



How to Have Your First Serious Conversation With Your Child About God: Creating a God-talk Environment



When you feel like watching adults at a loss for what to say, attend a tee-ball game. Parents volunteer to “coach” these kids and introduce them to the game that is so beloved to Americans that it is called “America’s pastime.” Coaches gently explain how to hold the bat, eye the ball, keep the elbow high, and give a level swing. All of those carefully laid instructions result in contact, a real hit that evokes shrill screams from otherwise dignified adults. Then the future hall of famer pivots and runs with purpose and speed...straight up the line toward third base. Onlookers laugh at the absurdity until reasoning that it makes sense if you don’t know the rules.

Kids don’t know the rules. They do not have a pad of experiences to guide their thought process. Their innocence provides fun tee-ball moments and awkward questions that seem so simple yet stump unsuspecting parents and friends. Many of these questions are about life and God. Consider these questions asked by children:

- Who is God’s mommy?
- Who made God?
- Where does God live?
- How old is God?
- Why can’t I see God?
- Why does God let people die?
- Why does God let bad things happen?

Since kids don’t know the rules they are unaware of the adult answers intended to mask ignorance and allow everyone to be happy. Children are brilliant theologians. There is not an atheistic bone in their bodies, but they want real answers to real questions. This is how God designed them. Here are some thoughts about introducing them to the God you love.

- **Talk about God freely at home.** Let children see that God is an integral part of life. God is not just a “church topic.” We think of God in everything we do.



- **Read Bible stories to children.** While there is some biblical content that may be inappropriate for children we can easily introduce the story of God’s creation and redemption in an appropriate manner.
- **Answer questions honestly.** Honest answers sometimes admit, “I don’t know.” Let your child’s questions inspire you to study and find answers to those tough questions.
- **Pray openly.** You want children to see that God is not simply a topic to be discussed but a real, personal being with whom we experience a vital relationship.

In a home that regularly talks about God and prays to God, teaching moments will flow as a natural part of life. Parents will not schedule a time to talk about God, the talk will occur as a natural part of life. Do not avoid these conversations. Encourage and engage the conversation as a matter of growth for both parent and child. In a truly D6 home, talks about God are not the agenda of a scheduled meeting but the fruit of a Godward environment.