

March 2015

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



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Jesus Proves His Love for Us

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To assure your children of God's never-ending love for them.
2. To bless your family's Easter preparations, as you remember Jesus' sacrifice for your sins.
3. To help your family members be "living sacrifices" who do all things for Jesus.

I would like to greet you in this first Parents Newsletter. We pray that you will find it helpful as you do life together as a family.

Can I remind you again that Jesus loves us so much he sacrificed everything—including his very life—on the cross. Then he rose again to give us new life.

That glorious Easter message is the best news we can share with our kids—and the world around us. God did something incomprehensible because of his unfailing love. His resurrection opens the door to heaven.

As parents, we can put this big, abstract concept in understandable bites. Kids of all ages *can* understand the gospel, as well as what it means to

make their own sacrifices to God. Use these tips to talk about Easter with your kids.

Ages 2 to 5: Tell young children that people who hated Jesus nailed him to a cross and left him there until he died. Explain how sad and afraid Jesus' friends were, but emphasise their joy when he returned to life three days later.

Ages 6 to 9: Fairness is a big deal at this age, so explain in simple language that Jesus willingly died in our place because he loves us. Kids may be fascinated by crucifixion details. Avoid euphemisms for death such as sleeping.

Ages 10 to 12: Kids who are familiar with the details of Easter are ready for the "why." Explain why Jesus had to die for us, referring to the blood sacrifices required in the Old Testament.

Celebrate Jesus' Sacrifice

Because children think concretely, they understand Easter in vivid, literal images. They may understand that God brought Jesus back to life in a literal way, but from that point on, the account and its big-picture impact can get abstract. What does it mean that Jesus sacrificed himself for us? Why did he have to do that? For Jesus' sacrifice to make sense, children must know about sin—theirs and everyone else's. When kids realise they can't do anything to save themselves from that sin, they gain a greater appreciation of Jesus' suffering and death for the whole world's sins. Out of gratitude, kids also can make their own sacrifices to Jesus as they dedicate their lives to him. Use these ideas as you prepare for Easter.

Saved From Sin—Give your children sticky notepads. Ask them to write (or draw) things they've done wrong and stick the notes on themselves. Then quickly come by, take their papers, and stick them on you. Discuss how Jesus removed our sins by taking them on himself.

A Great Banquet—Read aloud Luke 14:15-24, about the man who held a banquet with surprising guests. As a family, plan your own fancy banquet near Easter. Have each family member choose one guest who might not get many party invitations or who needs some extra love. Kids can make special place mats and decorations, as well as help prepare the meal. Use the experience to discuss making sacrifices for other people—and to share Jesus' love with your guests.

Easter Art Show—As Easter approaches, encourage family members to get creative. Have them demonstrate the reason we celebrate Easter by drawing or painting a picture, creating a clay sculpture, sewing an object, building a block structure, taking photos, or creating a collage. Display the depictions throughout your home or at church. You could also give some of the artwork to family, friends, or neighbors.

Tomb Rolls—Bake these with your kids and discuss how Jesus was put into the tomb but was resurrected. The marshmallow (Jesus) disappears once the roll is baked. Read Luke 23:50-24:12 while you prepare the rolls, explaining the symbolism to your children:

- Marshmallow - Jesus
- Marshmallow rolled in butter and cinnamon - after Jesus died on the cross he was wrapped in linen
- Marshmallow wrapped in pastry - Jesus put into tomb
- Open cooked roll to find the marshmallow has gone - Jesus has risen and is no longer in the tomb



Ingredients

- 1 packet of puff pastry
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 8 large marshmallows
- ¼ cup butter, melted

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 190 degrees. Prepare muffin pan (preferably jumbo muffin pan) with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Cut pastry into eight triangles (big enough to wrap a marshmallow) and set aside. Combine sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl.
3. Dip each marshmallow into butter, then roll in cinnamon-sugar and place on a pastry triangle. Pinch pastry around marshmallow, sealing all edges. *Make sure to seal well or the marshmallow will escape.*
4. Dip tops of pastry into the remaining butter and then into the cinnamon-sugar. Place roll with the sugar side up into prepared muffin cups.
5. Bake at 190 degrees for 13 - 15 minutes. Eat warm.

