

Alistair Begg



Jesus

Enjoying Who Jesus Is from A to Z

ILLUSTRATED BY Emma Skerratt

“J is for Jesus is a gospel-rich treasure that helps little ones hide God’s Word in their hearts as they learn their ABCs. Each page faithfully points children to the beauty of who Jesus is and what He has done for us. With engaging illustrations and carefully chosen Bible verses, this book is a meaningful addition to any family’s library.”

Melissa Kruger, Author, *Wherever You Go, I Want You to Know*;
Vice-President of Discipleship Programming at The Gospel Coalition

“In J is for Jesus, Alistair Begg spells out the truth of who Jesus is and what He’s like from A to Z. This will be a treasured resource for family discipleship.”

Hunter Beless, Author, *Jesus Loves You More*; Founder of
Journeywomen Ministries

PRAISE FOR *C IS FOR CHRISTIAN*:

“When children think about the marks of a Christian, they may first think of things Christians do. But it’s also essential for us to teach kids who Christians are. That’s exactly what Dr. Begg does in C is for Christian. This beautifully illustrated alphabet catechism will help the next generation learn and remember the Bible’s many vivid depictions of Christian identity.”

Jared Kennedy, Editor, The Gospel Coalition; Author, *The Beginner’s Gospel Story Bible*

“C is for Christian is a book I’ll be reading to my grandkids. Every family will want to add this book to their library.”

Marty Machowski, Family Pastor; Author, *The Ology*, *WonderFull*, and
The Treasure

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This book has been written and illustrated by human beings.

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Hello! I am Alistair, and I'm going to tell you about myself in ten words... Husband. Dad. Grandad. Christian. Bible teacher. Golfer. Scottish-born, Ohio-resident. Cheerful.

I found that tricky! It's hard to sum up who I am and what I'm like. I needed more words!

In this book, I'm going to tell you about someone far more important and wonderful than me. I'm going to tell you about the most remarkable person who ever lived. And I'm going to use 26 words to do it. I'm talking about Jesus. 26 words are nowhere near enough to describe Him—in fact, there could never be enough words to sum up His greatness—but hopefully the 26 words I've chosen will help you see how amazing He is and how exciting it is to know Him.

To help you remember the words, they each start with a different letter of the alphabet. You can read through this book yourself, or you can use it with others in your family, enjoying reading and answering the questions and praying together.

I hope you enjoy your time in this book. I hope that, as you read, you'll become more and more amazed by Jesus—and that you'll want to live with Him as *your* Lord, Savior, and Friend.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alistair'.



Advocate

“If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

1 John 2:1

If someone breaks the law, what happens to them?

“**A**dvocate” is a strange word to be starting this book with! Here is what an advocate is... When it looks as if someone has done something that is against the law, they often have to go to a meeting of a court. The court decides if they are guilty and what their punishment will be.

Every court has a judge. They are in charge of what goes on.

Then there will also be someone who speaks to the judge on behalf of the person who is being accused of doing something wrong. They try to show that the accused person is innocent and try to make sure that the person is not punished. They are called an “advocate.”

This helps us understand what it means to say that the Lord Jesus is *our* advocate. The Bible tells us that God the Father is our judge, and that we are guilty because of our sin—the ways we do not love and obey God (Romans 3:23). We are in trouble, and facing God’s punishment.

We need someone to speak on our behalf to God the Father—and the Lord Jesus is the one who does that.

Jesus does not try to tell His Father that we have done nothing wrong. He knows that we have! Instead, He tells His Father that we are guilty but that He has taken the punishment that we deserve. He did that when He died on the cross for our sins. And God the Father is delighted to accept that our punishment has been paid, and we can go free.

So we don’t ever need to worry that we will be punished for our sin. Jesus died to take that punishment for us. And we don’t ever need to worry about what will happen when we meet God our judge one day. Jesus will be our advocate. He will say, *Father, I died for this person. They do not need to face punishment.* As one old hymn puts it:

*Because the sinless Savior died,
My sinful soul is counted free,
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me.*



A is for Advocate.

*Have you asked Jesus to be **your** Savior and advocate?*

If you have, next time you disobey God, what can you remember that Jesus says to His Father about you? How does that make you feel?

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You that You died to take the punishment for the sins of everyone who trusts in You. Thank You that You tell God the Father that I don’t need to face punishment and that I can be free to live with You forever. Next time I sin, please remind me that I am forgiven and that You are my advocate. Amen.



