



Raising Up SPIRITUAL CHAMPIONS

GRATEFUL: For Relationship with God

Also in this newsletter:

- Connect Your Kids to God • Family Fun • Easy Bonus Activity

TIP:
Display this newsletter at home, and use the activities as desired throughout the week.



Questions to Go at bedtime, mealtime or car time

- What do you think your life would be like if you didn't have God?
- How do you feel when someone says they are grateful for something you did or said?
- How do you show that you are glad to be someone's friend? How can you do this in your friendship with God?

Verse to Chew on

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him" (Psalm 34:8, NIV).

- Talk about your favorite things to taste. Why do you think it takes experiencing God yourself to find out that He is good?
- Why are people who depend on God blessed? What kinds of blessings do they receive?

Character Builder: Grateful

The greatest decision you can make is to become a follower of God and let Him develop you into the person He created you to be. You will experience an awesome life that's not possible by following your own path. Gratitude is a natural result of this relationship. As your kids grow to understand this, they will develop a hunger for Him that only He can fill.

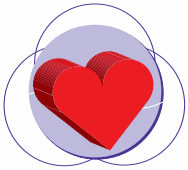
- **Show your kids** the benefits of a relationship with God. Read Psalm 103, and let your kids count the benefits out loud. What does the writer do at the end of the psalm?
- **Make your relationship** with God a natural part of life. Be grateful in your everyday conversation, e.g., "Isn't God wonderful to want to have a close friendship with us?"
- **Value your relationship** with God. Treat Him with the care and kindness and love you would show for a very special friend. Help your kids make time for Him. Maybe read a Bible verse and pray together before school, after supper, or before bedtime. Encourage them to talk to Him when you're not with them.

Bedtime Thanks

Kids often open up as they settle down for bed. Plan to spend a few extra minutes to listen and answer questions, or bring up something like, "Do you ever wonder what God might want to hear from us tonight?"

Preschool Focus

All kids start out self-centered. Their world is all they know. As your family discusses gratitude, your youngest kids will gradually catch on. Include them as you can, allowing them to point to things they are thankful for if they don't have the words.



Connect Your Kids to God

What is heaven like?

Jesus said He is preparing a place in heaven for you. Look around and see how wonderfully He created the earth. Beauty is everywhere. Imagine what heaven might be like!

Heaven is a place we can be face to face with God and be with all other believers who have ever lived.

Heaven is forever. The only chance you have to choose to go to heaven is while you're here on the earth. When you have asked Jesus to forgive your sins and made Him a part of your life, then you can "rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20, *NIV*) and that will be your forever home.

You Can Do It!

- Talk often about heaven. It's a real place.
- Keeping heaven in mind can help kids make right choices. There are eternal rewards for living God's way.
- Let your kids know that your family will all be there together. If some in your family have not yet given their lives to Jesus, pray together with your kids that they will do that soon.

Family Fun

Ask your kids what strategies they use to memorize something. Select a Bible passage you want to memorize as a family and then come up with some fun ways to learn it. Here are some ideas.

- Break the passage up into short phrases.
- Make up a tune to go with the words. It doesn't have to be musically "correct."
- Put actions to the words or phrases.
- Think of pictures in your head to associate with the phrases.
- With a partner, have one person say the first phrase and the other person say the next phrase. Alternate until you get through.

Visit www.raisingupspiritualchampions.com for more Family Fun.

Did You Know?

"If we do not influence our children, someone else will. You can't adopt a hands-off policy without somebody else putting his or her hands on your child."

—John A. Huffman Jr. in "Giving Your Child Something to Rebel Against" in *The Complete Parenting Book* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2005), p. 23.

Easy Bonus Activity

Write a psalm of thanks together that is meaningful to your family. Read David's psalm of thanks (see 1 Chronicles 16:7–36), which he wrote after the Ark of the Covenant was brought back to Jerusalem. Yours won't be so long, but it may give you some ideas.

Preschool Focus

Use this activity to help your kids understand giving and receiving, and feelings of gratitude. Ask your kids to remember how they feel when someone shares cookies with them. Are they grateful? Ask them if they would like to make some cookies with you to give to someone else.