(<http://www.aroundmyfamilytable.com/empty-tomb-rolls>)

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

The Gift of Salvation

Make a giant cross out of poster board, draw a large heart in the middle, and tape it to a wall. Give each family member a gift bow with his or her name written on it in permanent marker.

Read aloud Ephesians 2:8. Say: **This Bible verse says we have a special gift from God. The gift is that we can go to heaven when we die because Jesus died on the cross for our sins.**

Play a version of Pin the Bows on the Cross. Have family members close their eyes and try to stick their bows on the heart in the middle of the cross. Afterward, have people each put their bow on their own heart.

Ask: **What gift did Jesus give each of us? How do we know Jesus loves us?** Say: **Jesus died on the cross so we can live forever in heaven with him. Let's pray to thank him for that!**

Close in prayer.

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parenting
CHRISTIAN kids

Group
Real. Bold. Love.

“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable.

This is truly the way to worship him.”

—Romans 12:1



Easter Scavenger Hunt

Hide the following items around your backyard or throughout an area of your house. Get your child/ren to hunt for them – once they return relate each ‘treasure’ back to the Easter story.

1. Item: *Small cup or sacrament cup.* *Scripture: Matthew 26: 39-44* Jesus went to Gethsemane to pray. He asked God to bless Him. He did not want to suffer. He said to God “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” But Jesus wanted to obey God. He would suffer for all people who repent of their sins.

2. Item: *3 coins.* *Scripture: Matthew 26: 14 – 49* One of Jesus’ twelve apostles, Judas, made a deal with some wicked men. He would show them where Jesus was in exchange for thirty pieces of silver.

3. Item: *Knotted twine.* *Scripture: Matthew 27: 1-2* When morning came, the chief priests and elders of the people decided to put Jesus to death. They bound Him, led Him away, and delivered Him to the governor, Pontius Pilate.

4. Item: *Piece of soap.* *Scripture: Luke 23: 13-24 and John 19:6.* Pilate asked Jesus many questions and then told the Pharisees that Jesus had done nothing wrong. Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the Pharisees wanted to crucify Him instead. Pilate washed his hands in front of all the people, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person. Then he let them crucify Jesus.

5. Item: *Square of purple cloth.* *Scripture: Matthew 27: 28-30 and Mark 15: 15-19.* The people stripped Jesus, put a purple robe and a crown of thorns on Him. They mocked Him, saying “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spit on Him and whipped him with a reed.

6. Item: *Nails.* *Scripture: Mark 15: 15-19 and Luke 23: 26-27, 33.* After they mocked Jesus, they took the robe off Him and led Him away to be crucified. The soldiers nailed His hands and feet to a cross.

7. Item: *Dice.* *Scripture: Luke 23: 24-34.* When Jesus was on the cross, he asked Heavenly Father to forgive the people who crucified Him because they didn’t know He was the Savior. The soldiers took Jesus’ clothes and cast lots for them.

8. Item: *Small rocks.* *Scripture: Matthew 27: 57-60.* When Jesus finally died, His spirit left His body and the sky was dark. There was a big earthquake, and the ground and rocks broke into pieces.

9. Item: *Strip of white cloth.* *Scripture: Matthew 27: 57-60.* One of Jesus’ disciples, Joseph, took His body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb.

10. Item: *Stone.* *Scripture: Matthew 27:60, 65-66.* After Joseph had laid Jesus’ body in the tomb, he rolled a big stone in front of the tomb so Jesus’ body would be safe.

11. Item: *Spices tied in a small piece of cloth.* *Scripture: Matthew 28:2 and Mark 16: 1-9.* Jesus’ body was in the tomb for three days. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome had brought spices to use to anoint Jesus’ body.

12. Item: *Hollowed out egg.* *Scripture: Matthew 28:6.* When the women got to the tomb, the stone was rolled away from the door and it was empty. They saw an angel there, who said to them, “Jesus is not here, for He is risen.” Jesus was resurrected.

