September 2016

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



whyte ridge baptist church
www.whyteridgebaptist.ca

Allow Children the Benefit of Doubts

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To assure your children that doubts and questions are okay.
2. To help you listen well when your kids express doubts.
3. To offer tangible reminders of God's never-ending love and constant presence.

In the groundbreaking book *Sticky Faith,* Kara Powell and Chap Clark explore how to instill lasting faith in kids. Research shows that when children feel safe to express doubts, their faith tends to grow stronger.

Contrary to popular opinion, questioning God doesn't mean you're a weak Christian. Instead, doubts force you to examine the truthfulness of something (or someone) and consider how much you're willing to invest in it. To truly own their faith, children must critically evaluate it first.

Encourage that process by making your home a "safe zone" for doubts and questions. Listen intently, and don't shame children for asking questions. Let them know you have questions, too. Reflect on children's words, and affirm their feelings with phrases such as "You look like you have a question" or "You seem concerned."

Tough questions help kids verbalize doubts, so don't feel threatened. View the questions not as signs of rebellion but as opportunities to teach and learn.

And remember, until we get to heaven, we won't have all the answers. As author Marlene LeFever says, "There are some things we just can't know for sure. We believe with all our hearts that God is trustworthy, and that allows us to make that leap of faith and accept what we can't prove."

Read on to discover more ideas for handling—and encouraging—doubts.

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No Doubt About It: Doubt Is OK

As children grow, their thoughts and questions about God develop as well. Older preschoolers begin asking "why?" and "how?" Miracles, symbolism, and God's nonphysical nature are often confusing for kids ages 3 to 5. Answer questions simply, with words that mean exactly what they say. By ages 6 to 8, children begin to distinguish between fantasy and reality, and they also begin to use logical thinking. Provide answers that let kids use these skills; otherwise, they'll become frustrated. By the preteen years (9 to 12), kids start questioning some basic beliefs they've previously accepted. They want to explore an issue from many perspectives. Share your own doubts, and help kids find a niche to put their developing faith into action.



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Unseen Presence

Fill a bowl with small beads or pebbles, mixed with about 25 paper clips. Set the bowl on a table, and blindfold one family member. Give that "seeker" 30 seconds to find as many paper clips as possible. After each person has a turn, count how many paper clips you found.

Ask: **How easy or difficult was it to find the paper clips? What made it easy? What made it difficult?** Read aloud Hebrews 11:1. Say: **Just as we hunted for something we couldn't see or feel, God asks us to believe in things we can't see or feel.**

Ask: **How can you be sure you're believing in something real if you can't see or feel it? How do you know that Jesus and the Bible are really true?**

Say: **The paper clips were here all the time, and Jesus is here all the time, too. We can believe in Jesus even though we don't always see or feel what we're believing in.** Close in prayer, asking Jesus to strengthen your faith in him.

Affirm the Authority In your earliest conversations about God, establish the Bible as the authority for all truth. Emphasize that whatever God's Word says has either happened or will happen. Read Bible passages with enthusiasm so children will believe them and be excited about them.

Mark Milestones Celebrate important events such as baptism, a child's first Bible, Sunday school promotion, confirmation, and so on. Throughout the faith journey, challenge kids as their ability to think abstractly develops.

Childlike Faith With younger kids, read aloud Luke 18:15-17. Say, "Jesus says everyone should have faith like little kids—even grown-ups! We *all* need Jesus, all the time." Have each family member draw a heart on a piece of paper. Write "Jesus" inside it. To the left, tape a picture of when you were little (or littler). To the right, tape a recent photo of yourself. Decorate and hang the papers as reminders to trust Jesus as you grow.

Knowledge vs. Feelings With older kids, read aloud John 20:24-31, about doubting Thomas. Say, "When you have doubts, it's helpful to separate what you know from what you feel—and to read the Bible, which is always true, even if it doesn't feel that way sometimes." Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. Label one "What I Feel" and the other "What I Know." List some feelings, and across from each, write a Bible verse response. For example, across from "loneliness," write, "God is always with me. Matthew 28:20." Use a Bible index to find passages.

Build Wisely Set out a blanket and a large piece of cardboard. Using blocks, build a house on each surface. Then work together to carefully slide the two houses across the room. Afterward, ask, "What happened when we tried to move each house? Which base was stronger, and why?" Read Luke 6:46-49, about the wise and foolish builders, and talk about how we can build our lives on Jesus.

