

Parents guide to sharing scripture with children.

An important part of parenthood is sharing Holy Scripture with your children. To get started or see how you are doing check out the following verses from Deuteronomy 6:7-9. Following these verses is a very special promise for parents who take scripture seriously: "so that your days and the days of your children may be many" Deut. 11:21."

Deuteronomy 6, Verse seven Phrase one: "You shall teach them diligently to your children." ESV The verse makes it clear that the task of sharing bible verses with our children belongs primarily to the parent...not the Sunday School teacher or the lady next door. The actual statistic is that a parent can teach in ten minutes what it takes a trained teacher a whole hour. Another thing the verse makes clear is that we are to do this *diligently*. (Other translations say "repeatedly" or "again and again".) Repetition is the bedrock of a child learning anything...especially scripture. *Are your children getting their minimum daily spiritual requirement...at least one verse every 24 hours. Is scripture a PRIORITY in your home?*

Verse seven Phrase two: "Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road." ESV

Two key parts of talking with a child about a Bible verse are asking questions... which makes a child think...and sharing your own EXPERIENCE with the verse, how the verse or God has helped you in the past. A third option is praying about the verse that God would help you both understand it better.

The hidden assumption is that parents will automatically spend TIME with their children...time asking questions, time sharing their experiences with God and his word, time praying together. Keeping a few Bible coloring pages by the TV is a great reminder to sit down DAILY with our children and enjoy one another. A second great way to spend time with each of our children is a walk. Walking together is God's description of how we should relate to him and to one another. When is the last time you colored WITH a child or went for a pleasant walk with your child? You could take a Bible Verse with you. You could do it once a day.

Verse seven Phrase three: "When you are going to bed and when you are getting up."

These words (God's words) emphasize sharing or reviewing a Bible verse first thing in the morning and last thing at night. We know of no better investment than a Bible calendar with flip over verses. Twelve dollars for this bedside calendar will help your memory and FILL their minds and souls with a childhood filled with waking up and going to sleep with a Bible Verse.

Verse Eight: "Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads." (A website I tend, www.bibleparent.com, offers free printable daily Bible verses on little easy to use strips.) Simply snip off a verse a day and tuck it in your child's pocket. At the top of each strip it says: "God goes where his word goes. Keep this verse in your pocket and he will go with you". The point is that having a Bible verse in his or her pocket is good for a child...a reminder that God is real and just as close as the verse in his or her pocket. *There are two hidden messages in verse 8. First that sharing God's words with children requires child sized portions, something you could tie to your wrist or in modern terms tuck in your pocket and that carrying a verse should be a daily habit.*

Verse 9: Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

God's command here is to surround our children with Bible Verses but specifically to have at least one verse they will see when they leave the home and another when they are entering. One good idea is a second desktop flip calendar somewhere near the front door and perhaps some sort of plaque near the doorbell. Personally we like "Son Catchers" pages the children color and tape in a window...making the point that God's light enters the home through his word." Having a Bible verse in the living room window is one way to give God's word equal space with the TV. Each time your church sends a coloring page home with a child you are giving him the power to change his home by putting God's word "On Display". A good source of free unique Bible Coloring pages is www.bibleparent.com

Which brings us to the great and wonder-full additions of the New Testament. They are of course sharing scripture with "Love" and with the POWER of "The Holy Spirit." Adding love to a Bible verse is like adding a lit match to gasoline..it catches fire. The feeling of being loved stimulates the mind to save a verse longer and deeper. Emotion supercharges any memory we store. The more love the stronger the memory. Add to parental love the power of God's love ,the power of The Holy Spirit, and you have a complete formula for sharing God's word: Surrounding your child with daily verses (Deuteronomy 6:7-8) + parental love + The Holy Spirit/prayer and God guarantees you will get children strong enough and loving enough to survive the world we live in...and the next.

Sharing Bible verses from parent to child is a major theme of scripture. One old Hebrew tradition that comes to mind is putting a drop of honey on the cover of the Bible and having the child touch his tongue to the Honey before reading even a single verse. We pray that whether you use the Honey or not that you don't make your children do without God's word...a child sized portion... a verse a day.

Authors Note: I have served a small multi denominational group of Christian Day Care Providers. For nearly 30 years this group has done it's best to equip parents to be the spiritual leaders their children need. Late last year we learned that all 30 of our nation's largest Christian publishers have quit printing individual Bible verses of any kind. As a result most Christian Book stores no longer offer even a single set of 30 verses. God's word in child friendly form (one verse at a time) is nearly extinct and no one seems to have noticed. The question facing the church is: Who is going to get God's word in the hands of parents in child sized portions?" We pray you might share this article with your pastor or director of Christian education. How we pray you might visit www.bibleparent.com for thousands of free printable DAILY family friendly Bible verses.