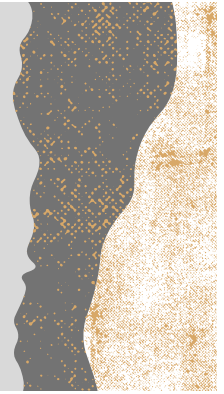


CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT



Please adapt these concepts to the level of understanding that matches your children's age.

Exploring Faith With Your Child For 1 Month

Faith means to believe in something even if you can't see it with your eyes.

Supporting Scriptures:

1. Proverbs 22:6 (NIV): "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it."
2. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 (NIV): "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."
3. Matthew 19:14 (NIV): "Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'"
4. Psalm 78:4 (NIV): "We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done."
5. Ephesians 6:4 (NIV): "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."
6. Colossians 3:20 (NIV): "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."
7. Isaiah 54:13 (NIV): "All your children will be taught by the LORD, and great will be their peace."

Question:

Do they know what the word or concept of faith means?

1	2	3	4	5
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Rate their answer: 1 - little understanding and 5 - on-point!

Week 1:

Exploring the concept of Faith

One example of how you could explain the concept of faith with someone that they already trust and have a ton of examples, drum-roll, please.....YOU!

Question:

Do they know of things that you do for them on a daily basis, that you **let** them do without them having to ask (you can help them by suggesting a few things, keep it light and enjoyable though),

Write their response or level of awareness and understanding.

If that was a little too difficult you can rather ask:

HOW do they know that you will give them food, today or even tomorrow? Not as a trick question but get them to loosen up and get creative, make it fun and see how they respond...

If they just shrug and say that "they don't KNOW". It's ok, you can gently explain that there are actually many things that you do for them, because you really love them!

Then suggest a challenge/game with a lovely reward (that both agree upon....)

Practical Activities and Exercises:

Aim of the game:

For you:

Suggest that every time that you spot them doing something for you, I use the term "for you"

loosely, we are not talking about foot massages etc. These are more like things that help you and make them become more independent and responsible with the reward of **you** would not have to do it so often.

See if they are willing to do things without being asked, which if they grasp the concept they will soon start doing, reward them BIG time verbally, and make it genuine and a big deal.

Ideas:

1. Setting/clearing the table
2. Help with simple chores, such as folding laundry or sweeping the floor.
3. Make a handmade card or drawing to express love and appreciation.
4. Offer to help with cooking or baking, like stirring ingredients or decorating cookies.
5. Water the plants or help with gardening tasks.
6. Offer to read a story or sing a song to younger siblings.
7. Offer a spontaneous hug or say "I love you" to show affection.
8. Offer to walk the family pet or help with feeding and grooming tasks.
9. Cleaning their room/picking-up toys
10. etc.

For them:

When they spot something that you do for them without them having to have asked, write it down, then by the end of a day/week/month reward them accordingly (see rules of the game)

Ideas:

- Doing their laundry
- Cleaning the house/their room
- Saying you love them
- Offering up your time to do something they want to do
- Investing time to cultivate their skills
- Driving them around
- Cooking
- etc.

Rules of the game:

Phase 1:

Everyday Challenge: A reward at the end of the day for a week. Small rewards.

Phase 2:

1-Week Challenge: A little bigger reward, only once a week – say every Sunday/Monday.

Phase 3:

2-Week Challenge: A much bigger reward that puts us at the end of the monthly (roughly) so about 4 weeks of "becoming aware" of what is done for them because they are loved.

Examples of rewards:

If possible exclude from the beginning that buying toys, games etc. (bribery) is NOT in the cards

and that if money is spent that it is under a certain amount, make it as low as possible.

- Skipping a certain chore for the **day** (daily challenge) / **week** (1-week challenge) / **month** (2-week challenge)
- 30 min's of extra screen-time
- Ice cream at the end of the week
- A play-date
- etc.

Please Note:

This off-course works a bit better if there are 2 kids, they do get competitive, which is healthy if managed well. But please **do not** overly reward one above the other.

Praise where necessary then separately discuss what the other child would want to do, or be really really awesome at, give high fives and make them feel equilly as special and make both understand that NO 2 people are ever the same or equally good at the same thing and that it is a GOOD thing.

