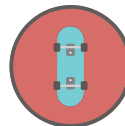


PARENTING PLAN

YEAR 3: WHO IS GOD?



HI FRIEND!



We've heard it through the grapevine that there's a birthday in your family this month! As your child enters into Year 3, we want to focus on the question: **"Who is God?"**.

At First Capital, we believe that a child's home is the number 1 faith-building, disciple-making environment that there is. We want to partner with you as you raise your fearfully and wonderfully made child. We've created a discipleship program that goes from year 1 all the way to year 18 when you're launching your child out into the world. We offer this plan that focuses on one thing every year when it comes to following Jesus.

This plan isn't supposed to be a course in everything you need to know when it comes to parenting and raising a child to love and follow Jesus. But we hope that every year, this plan will help you and your family take one step closer to Jesus.

This plan is just one part of many resources that we want to provide for you. Many of those resources can be found on our Parent Resources Wall in the lobby.

During this first phase of your child's life we label as the Embrace Phase, we focus on

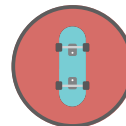
- God Made Me
- God Loves Me
- Jesus Wants to be my friend forever

If you have any questions or just need an adult to talk to anytime this year, we are available to you! You can reach out to anybody on the Family Ministry Team.

Evalina Pinnick - evalina@churchanywhere.us
Marianne Rader - marianne@firstcapitalchristian.org
Spencer Roberts - spencer@firstcapitalchristian.org
Patrick Crawford - patrick@churchanywhere.us

We are praying for you and your family,
The Family Ministry Team

WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR FUTURE 18-YEAR-OLD

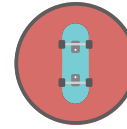


Each year throughout the parenting plan, take time to write your child a letter. Below are some ideas of things to include that will both speak life and love into your child as well as give them an invaluable collection of insights into their upbringing and a storyline of memories to be cherished for the rest of their lives. You could collect them in a journal or write each letter as a separate paper.

- things I've loved about you this year**
- fun stories from the last year**
- favorite toy**
- my prayer for you in the next year**
- things that made you laugh the most**
- what I want for your life**
- a scripture verse that I picked out for you this year**

Include a photo of your family with the letter to give a year-by-year collection of memories all in one place. Each year after giving your child the letter, get it back and keep them all somewhere safe. You will give them all to your child in the 18th year for LAUNCH.

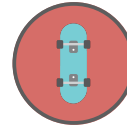
WHO IS GOD?



CAPTURING THEIR WONDER: Your three year old is smack dab in the middle of a stage that is full of wonder - where curiosity and delight create a unique time in life to discover the Wonder-Maker. This year, we want to leverage this phase to help them grow in their understanding of God. All throughout this year, we want to encourage you to constantly enter their world and connect the wonder they are experiencing to the God who created all that wonder. Take time to get familiar with the Phases Summary (tri fold developmental handout included with this booklet) which gives you an overview of what you might expect in your child's development. These phase summaries come from the ReThink Group out of Northpoint Church (Andy Stanley) in Georgia.

Here is an excerpt from their book *It's Just a Phase*: “Preschoolers who think like artists blend the stories they hear with the stories they live in a way that makes a loaf and two fish just as memorable as yesterday's pizza. They relate to an invisible God they can imagine. The One who designed the animals and created the flowers, the One who made them and knows everything about them, who keeps them safe, and who loves them.”

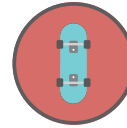
WHO IS GOD?



START FROM THE BEGINNING: Whether you take them to the zoo, watch a thunderstorm out the family room window or watch a mother duck waddle through the park with her ducklings, opportunities exist all around us to point to God the Creator. This is the beginning of their understanding of God - He made the world. Then they can better understand that He loves the world.

WHAT IS GOD LIKE? The ways in which you care for your child throughout the day can be a way to teach about how God provides for us, cares about us, helps us when we're hurt or afraid, and loves us even when we make bad choices. As you encounter experiences throughout the day, learn to capitalize on the moment to impress an important truth about God. For example, after comforting your crying little one, tell them that when you're sad, God helps you feel better. Or after disciplining your little stinker, hug him and explain how God loves you and forgives you when you make a bad choice. Parenting is a reflection of how God cares for and deals with us. Use these moments to help a child learn what God is actually like. Side benefit - many parents feel like they grow to know God better after becoming a parent and experiencing things like love, rebellion, forgiveness and provision.

WHO IS GOD?



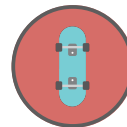
LOVE THE BIBLE IN YOUR HOME: And of course, teach your child about who God is by reading about Him in the Bible. Whether it's a story bible with illustrations or not, try to help the story come alive with different voices, sensations (like blowing in their face for wind or spraying them with a light mist for rain), and movement (like bouncing them on your knee during a storm, or tickling their tummy when the people were hungry).

