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# parenting CHRISTIAN kids



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## Share God's Love Letter With Children

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To give your children a deep hunger for God's Word.
2. To help your family members apply the Bible to daily life.
3. To guide your children as they "hide" God's Word in their hearts (see Psalm 119:11).

Today we equate communication with texts, posts, emails, and other digital methods. But God uses God's Word, the Bible, to communicate truths about God's Son Jesus, who's also called the Word (see John 1:1).

It's never too early to help children dive in to the Bible—God's ultimate love letter. Best of all, you don't need a theology degree or teaching credentials to help your kids love Scripture. Take these simple steps to spark a passion for God's Word.

#### Find age-appropriate resources.

Look for books and materials that build spiritual development at your child's interest and reading levels. Take advantage of local and church libraries, online resources, and

experts at Christian bookstores.

**Read the Bible to children and let them see you reading it.** Use your one-on-one reading time to read from God's Word. Also model a love for Scripture by letting kids see you read, discuss, and live it regularly.

**Partner with your church.** Parents and churches can work together to help children discover Jesus' message of love and salvation. Talk to your pastor, fellow parents and grandparents for ideas about nurturing your children's growing relationship with Jesus.

**Adapt as your children grow.** Watch for cues that children have outgrown Bible storybooks. Preteens might prefer using a Bible app on their phones. After reading with older kids, ask questions that encourage them to dig deeper into God's Word.

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## Instill a Deep Love for the Bible

These age-appropriate guidelines from *Children's Ministry Magazine* will help you tailor the Bible's message to your children as they grow.

**Ages 2 to 5** Preschoolers' attention span is only two to 10 minutes. They learn by touching objects and through repetition. Paraphrase Bible accounts and highlight only main points.

**Ages 6 to 9** By this age, children's attention span is 10 to 20 minutes. They think concretely and focus on people's actions. Provide more details, and then let kids share a Bible passage in their own words.

**Ages 10 to 12** Most preteens have heard many Bible accounts often. They need to know, "So what?" Offer modern-day applications, because kids learn more when they see how God's Word applies to them personally.

**Act It Out** If your children enjoy playing pretend and dress up, encourage them to act out various Bible accounts. Read directly from the Bible and then help kids search for fun props (a stuffed whale for Jonah, building blocks for the wall of Jericho, a doll for baby Jesus, and so on).

**"The B-I-B-L-E"** Many children absorb new information quickly through music. Plus, it's fun! At home or in the car, sing songs about Bible people and events. Many praise songs come directly from Scripture verses.

**The Ultimate Group Project** More than 40 people wrote the Bible throughout 1,500 years in three different languages. Yet the book fits together perfectly! What if your family decided to write a book and each person was responsible for a chapter or two? What would you each write about? The book might be interesting, but it wouldn't fit together. Ask family members to each write (or tell) a description of the same movie. Compare to see how similar or different the descriptions are. Next, read how different Bible writers present the same event; for example, see Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; and Luke 3:21-22.

**Hide God's Word in Your Heart** If you want your kids to learn Bible verses, keep it simple and fun. For longer passages, family members can each read a different section and retell it in their own words.

**I Can See Clearly Now** Have family members each try drawing two self-portraits—one while blindfolded and one while they can see. Then compare the results. Ask: "What was the difference in the outcome when you could see?" Say: "The Bible helps us see ourselves clearly. It tells us how God sees us, too. God loves each of us!" Read aloud James 1:22-25. Ask: "What do these verses tell us about the Bible?" Say: "The Bible comes to us straight from God. We can follow its directions and clearly see the way to go in life."

**Breathe Easy** Take turns seeing how far you can read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 in one breath. (Younger kids can blow out their breath while someone reads.) After several tries, read the verses normally. Ask: "What do these verses say about the Bible? Why is the Bible important? How does Jesus speak to us through the Bible?" Say: "One thing Jesus shares in the Bible is his love. To hear more about that, keep reading the Bible!"

"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. The teaching of your word gives light, so even the simple can understand."

—Psalm 119:105, 130



## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

### Knot a Problem!

Together, read 2 Timothy 3:16 once or twice. Have everyone try writing (or saying) the verse in their own words.