Bread

“I am the bread of life.”

John 6:35

Why do people eat bread?

We eat bread to fill ourselves up, of course! We like to feel full, and we don't like to feel hungry. Bread satisfies us.

But there's also a bigger reason why we eat bread, isn't there? If we don't eat, we can't live. Eating food such as bread keeps our bodies alive.

Bread satisfies us, and bread keeps us alive.

That helps us to understand what Jesus meant when He said, “I am the bread of life.” He was talking about spiritual life—food for our souls. We know that our bodies will not last forever. We can eat great food every day, but one day our bodies will stop working. But there is a part of us (our soul) that will not stop, and Jesus is the “bread” that our souls need. Jesus says, “Whoever comes to me will never go hungry ... whoever eats this bread will live forever” (John 6:35, 51, NIV).

Normal bread satisfies our tummies. Jesus is the “bread” that satisfies our souls.

Normal bread gives us physical life. Jesus is the “bread” that gives us eternal life.

So how can we enjoy this satisfying forever life?

Well, imagine you are hungry and holding a loaf of bread. It is no use just holding it. You need to eat it! You need to put it into your mouth.

And it is the same with Jesus, the “bread of life.” We need to receive Jesus—not into our mouths but into our hearts. Jesus says that we do this by believing in Him. “Whoever believes has eternal life,” He said. “I am the bread of life” (John 6:47-48).

So next time you are hungry and you open your mouth to eat some food—perhaps some bread—you can remember this: that Jesus is the bread that satisfies our souls and gives us forever life, and that we “eat” the bread of life by believing in Jesus as our King and our Savior.