IGNITE THEIR IMAGINATION: (Don't fight it.) "When it comes to the Bible, preschoolers might miss a few details, add some embellishments, or confuse the chronology. Just remember, they aren't overthinking it. They are imagining it. Sometimes it's just better to let them put a monkey in the manger scene and spend time talking about the wonder of Jesus being born rather than correcting their historical, geographical understanding of Bethlehem." It's Just A Phase

ACTIVATE THEIR SENSES: "Artists learn through their senses, so if you really want to help them relate: sing songs, tell stories with hand motions, make crafts, show videos, use pictures, eat snacks. (Don't worry about creating new smells; there are already enough of those!)." (It's Just a Phase*) While your child will connect easier to stories, don't be afraid to read non-narrative verses from the Bible that describe God. Just remember that they are not ready for abstract thoughts (metaphors and similes). Also, remember to keep it simple - the shorter the better at this age - and it's OK to leave them wanting more. We will focus on Bible reading in the Year 7 parent booklet.

WHO IS GOD?

IDEAS FOR TEACHING

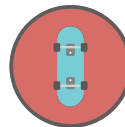


While we can't describe what God looks like, we can certainly teach them what he is like. Remember that they are letting their imagination teach them as well, so they might be picturing God as a cross between a fairy tale giant and Santa Claus. Your child might have a lot of questions about God over the next couple of years. That's normal and very good. Don't panic if you don't know the answer. Show them how you find answers to your questions: look in the Bible, ask a pastor or teacher, look it up online, and pray. Throughout this year, as you and your child learn what God is like, create a place in your home where you can write down the things you learn. You can get creative and make an artsy display, or you can simply cover their closet door with post-it notes. The goal is to keep track of what they are learning, and keeping it visible and handy can make it easier to reinforce these lessons throughout the year.

WHAT IS GOD LIKE DISPLAY IDEA: As you read the Bible you will come across verses like Psalm 145:8 "The Lord is gracious, kind and tender. He is slow to get angry and full of love." Talk about how this describes God with your child and then add this to your display. When you are raking leaves in the fall, or driving to the orchard, talk about how the beautiful fall colors teach us that God is beautiful. When you get home add it to your display.

WHO IS GOD?

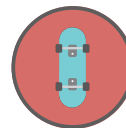
IDEAS FOR TEACHING



Read your display together once in a while throughout the year. Here are some suggestions:

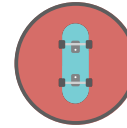
- Tape banner paper on a wall to create a work of art together throughout the year. Fill it with words, phrases, verses and doodles that describe God. Keep it and get it out again when they are older.
- Use a whiteboard marker to write adjectives about God on the bathroom mirror or a bedroom window throughout the year.
- Get a multi-color Post-It pad. As your child learns this year, write things about God on them. Write as many as they can think of at first. Then, put those on their bedroom wall or closet door and add to it throughout the year. Take a picture of your child in front of it before their 4th Birthday.
- Create a fishbowl of small slips of paper with verses that describe God. Allow your child to draw one out each night at dinner or at bedtime. You don't need a new one for each day of the year. It's okay if the same verse gets chosen over and over. Repetition is OK!!
- Create a fun journal together with quotes from your child, verses, memories (zoo, baby birds in a nest), doodles, song lyrics, etc. describing God. Keep it for them for when they're older, or continue it throughout their childhood and send it with them when they leave home.

NOTES



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SHOW GOD AS LOVING PARENT BY CONTINUING A HEALTHY MARRIAGE



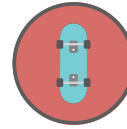
Each year we want to encourage you to make a plan to keep your marriage healthy. One of the most important gifts you'll give to your child is the love you give to your spouse. When mom and dad love each other and demonstrate the traits of a healthy (NOT PERFECT!) marriage, it not only sets a good example of a godly marriage but gives them a greater sense of security and well-being.

Good marriages require intentionality. Use the plan below to make an intentional effort in your marriage this year. Read *The Best Us* by Ted Lowe (©MarriedPeople 2016) for a full explanation of *Have Serious Fun! Love God First; Respect and Love; Practice Your Promise.*

Have Serious Fun! Date Night Scheduling:

Grab your calendars and mark at least TWO date nights for each month and PROTECT those dates. Remember that you were boyfriend and girlfriend before you were dad and mom, and have fun together! No family administration discussions!

BLESS YOUR CHILD BY BUILDING A STRONGER MARRIAGE



Love God First - Faith Practices 101:

Research finds that couples who pray together at least twice a week have a divorce rate of less than 1% (HomePointe). Commit to praying as a couple at least twice a week. Plan which worship service the two of you will attend together each week – don't "divide and conquer" in order to volunteer.

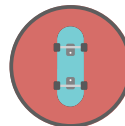
Love and Respect - Write an Annual Letter:

Write a letter to your spouse for your anniversary this year, much like the one in this packet that you will write to your child. Write a letter of memories from this past year, affirmations, prayers and promises to each other.

Practice Your Promise - Personal Growth:

Set a "secret goal" to grow as a spouse, such as "listening better," "praising her in public," or "initiating romance." Write it down and seal it in an envelope. When you receive next year's packet, open the envelope and assess your progress.

DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP



itunes



google play

**Parent Cue
creates the plan,
so you can make
the memories.**

