are afraid or tempted, etc.
- **DO:** Finish making your spaghetti together.
- **PRAY:** Before you eat, pray together and thank God for the strength He gives in standing strong together: *"We thank you, Lord, for our family. Thank you that we do not have to stand alone. Help us to stand strong together. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen."*