

# Faith

## Conversation Guide for Parents of Preschoolers

**Faith.** How we talk about faith at each phase of a person's life matters in how they'll think about faith in the phases to come. Preschoolers use their five senses to experience the world around them. In this phase, you can help them develop authentic faith by inciting wonder. You will give them the foundations for their faith in the way you respond with concrete examples and by letting them explore God's creation. As they grow and mature into adolescents you'll be able to unpack abstract concepts more deeply. For now, be as simple as possible, and remember that your role in the preschool phase is to . . .

**Incite Wonder**



**So they will KNOW GOD'S LOVE AND MEET GOD'S FAMILY.**

This guide is designed to help you connect with your child in the phase they are in, by giving you some words to say to introduce them to faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind for your kid:

**Trusting Jesus in a way that transforms how I love God, myself, and the rest of the world.**

**In the new baby phase, say things like...**

- "God, thank You for this healthy baby." (Pray aloud while you are with your baby.)
- "Jesus loves me." (Sing songs while you hold your baby.)
- "We are going to church." (Connect with a faith community.)

**In the following preschool years, say things like...**

- "God made you. God loves you. Jesus wants to be your friend forever." "God, thank you for . . ."
- "God, please help us . . ."
- "Let's read about how God made the world."
- "Are you scared? Let's talk to God about it."
- "How did the Samaritan take care of his neighbor?" (Talk about what your preschooler learns at church.) "Can you let your friend have a turn?" (Prompt them to share.)
- "Isn't that wonderful? Let's thank God for it."
- "Do not be afraid, for the Lord your God is with you." Joshua 1:9 (Repeat simple Bible verses.)

# It's Just A Phase...

## So Don't Miss It!

**Just Remember . . .** Every phase is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The preschool years are the wonder years. You can incite their wonder by exploring the world side-by-side with your child. Your child listens to your words, so this phase is the perfect time to begin talking, singing, and reading out loud with your toddler about faith. And as they get older—three, four, five—and have questions about so many things, including faith questions, answer as simply as possible.

**To enhance the conversation,  
here are a few activities your family can try:**

**Print photos** of family members and friends and place them in an inexpensive album. Let your preschooler flip through the book while you lead them in praying for the people they see in the pictures.

**Create a playlist** of your child's favorite praise and worship songs. Demonstrate connecting with God through song by dancing and singing with your preschooler on a regular basis. Don't know where to find great, kid-friendly music? Check out [ParentCueStore.org](http://ParentCueStore.org) or Orange Kids Music in iTunes.

**Pray consistently** with your preschooler. Demonstrate that prayer is having a conversation with God by using a pretend telephone during your prayer time. Take turns "dialing" (starting the prayer) and "hanging up" (ending the prayer). Let your preschooler use their own words and language, but feel free to prompt them if they get distracted or stall out.

**Tell your child simple Bible stories** and repeat favorite memory verses. (Use the Parent Cue App for help!) Explain simply that stories from the Bible are true, and show us how to live.

This guide is based on research from The Phase Project, a collaborative, ongoing effort, assembling classic and innovative research with practical application.

To discover more ways to understand your child's phase, check out the Parenting Your . . . book series at [parentcuestore.org](http://parentcuestore.org).

For more information on The Phase Project and other great parent resources, visit [theParentCue.org](http://theParentCue.org)  
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# Faith

## Conversation Guide

for Parents of Elementary Schoolers

**Faith.** In the elementary school years, kids become equipped with the skills they need to discover more about faith, and they have an active imagination that leads them to ask questions about their world and what they experience. As they learn new stories from the Bible, you'll be amazed at the questions they start to consider. The best thing to remember is to treat each question with care. How you respond to your kids each time they have questions about faith will determine if they continue to talk to you about their faith. Your role is to...

**Provoke Discovery** → **So they will TRUST GOD'S CHARACTER AND EXPERIENCE GOD'S FAMILY.**

This guide is designed to help you connect with your elementary-age kid where they are now, giving you some words to say as you navigate the critical issue of faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal for your kid:

### Authentic Faith

**Trusting Jesus in a way that transforms how I love God, myself, and the rest of the world.**

#### To elementary schoolers (K-3rd), say things like...

"Can I pray about that with you?"  
"You can trust God no matter what."  
"You need to make the wise choice."  
"You should treat others the way you want to be treated."  
"I'm not sure where that passage is. Let's look it up together." (Teach them to use a concordance and digital reference book.)  
"Don't ever get tired of doing the right thing." 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (Repeat and memorize simple Bible verses together.)  
"When I first trusted Jesus . . ." (Share your own faith story.)  
"I'm sorry your friend's mom is sick. What could we do to help?" (Make service personal. Encourage them to serve people who matter to them.)

#### To elementary schoolers (4th-5th), say things like...

"How can I pray for you today/this week?"  
"Having faith isn't always easy, but we can trust God no matter what."  
"What do you think is the wisest choice in this situation?"  
"Do not be afraid, for the Lord your God is with you." Joshua 1:9 (Repeat simple Bible verses.)  
"If you were them, how do you think you would want to be treated?"  
"Have you read anything in the Bible that means a lot to you right now?" (Talk about the Bible.)  
"Did you know that the Bible was written as 66 different books, but they all tell one story?" (Connect the dots between the stories to give a bigger context.)  
"I've been wanting to volunteer more. Is there somewhere we could serve together." (Consider serving at your church or a local ministry that appeals to your kid's interests.)

# It's Just A Phase...

## So Don't Miss It!

**Just Remember . . .** Every phase is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The elementary years are the discovery years. You can provoke their discovery by encouraging their imaginations, allowing them to investigate without filling in all the blanks, and simply making yourself available for the many, many questions that will come. As your child learns to read and gain more independence, it's a great time to encourage personal devotional time. But don't let their faith become private; continue having other faith conversations as you go about your days together.

**To enhance the conversation, here are a few activities your family can try:**

**Create a "Joy Jar."** Find a bin or bucket and label it the "Joy Jar." Place it in the middle of your dinner table along with a pen and index cards. Choose a period of time—30 days at the least—and write down all the answered prayers your family experiences and place them in the Joy Jar after dinner. (There will be some meals when you have nothing to write down—and that's okay.) At the end of the period of time, have your elementary schooler read through all the ways God was faithful to your family.

**Make church part of your family's weekly routine.** There's always a reason not to go, but demonstrating a positive interest in connecting with community and learning about God is an integral step in helping your child establish a faith of their own. Find somewhere you can attend consistently, so your elementary schooler can build relationships and trust with their church friends and leaders. Talk about why church is important in your family.

**Share your own story** of how you began a relationship with God with your 4th or 5th grader. Then share about how God has wired you, and how you connect with Him best. Share that it might be different than someone else's story. For example, you might feel most connected to God when you listen to worship music or journal; for others it may be when they are outside experiencing nature or beauty. Help your child see that we all connect with God in different ways, but there's a common thread of experiencing His love and forgiveness. Is there a particular way your child connects with God? Nurture it. If it's in nature, go for a hike. If it's journaling, take him or her shopping for a new journal. Music? Sign them up for a streaming music service so they can get all the latest worship songs.

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