Safe and Sound Hold hands in a circle, and announce that you're on a boat. Tell about Paul being in a terrible storm at sea (Acts 27:13-26). As a "boat," roll and sway together on pretend waves. Try to move as a group while being tossed about. Then ask, "What was it like to be on this sea? Why wasn't Paul afraid during the storm?" Say, "Just like Paul, we can have faith even during tough times. Jesus is always with us!"

Then [Jesus] said to Thomas, "Don't be faithless any longer. Believe! … Blessed are those who believe without seeing me."
—John 20:27, 29

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MEDIA **MADNESS**



MOVIE

Title: *Storks*
Genre: Animation, Comedy, Family
Rating: PG
Cast: Andy Samberg, Jennifer Aniston, Ty Burrell, Kelsey Grammer
Synopsis: These days, storks deliver packages for an Internet retailer. When one bird accidentally manufactures an adorable but unauthorized baby girl, he must fix the situation. With a human buddy, he races to make his first-ever baby drop—and to restore the true mission of his species.
Our Take: This looks like a fun story with top-notch voice talent. However, the thematic element of making and delivering babies could be awkward. Parents who take their kids to see this movie should be prepared to discuss the birds and the bees.



TV

Title: *Just Add Magic*
Network: Amazon original series; loosely based on the fiction book by Cindy Callaghan
Synopsis: After Kelly and two middle-school friends discover a magic cookbook in her attic, they try to use it to figure out a mystery about Kelly's grandmother. They find that not all the effects of magic are positive.
Our Take: Overall, the three preteen friends are positive role models who learn important lessons through their experiences. Because of the ties to spells and magic, however, we wouldn't recommend this show. If you discover that your preteens are watching it, though, don't panic. The show seems harmless in overall content.

Games, Sites & Apps

LEGO Star Wars: The Force Awakens

The popular, kid-friendly "LEGO" gaming series returns to the franchise it began with. Players can step into scenes from the movie in LEGO form. New gameplay concepts include "Multi-Build system" and "Blaster Battles." Rated Everyone 10+.

Generationon.org/peace

To honor Martin Richard, the 8-year-old Boston Marathon bombing victim, this website encourages kids to sign up for acts of kindness and service projects. The campaign is mobilizing young people to take action to change the world—and themselves.

Busy Water

With this educational app, designed for ages 6 to 8, kids tackle puzzles and games based on water physics. Each challenge has multiple solutions to spur critical thinking and creativity. The app ($3.99) uses a fun setting to boost STEM knowledge and develop fine-motor skills.

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This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Pokémon Go—Here to Stay? Even if the craze of walking around and collecting virtual creatures is short-lived, experts say such "augmented reality" games will become the new normal. Through mobile devices, players will see altered versions of the real world, requiring new safety standards and cautions. *(washingtonpost.com)*

Gaming Diversity In other video game news, characters are becoming more ethnically diverse. Gone are the days when white people act as protagonists and heroes, leaving characters of other skin colors to play villains or supporting roles *(ap.org)*

QUICK **STATS**

Hand It Over! Almost half of children (47%) say they'd confiscate a parent's smartphone if they could. *(lifeway.com)*

Start Talking Four out of 10 American adults say they rarely or never talk about religion, even with their own families. *(pewresearch.org)*

Opportunity Costs Each year that a parent opts to stay home with a child, away from the workforce, can eventually cost a family more than three times a parent's annual salary. *(bloombergnews)*

September

September Schedule:

September 4th One service continues with programming for preschoolers only

September 11th Worship by the Lake

September 18th Refresher Training and Orientation for:
Nursery Workers, Preschool Teachers and Youth Helpers, Puppet Volunteers, Security/Greeters

Preschool – Classes combined (ages 2 years through to age 5 years)
Grades 1 to 4 - large group class

September 25th Refresher Training and Orientation for:
Scripture Memory Volunteers, Shepherds, Workshop Leaders, Worship leaders, The WAVE and The WAY Volunteers

Preschool – Classes combined (ages 2 years through to age 5 years)
Grades 1 to 4 - large group class

SONSeeker Staff for 2016 – 2017:

Age 2/3 Years:
Juanita Enns, Jen Mantler
Youth Helpers – Kayla Bergmann, Jane Tully

Age 4/5 Years:
Tim McDaniel, Lorilee Penner
Youth helpers – Alexis Cooper, Anthony Enns, Jessica Iwabuchi

Grade 1/2 Shepherds:
April Krahn, Christina Cooper

Grade 3/4 Shepherds:
Wes Krahn, Girish Manuel, Lisa Iwabuchi, Jin Lin