

It's Just A Phase . . . So Don't Miss It

As a parent, you want to invest your time in things that matter. Like having the right conversation with your child at the right time, with the right things to say at your fingertips. These conversation guides will help you navigate the critical issues you face at each phase, as you imagine the end for your child. They are based on research from **The Phase Project**, a collaborative, ongoing effort assembling classic and innovative research with practical application.



Preschool

FAITH

PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

... for great conversations with kids

Faith. It's only five letters, but it's a big word—especially for preschoolers. How we talk about faith at each phase of a person's life matters for 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're giving 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
& MEET GOD'S FAMILY**

This guide is designed to help you meet your preschooler where they are now, giving you some words to say and not to say as you navigate the critical issue of faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind for your kids:

Authentic Faith: trusting Jesus in a way that transforms how I love God, myself, and the rest of the world.

WHAT TO SAY:

"God made you"

"God loves you"

"Jesus wants to be your friend forever"

"I'm sorry you feel that way. Let's talk to God about that."

"I'm glad you feel that way. Let's thank God for that."

"There's a true story in the Bible about that. Let's read it together."
(Use an age-appropriate storybook Bible to read stories that relate to what your child is experiencing.)

"How can we share with our friends?" *(Sharing is the foundation for service. We start thinking about others when we share what we have to help them or make them feel included.)*

"You can always talk to me about anything you're wondering about God."

"Praying is when we talk to God. Even though we can't see Him, He tells us in the Bible that He can hear us. Would you like to pray together?"

Repeat simple Bible verses:

"Do not be afraid, for the LORD your God is with you" *(Joshua 1:9 NLT).*

"With God all things are possible" *(Matthew 19:26, NIV).*

You [God] made the world and everything that is in it *(Psalm 84:11, NIV).*

Sing simple songs about faith, like "Jesus Loves Me."

Use concrete examples to share a bottom line or a story. Focus the story in a way your preschooler can understand.

A storybook Bible written with preschoolers in mind is very helpful when introducing preschoolers to Biblical truths.

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"Don't be silly, Moses wasn't Isaac's father." *(Or whatever Biblical fact they mess up. You can correct them, but don't make them feel badly about it.)*

"Don't ask questions about . . ." *(Because preschoolers have an active imagination, they'll ask some off-the-wall questions about what they hear. Give them grace with these questions and help them realize that God is big enough to handle all of our questions.)*

"Don't say that when you pray." *(Encourage your child to share their honest thoughts and feelings with God.)*

Don't use too many words.

Don't over-explain Biblical concepts or include too many details about a story.

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, so encourage their questions about God and the world He made. Remember to embrace their physical needs as you talk about God. Pull them into your lap and give lots of hugs as you remind them that God made them, He loves them, and Jesus wants to be their friend forever.