Next, take a one-foot length of rope or clothesline. Say: **I'm going to hold one end of the rope in each hand and tie a knot without letting go of the ends. It seems impossible, right?**

Let family members try to come up with a solution. After a few minutes, lay the rope out straight on a table. Cross your arms over your chest, lean over, and pick up the ends of the rope with your arms still crossed. Then unfold your arms to reveal the tied knot.

Say: **Without God's guidance in the Bible, it's impossible to make good decisions. The Bible teaches us to do what's right and how to love as God loves us. Without the Bible, it's impossible to know how to live a life of love that pleases God.**

Close in prayer: **Thank you, God, for communicating with us through your Word, the Bible. Help us read it often to learn about you. Amen.**

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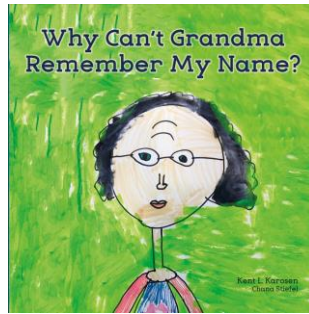
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## MEDIA MADNESS



### MOVIE

**Title:** *The Space Between Us*  
**Genre:** Adventure, Drama, Romance  
**Rating:** PG-13  
**Cast:** Asa Butterfield, Britt Robertson, Carla Gugino, Gary Oldman  
**Synopsis:** Gardner, 16, is the first human born on Mars. After striking up an online friendship with a girl in Colorado, he visits Earth for the first time—only to experience major culture shock. When Gardner's health fails, he goes on the run with his friend, trying to figure out his place in the universe.  
**Our Take:** Older children and preteens will be drawn to this interplanetary tale. It can spark good discussions about friendship, loneliness, sacrifices, and people's differences. Also, talk with preteens about where they find their identity and sense of belonging.



### BOOK

**Title:** *Why Can't Grandma Remember My Name?*  
**Author:** Kent Karosen & Chana Stiefel  
**Synopsis:** This picture book, which has drawings by children and Alzheimer's patients, offers helpful guidance for families dealing with the disease. Geared toward children ages 4 to 7, the book tackles questions such as "Will Grandma get worse?" and "How can I have fun with Grandma?" Proceeds go to Alzheimer's research.  
**Our Take:** Many families have relatives or friends who are affected by Alzheimer's. More than 5 million Americans have the disease, which is on the rise because of our country's aging population. This is a positive way to help children understand and relate to people with Alzheimer's.

## Games, Sites & Apps

### Gravity Rush 2

In this follow-up to the popular PlayStation title, players can manipulate levels of gravity as they go on missions. The main characters, Kat and Raven, engage in battles with humanoid enemies. The entire game takes 20 to 40 hours to complete.

### Kiva.org

This micro-loan site is ideal for families who want to make a big difference with a little money. Parents and children can select a borrower from a variety of categories and countries. You receive updates as the loan is repaid and can keep loaning that amount out to someone new.

### 1600

This new free app by the White House Historical Association lets users take an augmented-reality tour of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. By pointing a smartphone camera at a dollar bill, you'll see an interactive, 3D video of the White House and its many activities. Best for ages 7 and up.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

**Activity and Activism** With the UNICEF Kid Power Band, children can change the world while getting exercise. The Fitbit-like bracelet has a mobile app that encourages physical activity with videos from stars. When kids earn points by meeting their step goals, UNICEF sends food packets to hungry children around the world. ([unicefkidpower.org](http://unicefkidpower.org))

**Built for Play** While working at Lego's experimental lab in Denmark, Carlos Arturo Torres designed Iko, a prosthetic arm that accommodates a variety of toy-like attachments. The arm, which encourages play with friends, is expected to be cheaper than regular prostheses. ([designawards.core77.com](http://designawards.core77.com))

## QUICK STATS

**Disconnect** About 5 million U.S. families with school-age children don't have broadband Internet access at home. Meanwhile, 70% of teachers give assignments requiring web access. ([Time.com](http://Time.com))

**I'm Sorry** In a survey, 96% of parents said it's important for their child to apologize when he or she intentionally does something to upset someone else. And 88% said it's important for kids to apologize when they upset someone by mistake. ([thenewsminute.com](http://thenewsminute.com))