For more ideas like this, check out
<http://www.families.com/blog/easter-story-egg-hunt>

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE

Title: *Cinderella*

Genre: Adventure, Drama, Family

Rating: PG (mild thematic elements)

Release date: 21/03/2015

Cast: Lily James, Hayley Atwell, Helena Bonham Carter

Synopsis: The classic fairy tale gets a live-action retelling from director Kenneth Branagh. After her parents die, young Ella is at the mercy of a cruel stepfamily until she meets her prince. Throughout various challenges, Cinderella determines to honor her mother by being kind and brave.

Our Take: Children of all ages will enjoy this new version of a favorite story. Use the movie to spark discussions about family relationships, maintaining hope, being kind to people who aren't kind to us, and showing courage amid difficulties.



MUSIC

Title: *Saints and Sinners*

Artist: Matt Maher

Synopsis: Maher is a 40-year-old contemporary Christian singer, songwriter, and worship leader. At World Youth Day 2013 in Brazil, he performed for a crowd of 4 million people. *Saints and Sinners*, Maher's eighth studio album, releases on March 17, St. Patrick's Day.

Our Take: Maher says his new songs were influenced by quotes, hymns, and stories of godly people throughout history. But he also explores how "God can call you and I both saints and yet we are still very much tethered to the ground in our humanity." The new album's first single, "Because He Lives (Amen)," uses simple, straightforward lyrics to express the joy of Easter.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Social Media 101—Proper online behaviour is now a topic in some schools. Jay Donaldson, who teaches social-media know-how to 4th through 6th graders in Canada, says although many preteens now have cell phones, they're rarely educated on how to use them safely.

Co-Parent Shopping—Websites are multiplying to help people co-parent...with a platonic partner. At sites like Co-ParentMatch.com, people desiring children can set up various arrangements. Critics accuse such sites of encouraging adults to "time-share" a child.

Games, Sites & Apps

Kirby and the Rainbow Curse

Players guide fan-favorite Kirby through a Claymation world by drawing rainbow "ropes" for him. Waddle Dee allies provide backup, allowing players to collect lots of items and stars. This Wii U game is a sequel to *Kirby: Canvas Curse* on DS.

OLogy

When kids visit amnh.org/explore/ology, sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History, they can explore various branches of science, from anthropology to zoology. Users receive immediate feedback on quizzes. Best for ages 8 to 10.

GeckoLife

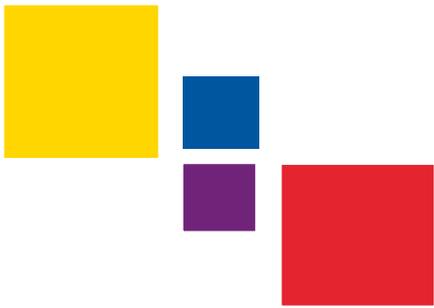
Billed as a "safe social app" for the whole family, this lets you create shared spaces for updates, memories, and interaction. Parents can control what kids share and who they hear from. The free app, which was recently updated, has no minimum age in its user agreement.

QUICK STATS

Keeping Up—In a survey of more than 3,500 parents, 78 percent admit they've felt the need to outdo other parents when it comes to their kids. The average amount parents say they'll spend per month to ensure their kids have more than their peers is \$532. (couponcodespro.com)

Take a "Stand"—Kids who use standing workstations at school burn 15 percent more calories than kids who sit at traditional desks. For obese children, that figure jumps to 25 percent. Health officials say prolonged sitting increases people's health risks, even if they exercise regularly. (*Texas A&M; Annals of Internal Medicine*)

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product.



March

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6 World Day of Prayer	7
8	9 Taranaki Anniversary	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23 Otago Anniversary	24	25	26	27	28
29 International Day of Prayer for Children	30	31				

Visit us online for great resources, fresh ideas and coming event info. Downloadable junior soldier lessons, pre-school material, and how families and churches can partner to build faith at home.

CALLING ALL PARENTS AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADERS ...

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www.salvationarmy.org.nz/childrensministries