

My Mum tells me that I asked Jesus into my life when I was 2 ½ years old. What a privilege to have lived my whole life with Jesus. I'm forever grateful to God for parents who encouraged and allowed me to know Jesus so young. You may or may not have had the same privilege. What about your children?

Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.' Mark 10:14

Jesus loves our children and He longs for them to know that love and to know him personally. He delights in them, just as he delighted in the children running round the temple, singing praise to him. (He kicked everyone else out!) Matt 21:12-16

God Snippets '...forget not all His (God's) benefits' 'benefits' - things favourable, helpful, that bring advantage Psalm 103:1-10, Psalm 68:19 Psalm 29:11, John 10:10, Ephesians 1:3-14, 3:14-21

One of our sons, David, also asked Jesus into his heart when he was 2 ½ years old. I was putting him to bed - he prayed thanking Jesus for going to the market that day, for his new ball...for an orange a stall-keeper gave him! I started talking a bit about Jesus, and then felt I should ask him if he'd like Jesus in his life. Immediately, he said 'Yes', and without me saying anything, he screwed up his eyes and said, 'Thank you Jesus in my heart. Thank you Jesus in my heart.' So simple, and yet I know he touched the Father's heart. Our 4 year old, Josh, asked Jesus into his life a few weeks later. It is so special to be a family together in Christ, and to know we will always be.

Of course our children will grow in their understanding, knowledge and experience of God. We all do. But... **it can ONLY be to our children's advantage that they know Jesus from young.** Jesus can be their friend, someone to talk to, someone to help them through every struggle, right from nursery onwards! In fact, Jesus says that little children are to be our example in receiving Him and His kingdom! Mark 10:15 says '...whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.' A child's faith is what it takes to know Jesus!

Pray for your children, tell them about Jesus, ask them if they want Jesus in their heart. It may not happen straight away. We asked a few times before our Josh was ready, but then it really was his own decision and very meaningful for him.

God's heart says 'Let the little children come to Me... All My promises and blessings are for them... They will be my children and I will be their God.'

More than an egg-timer!

1. When your children both want the same toy, use an egg-timer or stopwatch to allocate turns. One child has the toy for the first few minutes - when the bell rings they have to hand it over to the other child. This works great with my kids, and prevents many fights!
2. Set a timer for 1 or 2 minutes. Hide it. Children have to find it before the bell rings!
3. Set a timer to help a child eat his food, or eat more quickly. If they finish their food before the bell goes give a sticker or reward. Set realistic times.
4. When you need a rest, put your children in their room, set a timer (somewhere out of reach), and tell them they can only come through to Mummy when the bell rings. This has a novelty to it - children enjoy waiting for the bell to ring - though it may take several days or even weeks to enforce, depending on the ages of your children, and what they get up to when they are on their own. The first few days I did this with my boys, the youngest kept running out to me, or one of them would end up crying. But gradually they got better at staying by themselves. Start with short times and extend the time each day. Give them 'quiet' things to do (books, jigsaws), though they will probably get up to their own mischief anyway! Stick at it...it's worth it!

MUMS WITH JESUS Part 3

Practical ideas to help us remember Jesus, pray, worship & read the word through the day

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Psalm 119:11, Colossians 3:14-17 and Deuteronomy 11:18-20 speak of an all-the-time walk and relationship with God. Here are some practical ideas of how we can do this:

- Offer up a prayer for the person you've been speaking to after each telephone call (worth-while to repent/cut yourself free from anything negative spoken during the call).
- Write prayer items on a piece of paper & hang it where you will often see it (near where you breastfeed, at the end of your bed, by the kitchen sink etc). Whenever you see it pray one of the items. Write up answers to prayer and use them for thanks.
- Pray with your kids - ask them what they want to pray for. Get them to lay hands on you when you don't feel well! Let their faith build yours! Get excited with them about answered prayer.
- Send up quick 'Help me!' prayers to God when your kids are driving you crazy!
- Talk to your children about Jesus. Tell them stories of things he's done for you.
- Write out Bible verses on a piece of paper and put them in a place where you often stand/sit (kitchen-sink/toilet! Deut 11's doorposts & gates!!). Read a verse whenever you can - ask God to bring it back to your mind through the day. Meditate on it as you do other things.
- Go 'mad' with your kids! Dance round the house, jump on beds, shout hallelujah, sing & march through rooms. Especially good for 'down days' & when you want to get heaviness/sickness out of the house. Kids love it!
- Play worship tapes through the day. Sing as you do things.
- Thank God for your children and your husband everyday.
- When you first wake up in the morning thank God for a new day. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you for the day ahead, and to be your help.
- Try and sit down early on in the day, open your Bible & read something out loud, even if it's just for a few minutes. Dramatise your reading or act it out with your children. Let your children see that the word is important to you.
- Before going to sleep at night read one or two verses. Think about them as you fall asleep. (This is really good to do - it only takes a couple of minutes and the verses will be part of your sub-conscious thought as you sleep)

Implementation

I suggest you implement and concentrate on only one or two of these ideas a week. Some things take a bit of effort just to get going! It took me over a month from having the idea of writing up prayer items to actually get round to writing my list and putting it up! And I usually forget to pray for the person I've been speaking to on the phone! I put stickers on the phone to remind me...but the hour after I put the stickers on, the line went dead & our phone was out of order for 4 days!!

It will take a while for some of these things to become habit and part of our daily routine. Our greatest help of course is the Holy Spirit. Maybe the first thing we need to get into the habit of doing is asking Him to be with us everyday when we wake up.

I remember when I began to implement some of these things - almost immediately I began to feel a new edge coming back into life. I had a fresh desire to pray, and I started hearing God speak things to me again. I think that as we make worship, prayer, the spirit & the word, a part of our daily lives, and as we touch the presence of Jesus afresh, our desire for Jesus will grow & grow. And I think then that even if we are tired after the children have gone to bed, we will want to sit down and be quiet with our Father.

To be continued...more ideas to intimacy with Jesus, & how I am doing 2 years on from writing 'Mums With Jesus'

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