Differences are meant to be cultivated, rewarded and appreciated!

Week 1 - Continues...

If your child is very aware, high-five yourself, you have clearly raised a winner! Note down the things that he/she has noticed, and you may even ask what they do for you that you might not have noticed, thank them warmly for it!

Optional: Self-Improvement Opportunity

For you:

If you are feeling exceptionally brave and into self-development you can ask them what things you can do as a parent to help, understand, or support them better.

If this goes haywire please please keep your cool, stay quiet and truly listen, no matter how

difficult remember that your child is most likely giving feedback for the first time, they might be brutal, but listening intently – will show them that you do care about how they feel.

If you know that you are doing something, and they might feel too scared to say something, admit the worst faults, by saying that they are being kind, but you have noticed that you(insert something, like yelling for example) and that you have decided to work really hard on that from now on. Then continue to ask if they can think of anything else, thank them for their honesty and don't be shy to apologise to your child, respect does go both ways.

This will strengthen your bond.

Homework:

Take a day or at most a week and work on the things that they have asked for or suggested, ask for feedback only when you know you have truly made an effort.

Be sincere:

- Wow, that was a tough one...
- Or, I am really sorry that I didn't know how that made you feel...
- How did I do this week?

Showing that you are also human will make them see you in a different light, it will improve your communication which will serve you in the future when you would want to know "things" (teenager phase).

At a later stage when they are ready you can discuss things that they perhaps do that trigger your responses, and you can work on them together.

Also, don't hesitate to ask them to take a breath and kindly explain what they are feeling, kids usually lash out if they feel unheard or when there are major pent-up feelings, helping them to calmly navigate and voice their feelings will guarantee a smooth ride forward, but remember, practice what you preach!

For them:

If you feel that your child is mature enough to understand, ask them if they would give away all their clothes, toys to a friend, family member or stranger if they never even say thank you or worse never ever give anything back in return?

The purpose of this question is so they would understand that all things in life are an ebb-and-flow, people, skills and even God, the sooner they learn to understand this, the more compassionate human beings they will become, (less selfish and all-about-me) later we will teach them to discern the difference of; not being taken advantage of and when to give without expecting anything in return (out of kindness)

Homework:

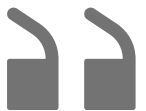
- Ask them if they have ever done something kind for another human being.
- Have they ever done something for another human being without expecting anything in return?

- When would they know if someone really needed help or when they are just pretending?
- Would they spend a lot of time doing something that they hate to do?
- What things do they love to do that they would like to get better at?
- Do they know when someone is a good or bad friend? Have them explain why they think that.

Notes for you regarding their answers or questions:



I know this section has been long, but faith starts at home, with the people you have in your life. When you feel safe, supported, invested in and heard then it is much easier to believe in the possibility of having faith in yourself, other human beings and in a God that you have never met.



Week 2:

Faith in oneself

Cultivating self-belief/confidence is crucial for the overall development and well-being of all humans, especially if it can start at a young age in a safe environment with a loving mentor.

It means instilling in them a strong sense of belief in their abilities, inner strength, and worthiness.

The Environment:

- You can foster this by creating a supportive environment where the child can feel safe to explore, learn, and grow. It involves providing encouragement, affirmations, and **opportunities** for them to take risks and overcome challenges.
- Celebrating their achievements, no matter how small, and acknowledging their efforts!
- Encouraging open and honest communication, actively listening to their thoughts and feelings, and validating their experiences are essential!
- It's also important to provide helpful tips and guidance, encouraging them through sharing some of the challenges that you overcame, or all children learning to ride a bike, this would spur them on to develop some healthy resilience and problem-solving skills.

Practical Activities and Exercises:

Engage in activities that foster self-belief:

- Encourage your child to set goals and work towards achieving them, providing guidance and support along the way.
- Offering opportunities for them to make a few decisions at home, in their lives and if you are feeling brave something about you, like shoes for the day.
- Allowing them to make mistakes and the opportunity to learn from them, by explaining why this rather than that, teaches them that failure is just an opportunity to grow.
- Having them engage in creative activities, such as art, music, writing, sport, languages etc. can tremendously boost self-expression and belief in their unique abilities.
- When endeavours are more on the dangerous side, discuss the potential dangers and rather provide them with an alternative that they can try instead.
- Try to never say that they should NOT do something, they will end up doing it anyway.