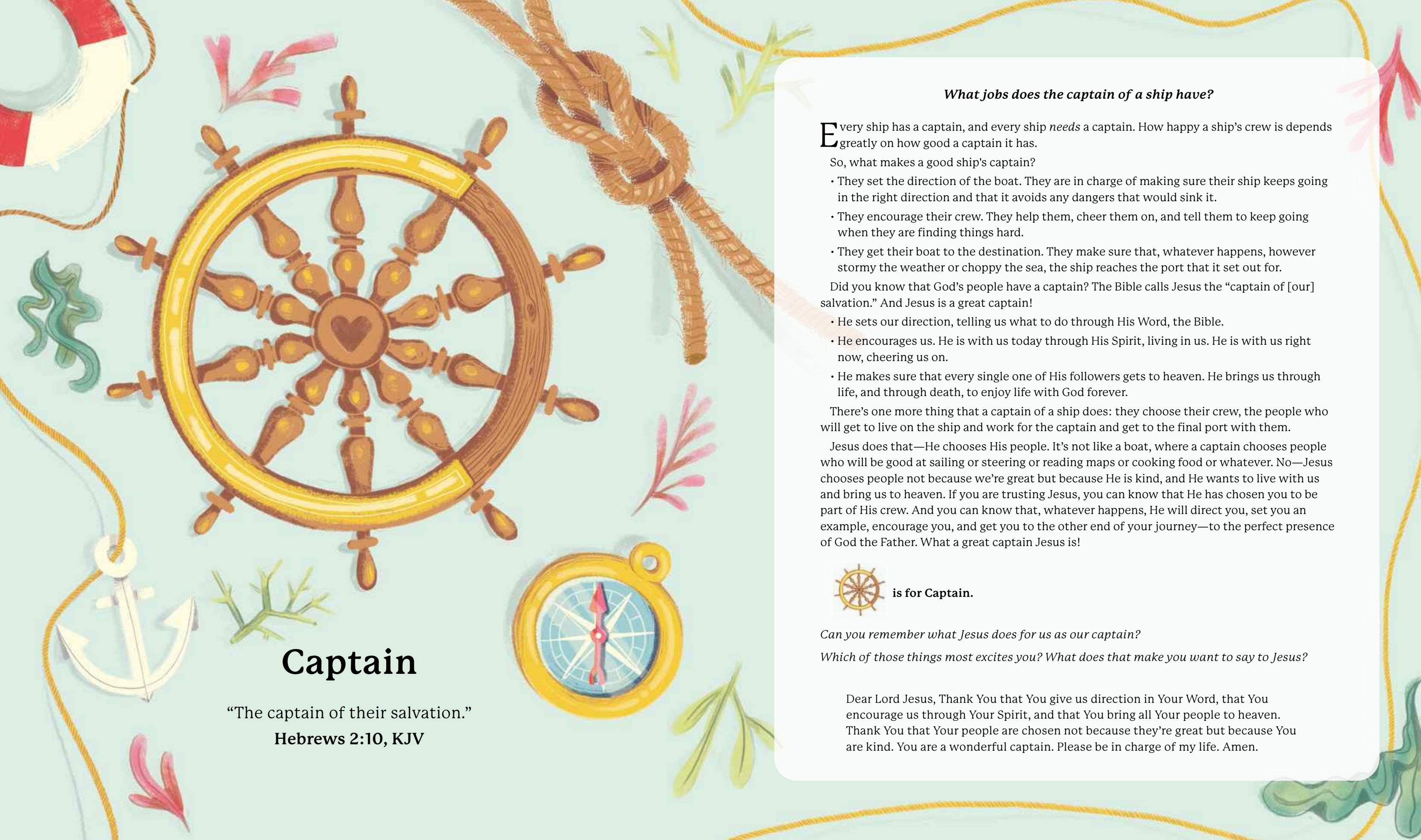


B is for Bread.

Why is believing in Jesus even more important than eating enough food?

What could we say to each other about Jesus next time we sit down to eat together?

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You that You satisfy us deep down. Thank You that You love me and give me everything I need. And thank You that You give forever life to anyone who believes in You. Please remind me, next time I am eating bread, that You are the even-better bread—the bread of life. Amen.



Captain

“The captain of their salvation.”

Hebrews 2:10, KJV

What jobs does the captain of a ship have?

Every ship has a captain, and every ship *needs* a captain. How happy a ship’s crew is depends greatly on how good a captain it has.

So, what makes a good ship’s captain?

- They set the direction of the boat. They are in charge of making sure their ship keeps going in the right direction and that it avoids any dangers that would sink it.
- They encourage their crew. They help them, cheer them on, and tell them to keep going when they are finding things hard.
- They get their boat to the destination. They make sure that, whatever happens, however stormy the weather or choppy the sea, the ship reaches the port that it set out for.

Did you know that God’s people have a captain? The Bible calls Jesus the “captain of [our] salvation.” And Jesus is a great captain!

- He sets our direction, telling us what to do through His Word, the Bible.
- He encourages us. He is with us today through His Spirit, living in us. He is with us right now, cheering us on.
- He makes sure that every single one of His followers gets to heaven. He brings us through life, and through death, to enjoy life with God forever.

There’s one more thing that a captain of a ship does: they choose their crew, the people who will get to live on the ship and work for the captain and get to the final port with them.

Jesus does that—He chooses His people. It’s not like a boat, where a captain chooses people who will be good at sailing or steering or reading maps or cooking food or whatever. No—Jesus chooses people not because we’re great but because He is kind, and He wants to live with us and bring us to heaven. If you are trusting Jesus, you can know that He has chosen you to be part of His crew. And you can know that, whatever happens, He will direct you, set you an example, encourage you, and get you to the other end of your journey—to the perfect presence of God the Father. What a great captain Jesus is!

