

Family MATTERS



A Christ-centered resource for families and teachers
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Promises! Promises!

- "I promise . . . I will not pull my sister's hair ever again!"
- "I promise . . . I will never eat cookies just before dinner the rest of my life."
- "I promise . . . I will get my homework in on time the rest of the school year."
- "I promise . . . I will never be late for work again."

We seem ready to make a promise for just about anything. We are willing to make a commitment from the simple to the serious—from the mundane to the monumental. In this busy life that we lead as parents, we often make promises that we cannot keep because we want to "look good" in front of others, and we even do this to our kids. We seem to be very good at promise-making, but are we good at promise-keeping?

The power of the word "promise" seems to become less meaningful when we use it in careless ways, and when there is little consequence for a broken promise. These days, promises seem to become nothing more than good intentions. It appears that a promise has lost its covenant status, and we aren't always sure what to think when someone says, "I promise."

However, we can be sure of what God was thinking when He used the word

"promise." Throughout Scripture, God makes promises to His people and He keeps them. A big example of this is found in the Old Testament with the promise to Abraham that his offspring would number like the stars in the sky, and that his people would become God's people. This was an amazing promise because Abraham and his wife Sarah had no children, were old and way past their child-bearing years.

Yet, over time, God kept that promise. Along the way, there were times when Abraham and Sarah doubted the promise. Sarah laughed when she was told that she would have a child in her old age and at one point Abraham lied about his family situation, which may have demonstrated his uncertainty about God's promise.

The biggest promise of all from God was sending Jesus to save us from sin, death and the power of the evil one. God told His people for years that this gift of a Savior would be coming soon. He gave many signs of the promise through the words of prophets in Old Testament times. Eventually, on a quiet Bethlehem

night, He showed He was a promise keeper and not just a promise maker.

It seems like we could all use a little more patience as we wait on the promises of God and the promises of others around us. As parents, perhaps we can focus on being more consistent promise-keepers in our families and not just mere promise-makers, all because God has shown us how to keep promises!



Family Links

Activities for families to reinforce Bible story truths in the home.

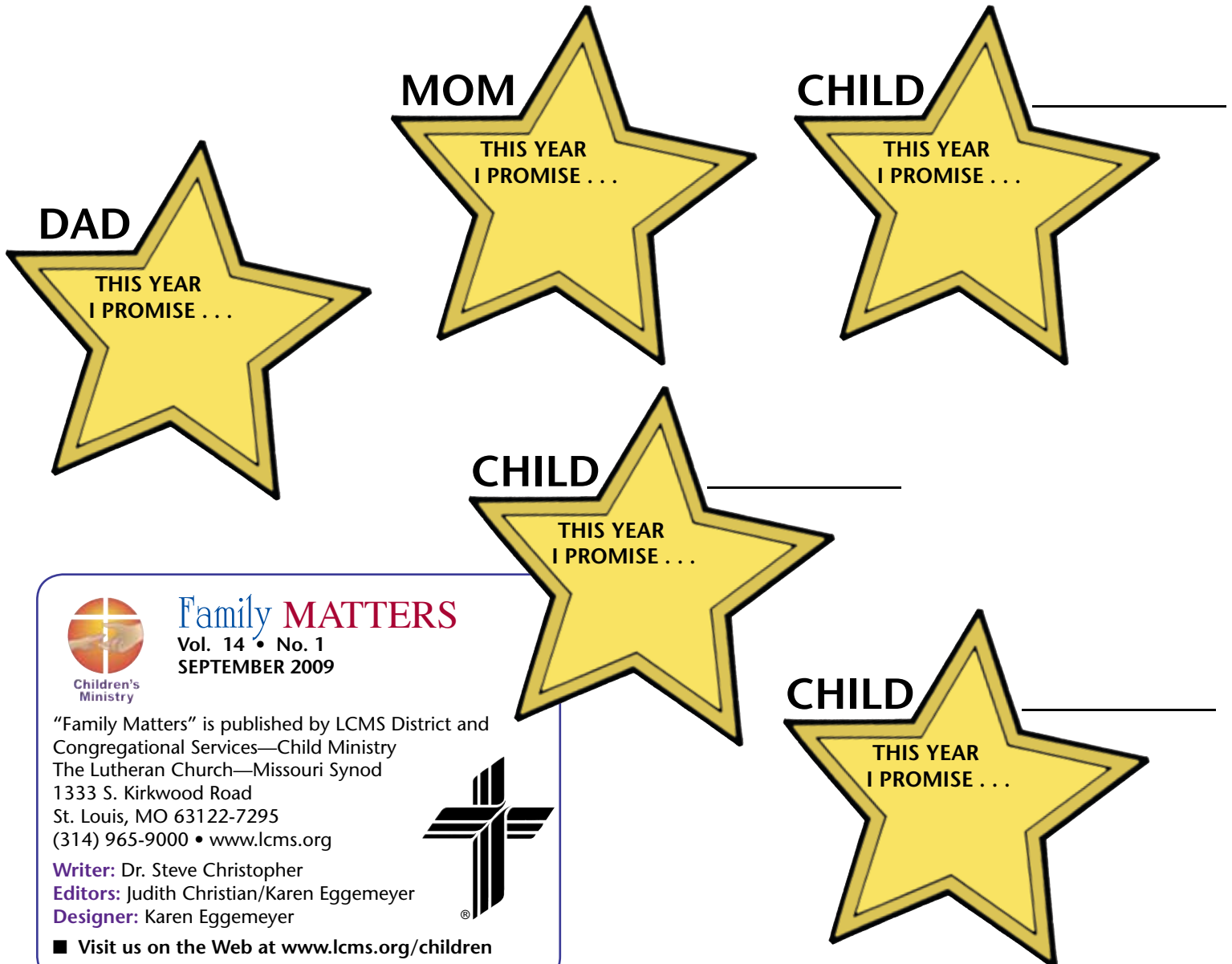
Shine Like Stars!

Read the story of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:5-6 and answer the following questions as a family:

1. Have you ever tried to count the stars? If so, what happened?
2. What is God's promise to Abraham in these verses?
3. How did Abraham respond?

FAMILY PROMISES . . .

Each family member should cut out the appropriate star below and think of a promise they want to make to the family for the coming school year. Tape the stars to the refrigerator or put on a bulletin board, or place them where family members can view their promises to each other every day. (Make extra copies, if you decide to make more than one promise!)



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