

*What can I do at each age to help children grow up knowing the person and purpose of Christ?*

<b>Session 4: Developing a Mission-Minded Heart</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Developmental Characteristics</b>	<b>Suggested Activities</b>
0-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing trust</li> <li>- Able to mimic sounds, basic sign language, words</li> <li>- Learning through repetition and consistency</li> <li>- Early concept of God being shaped by how parents/adults interact with them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create a safe, loving, nurturing environment</li> <li>- Pray blessings over your baby using Scripture (Psalm 67, Psalm 63:3-4, Isaiah 26:8, Ephesians 2:19, Colossians 3:12, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Peter 3:18)</li> <li>- Enlist others to pray with you and for you and your baby</li> <li>- Sing Bible songs to your baby</li> <li>- Introduce the Bible and simple Bible stories</li> <li>- Incorporate songs, stories, prayer in daily activities/routines (diaper changes, praying before meals, bedtime, etc.)</li> <li>- Begin to develop a family vision statement</li> </ul>
2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short attention span</li> <li>- Learning through five senses and movement</li> <li>- Learning through repetition</li> <li>- Love singing, rhymes, stories</li> <li>- Can understand that God loves them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a daily routine of blessing your child</li> <li>- Tell or read simple, short Bible stories using pictures or movement. Talk about what God is like. Tell them that the Bible is God's true Word (different from other books they read)</li> <li>- Point out how God is involved in everyday situations</li> <li>- Pray for and with your child using simple words. Pray for family, friends, and others who do not know Jesus</li> <li>- Introduce children of other cultures/races using books and pictures</li> <li>- Adjust finger plays, rhymes, and songs to include God's love for all peoples</li> </ul>
4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short attention span</li> <li>- Concrete thinkers</li> <li>- Learn best through play and variety of short activities</li> <li>- Learn through five senses</li> <li>- Able to compare/contrast</li> <li>- Enjoy acting, pretend, and dress-up</li> <li>- Can understand that the Bible is a special book about God</li> <li>- Can understand that prayer is talking to God</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teach simple Bible verses that include the concept of God's love for all peoples</li> <li>- Read and act out simple Bible stories. Talk about what God is showing about Himself and how He uses people and situations to make Himself known</li> <li>- Teach them how to pray in their own words. Establish a habit of praying for those who do not know Jesus</li> <li>- Pray for the continents, introduce world maps</li> <li>- Use simple objects/pictures to teach about people from other cultures, compare and contrast with themselves, point out that some children have never had the chance to hear about Jesus</li> <li>- Begin to introduce the salvation message using simple words (avoid symbolism)</li> <li>- Provide simple opportunities for children to lead in worship (hold up the Bible or pictures, clean up, serve the snack, pass out supplies)</li> </ul>

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6-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concrete, literal thinkers</li> <li>- Begin to distinguish between reality and fantasy</li> <li>- Learn from multiple experiences like games, music, art, stories, drama</li> <li>- Learning to read and write</li> <li>- Developing a sense of right and wrong</li> <li>- Can understand Bible has two parts, Old Testament and New Testament</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Model God’s love in a consistent, loving way</li> <li>- Teach that the Bible is true and trustworthy</li> <li>- Show how to use the Bible, find chapters and verses</li> <li>- Teach how the Old Testament and the New Testament go together, share that Jesus was fulfilling what the Old Testament was all about</li> <li>- Give specific examples of how Jesus shows love and care for us and others</li> <li>- Begin to use simple devotionals</li> <li>- Focus on spiritual discipline of prayer—building a habit</li> <li>- Write down prayer requests and see how God answers</li> <li>- Pray for nations/countries—point out on world maps</li> <li>- Pray for specific global needs and current events</li> <li>- Teach simple games/art from other cultures</li> <li>- Teach how to say words in other languages</li> <li>- Continue to give the salvation message frequently (avoid symbolism)</li> <li>- Give opportunities to lead in worship as well as serve others</li> </ul>
8-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Starting to reason, think for themselves</li> <li>- Learning to talk about what they read in the Bible</li> <li>- Becoming more outward focused</li> <li>- Recognize need for a personal savior</li> <li>- Beginning to personalize their own faith</li> <li>- Developing value system of right and wrong</li> <li>- Sense of justice</li> <li>- Can understand importance of serving others</li> <li>- Searching for identity/heroes beyond</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help children apply Bible stories and ideas to their everyday lives</li> <li>- Encourage and model how to look for answers to life questions in the Bible</li> <li>- Talk about what God is doing actively in your life as a model for the children</li> <li>- Focus on discipline of worship—singing, prayer, Bible reading, obedience, serving</li> <li>- Teach about and pray for unreached people groups</li> <li>- Pray for children at risk (poor, orphans, street children, child laborers, refugees)</li> <li>- Continue to give the salvation message frequently</li> <li>- Provide opportunities to lead and serve in worship</li> <li>- Teach we are blessed to bless others, provide giving and outreach opportunities</li> <li>- Read mission biographies, share stories of children God is using</li> <li>- Provide experiences for children to explore their own giftings and talents and</li> </ul>