For the younger bunch:

Games, games and some more games!

Games are fun they learn their limits, grow in confidence & trust you in the process...

Make it fun and exciting, put on some music and enjoy the experience with them!

1. **Memory Match:** This classic game helps improve memory skills. You can create or purchase a set of matching cards to play, taking turns flipping the cards to find matches.
2. **Simon Says:** This game is great for promoting listening skills and following instructions! For you who are not familiar with this game; it's quite simple, you can take turns being "Simon" and give commands for the children to follow, such as "Simon says touch your nose" or "Simon says hop on one leg." They LOVE it!
3. **Hide and Seek:** This classic game promotes physical activity, social interaction and bonding.

4. **I Spy:** This game helps children focus on their surroundings and boosts their observation skills. Again if you are not familiar with this game it goes like this: you take turns saying "I spy with my little eye, something..." and provide clues for the children to guess. As children successfully identify the object, it builds their confidence in their ability to problem-solve and find solutions.
5. **Dance Party:** Crank up some music and have a dance party at home! Encourage children to move freely and express themselves through dance. This activity promotes self-expression, and body positivity, and boosts self-confidence as children feel comfortable in their bodies.
6. **Home Oscars:** Set aside dedicated time for children to share something they are proud of or interested in with the family. This can be a drawing, a favourite toy, or something they accomplished. Giving them a platform to showcase their achievements and interests helps build their confidence and encourages them to value their abilities.
7. **Outdoor Challenges:** Create simple outdoor challenges or obstacle courses that children can complete. It could involve jumping over hurdles, crawling under objects, or balancing on a beam. These physical challenges allow children to push themselves, overcome obstacles, and feel a sense of accomplishment, boosting their self-confidence.

Remember to cultivate their self-belief and personal growth and invest time to figure out what it means/looks like/feels like to them to have an environment of love, acceptance, and empowerment.

Week 3:

God is everywhere...

Give them these examples of how they can feel and "see" God in everything:

Wind: We can't see the wind, but we can feel it when it blows through our hair or makes the leaves on the trees dance. We know it's there because we can see the effects of the wind, even though we can't see the wind itself.

Sun: We can't look directly at the sun because it's too bright, but we can feel its warmth on our skin. We know the sun is there, even if we can't see it behind the clouds, because it helps plants grow and gives us light during the day.

Air: We can't see the air around us, but we know it's there because we can breathe it in and out. Without air, we wouldn't be able to live, and we can feel its gentle breeze on a sunny day.

Love: Love is a special feeling that we can't see, but we can feel it in our hearts. When someone hugs us or tells us they care about us, it's like feeling their love, even though we can't physically see it like a toy or a pet.

Music: We can't see music, but we can hear it with our ears. When we listen to our favourite songs or the sound of birds singing, it's like the music is all around us, making us feel happy or excited.

Remember, faith is something that grows and gets stronger with time. Just

like a tiny seed can grow into a big, beautiful tree! So will your faith if you practice it regularly.

What "having faith" looks like...

Trust: Faith is about trusting and believing that God loves us and will take care of us, just like how you trust your parents to take care of you.

Belief: Faith means believing in God, who made everything and is always with us. We believe that He is real even though we can't see Him, just like we believe in the wind even though we can't see it.

Obedience: Faith means doing what God tells us in the Bible because we love Him. It's like following the rules your parents set because you know they want what's best for you.

Surrender: Faith means giving our worries and problems to God and letting Him help us. It's like giving a heavy backpack to someone strong to carry it for you.