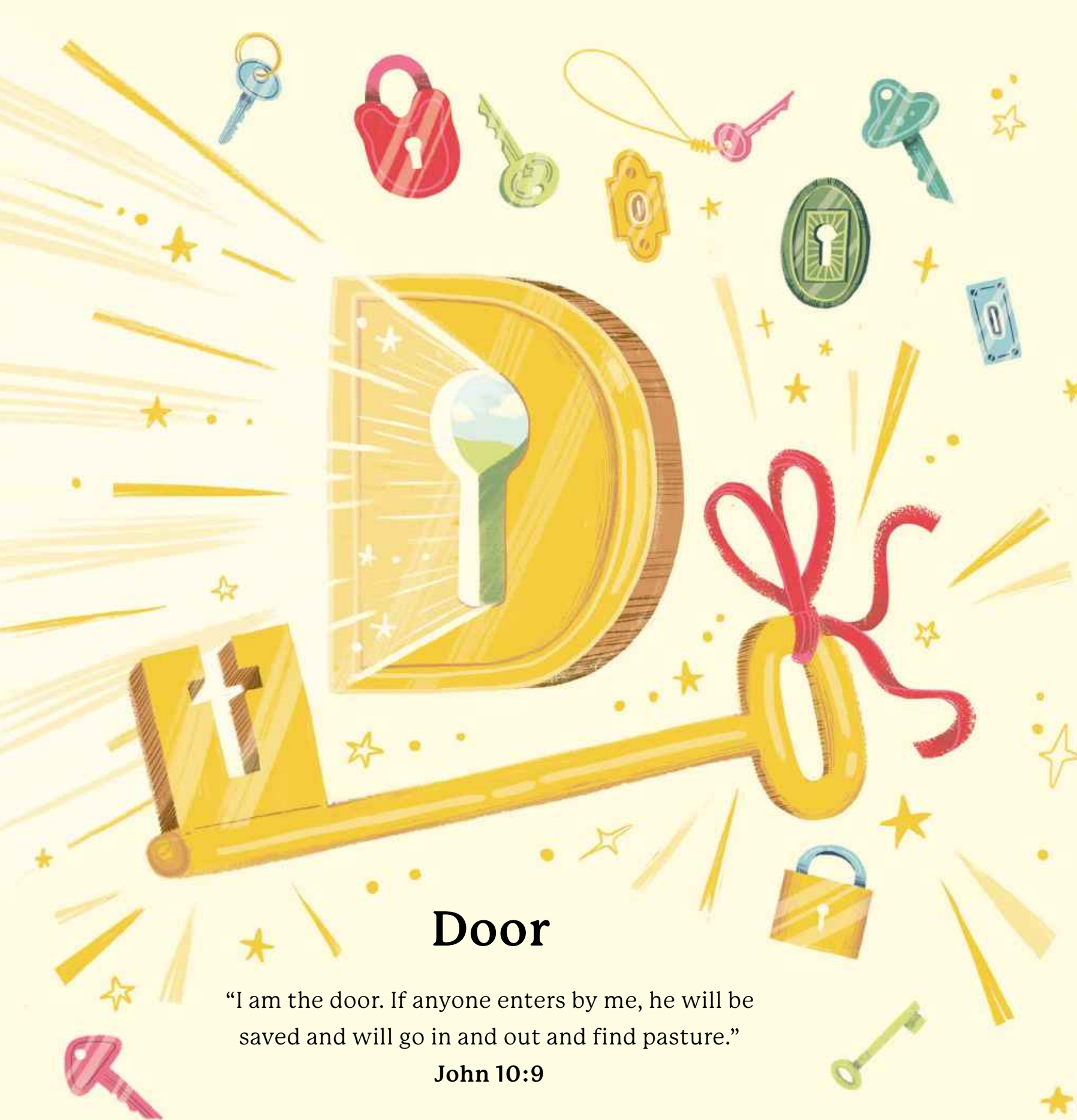


is for Captain.

Can you remember what Jesus does for us as our captain?

Which of those things most excites you? What does that make you want to say to Jesus?

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You that You give us direction in Your Word, that You encourage us through Your Spirit, and that You bring all Your people to heaven. Thank You that Your people are chosen not because they’re great but because You are kind. You are a wonderful captain. Please be in charge of my life. Amen.



Door

“I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.”

John 10:9

How many doors have you opened so far today?

We all go through doors all the time, and we hardly think about doing it! There are front doors. Room doors. Car doors. School doors. Doors on hinges, doors that slide, doors that go round and round, doors that open when you get close to them, and doors that need you to turn a key to unlock them.

All those doors have one thing in common: they provide a way of getting from one place to another. A door is a way into somewhere. A door is of no use if it doesn't lead anywhere!

This is why Jesus said He is “the door.” He is the way into forgiveness, salvation, friendship with God, and eternal life. So when someone says to Jesus, “You are my Lord and Savior,” it is as if they've gone through a door into a much, much better life, that lasts forever.

A door is a way into somewhere—and it is a way *out* of somewhere too. When you go through a door, you leave things behind. When we enter through Jesus-the-door, we are deciding to leave things behind which would stop us from pleasing God. We are choosing to leave selfishness behind us.

Of course, lots of places have several doors into them. My car has four doors. My house has several ways in. But other places have just one door to get in. And there is only one way into heaven—through Jesus. He said, “I am the way ... No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

This means we all have to make a decision. Whatever room you are reading this in, you made a decision to come through the door. You decided to leave somewhere else and enter this room. Jesus says that everyone has to decide whether to enter through Him and enjoy life forever with God or to stay outside and miss out. He is the door, and He is standing waiting to welcome people through into friendship with God.



D is for Door.

Can you explain in what way Jesus is like a door?

Who would you like to pray for now, asking that they would ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior and enter eternal life with God?

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You that You are the way to have perfect life forever with God. Please help me to think about whether I have decided to ask You to be my Lord and Savior so that I can enter eternal life. Thank You that life with You is much, much better than anything else I can have in this world. Amen.



Emmanuel

“And they will call him, Emmanuel.
(Emmanuel means ‘God with us.’)”

Matthew 1:23, CEB

Imagine someone in your family lives a long way away. How could they tell you things about their lives? How could they tell you that they loved you?

There are lots of ways that someone could get in touch with you. They could write you a letter. Or send you a photo. Or telephone you. Or set up a video call.

Or... they could come and visit you.

If they stayed in your house and spent time with you, you would get to know all about them. They could tell you that they love you, and they could show you that they love you.

The best way to get to know someone is for them to spend time with us.

And so that is exactly what God has done.

Before Jesus was born, while He was growing inside his mother Mary, an angel visited Mary’s fiancé, Joseph. The angel said that one of Jesus’ names would be Emmanuel (in some Bibles, it’s spelled Immanuel). Emmanuel means “God with us.” Jesus was God’s Son, who came to live in this world as a human so that He could live with humans. Jesus is God, who came to visit, to spend time with people, and to show us what He is like and how much He loves us.

One of Jesus’ earliest followers wrote this: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son [who is] the exact imprint of his nature” (Hebrews 1:1-3). Jesus, God’s Son, is the best and clearest way that God has told us what He is like, because Jesus is God—the “exact imprint” of the God who made you. When you read a Gospel in the Bible, you are reading the true story of how God came to live with people just like us—how He was Emmanuel.

Today, Jesus lives in heaven with His Father, not on earth with us. That’s why He sent His Spirit to live with us. And one day—and this is very exciting to think about—Jesus will come back to this world and make all things perfect and live with His people forever. So, if you are a follower of Jesus, you can look forward to Emmanuel coming—to God’s Son being with His people, including you, once again.



Jesus is for Emmanuel.

Can you remember what Emmanuel means?

God loves us enough to have come and lived with us. How does that make you feel?

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You that You are God, and thank You that You came to live in this world with people like us. Thank You that I can read a Gospel and hear all about what You are like and how much You love me. And thank You that I can look forward to living with You forever. Amen.



Faithful

“The Lord is faithful.”
2 Thessalonians 3:3

**Who in your family or among your friends is most reliable?
Who can you most trust to keep their promises?**

Once read about a man who owned a dog. This man was in an accident, and he couldn't move or shout. He needed medical help, quickly. So the dog stood next to him and barked. He barked and he barked. He did not leave, and he did not give up; he stayed there and barked until eventually someone came to help the man.

What a faithful dog that was! He did not do what was easiest for himself—he stayed with his owner and didn't let his owner down.

That is what it means to be faithful—to be loyal and reliable.

This is why when two people get married, they promise to be faithful to each other. They promise to stay with each other, to never give up on each other, and to keep all their promises to each other.

Sometimes we are disappointed because someone who we thought was faithful lets us down. Maybe someone who said they were your friend was mean and showed they weren't really your friend at all. Maybe someone who said they would do something for you completely forgot to do it. People sometimes get things wrong, don't they?

But there is one person who is always faithful—the Lord Jesus. Jesus is all-powerful, so nothing can stop Him being able to be faithful. Jesus is perfectly loving, so nothing can stop Him wanting to be faithful. He stays with us, never gives up on us, and keeps all His promises to us. Jesus will forgive us when we ask (1 John 1:9). He will help us obey when we are tempted to do the wrong thing (1 Corinthians 10:13). He will always be with us (Matthew 28:20). He will take us to live with Him in His glory (John 14:2-3). He will return one day to make this world perfect again (2 Peter 3:9, 13).

Jesus cannot fail to be faithful! And He calls us to be faithful to Him too. Being faithful to Jesus means we stick with Him, we keep loving Him, and we keep our promise to follow Him. And when we fail (and we do), do you know what? Jesus stays faithful, and He forgives us whenever we ask Him.



is for Faithful.

Which promise that Jesus has made to us are you most excited about today?

Jesus will never give up on any of His followers. What does that make you want to say to Him?

Dear Jesus, thank You that You are faithful. Thank You that You always keep Your promises, that You never forget me, and that You will never leave me. Thank You that I can trust You. Please help me to be a faithful follower of Yours. Amen.