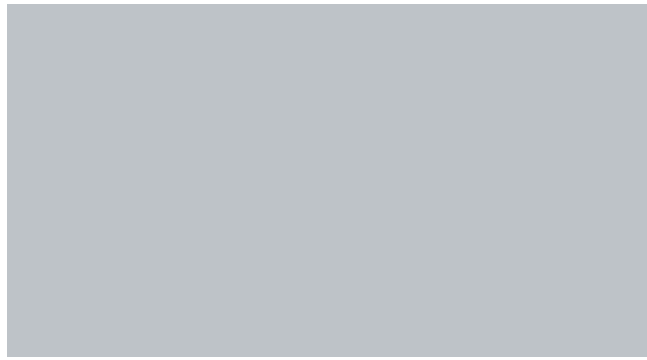
Perseverance: Faith is about not giving up, even when things are difficult. Just like how you keep trying to ride a bike even if you fall, we keep trusting God and believing in Him even when things are tough.

Practical Activities and Exercises:

Teach through Scripture: Introduce children to stories from the Bible that demonstrate God's love, power, and presence. Reading and discussing these stories can help children see evidence of God's existence and involvement in people's lives.

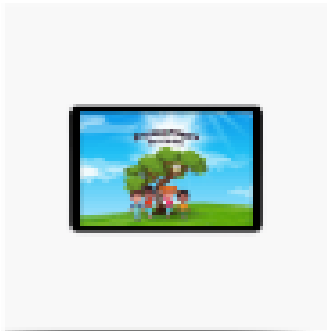
I've created a Daily Devotions just for kids, if you would like to receive it via email every day to read it to your child that hopefully sparks interest and even a discussion, sign up here:





Encourage Prayer: Teach children to pray and develop a personal relationship with God. Encourage them to talk to God about their joys, worries, and thankfulness. Help them understand that prayer is a way to connect with God and experience His guidance and comfort.

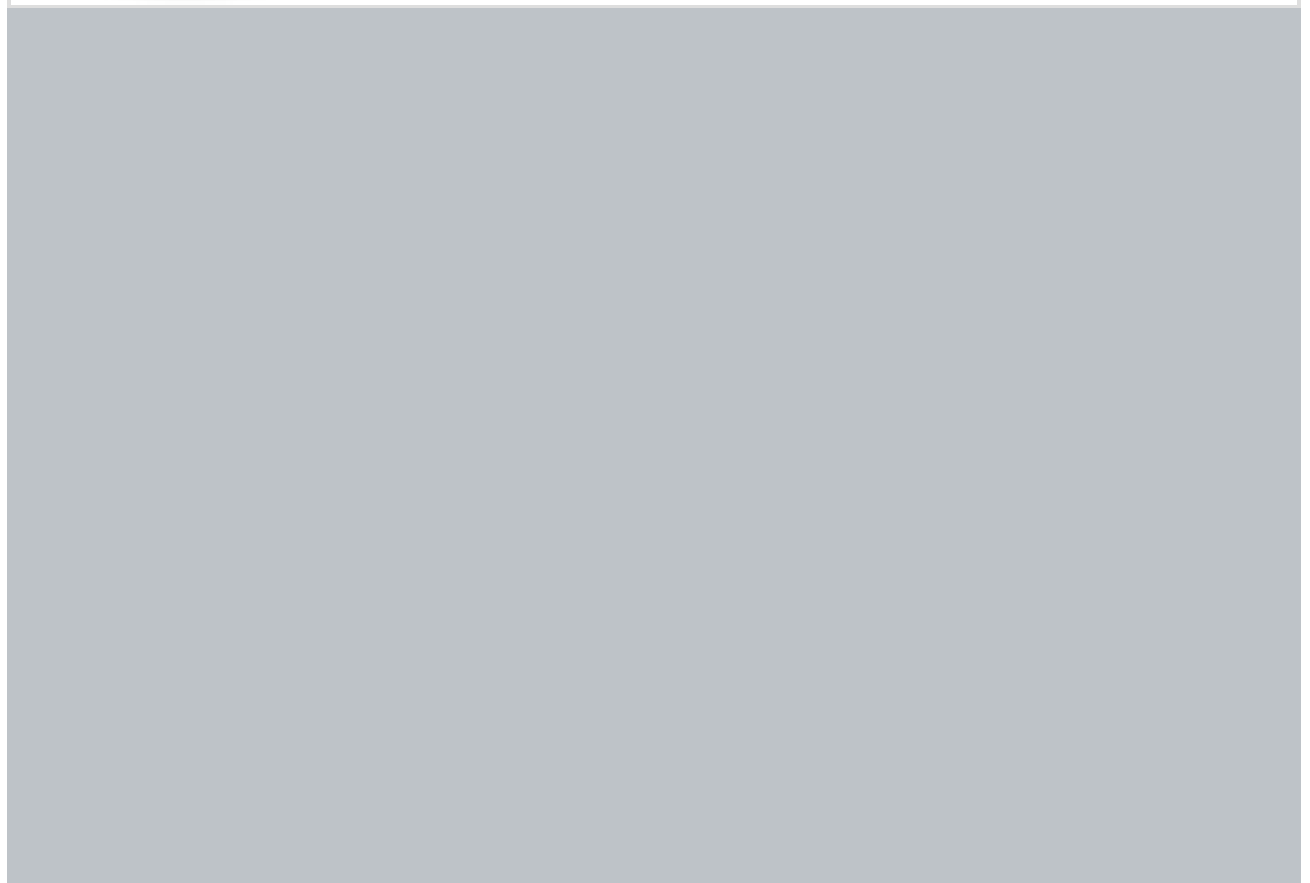
If your child is between the ages of 3-9 have a look at my ebook on teaching kids to pray through rhymes:



Precious Prayers For Little Ones - Ebook » Faith Force

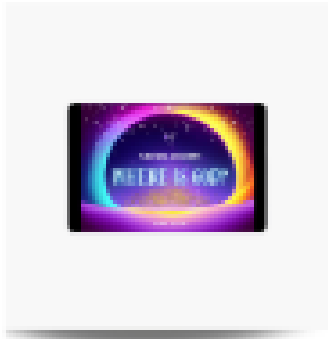
Precious Prayers For Little One...

faith-force.com



Explore Nature: Take children outdoors and encourage them to appreciate the beauty and complexity of nature. Help them see the intricate design in plants, animals, and the environment as evidence of God's creation. Engage them in discussions about how nature/earth/humans point to a divine Creator.

I also have an e-book for little one's about Where's God? for children aged: 3-7:



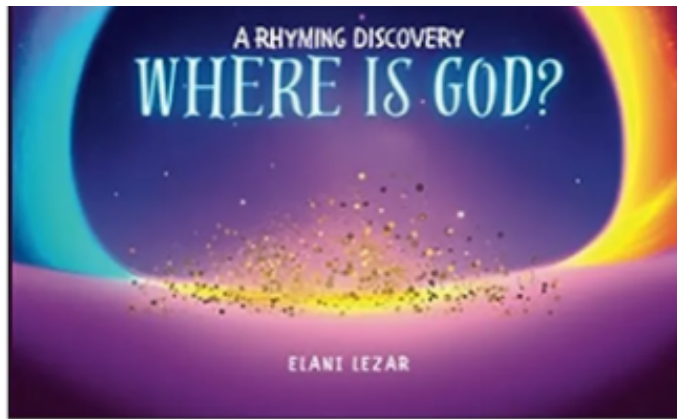
Where is God? A Rhyming Discovery - Ebook » Faith...

Where is God? A Rhyming...

faith-force.com

or the Paperback on Amazon:





Share Personal Testimonies: Share personal stories or testimonies of individuals who have experienced God's presence, guidance, or answered prayers. This can include stories from your own life or stories from others that inspire and demonstrate the reality of God's involvement in our lives.

Foster a Community of Faith: Engage children in a supportive faith community where they can interact with other believers, participate in religious activities, and learn from mentors who can guide and inspire them. Being part of a community can provide a sense of belonging, reinforce shared beliefs, and offer opportunities for growth in faith.

Remember, faith is a personal journey, and different approaches may resonate with different children. It's important to create an open and supportive environment where children can explore their beliefs, ask questions, and seek answers. Encourage them to embrace their own experiences and observations as they grow in their faith.

List challenges or questions they have:

Having faith in God, is a little more difficult for some people, because they think that you need to see God before you can believe in Him. But we are smarter, you and I, we KNOW that God is there!