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	the family unit	help them think about how God might want to use these for His purposes
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10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entering time of many physical, emotional, and social changes</li> <li>- Beginning to think abstractly</li> <li>- No longer thinking aloud, but processing ideas and feelings internally</li> <li>- Desire for increased independence, adult transitioning to mentor role</li> <li>- Peers are very important</li> <li>- Hero worship is strong</li> <li>- Capable of greater involvement in evangelism and service</li> <li>- Looking for identity and purpose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep communication open. Be patient and available. Listen, ask questions, and avoid being judgmental</li> <li>- Encourage to seek guidance from God to make everyday and long-range decisions</li> <li>- Provide opportunities to make decisions based on biblical concepts</li> <li>- Focus on discipline of daily Bible study, model how they can have their own, independent devotional time with God, talk about keeping a journal</li> <li>- Model prayer that shows you believe God is real</li> <li>- Talk about what God is doing actively in your life as a model</li> <li>- Continue prayer for unreached, be sensitive to certain peoples, issues, or areas of the world that God may be laying on your children's hearts</li> <li>- Teach how to pray specific Scripture passages and promises from God for these people groups</li> <li>- Introduce to missionaries or other believers who are serving God in a variety of ways/roles</li> <li>- Teach and model ways to share about Jesus with others</li> <li>- Provide opportunities for them to lead and serve in worship</li> <li>- Provide service and outreach opportunities they can do with their peers</li> <li>- Encourage friendships with those of other cultures and backgrounds</li> <li>- If you sense that God is calling a child to step out in faith for a specific purpose, support and affirm his calling or vision and pray with and for him</li> </ul>
13-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Beginning to become more independent</li> <li>-Bodies, moods and behavior are changing</li> <li>- Deciding what they really do or don't like</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help them keep connected with friends that can be a solid Christian support to them. Encourage them to reach out to those who are different or outcast.</li> <li>- Invest in good one-on-one times.</li> <li>- Help them make plans for spiritual growth (growing in areas that they are drawn to).</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deciding who they want to be</li> <li>- Building identity</li> <li>- Increased desire for ownership and responsibility</li> <li>- Friends are most important</li> <li>- Increased desire to be a part of something meaningful and bigger than themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seek to understand them and hear the essence of their heart.</li> <li>- Create a safe place to share, process, discuss and ask questions about faith and healthy boundaries. Look for answers in Scripture.</li> <li>- Let them know your love for them is not swayed by actions or failure to act.</li> <li>- Have a rite of passage, a special ceremony to mark entering into adulthood.</li> <li>- Assist them in finding opportunities to serve in areas where he or she has a passion.</li> <li>- Give them ownership in Bible studies and in service opportunities, leading and contributing their own ideas.</li> <li>- Be available and ask questions that can help them make wise decisions. Offer your opinion when asked.</li> <li>- Help them see what a life of pursuing God and advancing His Kingdom would look like in their life. Model it well.</li> <li>- Continue to expose them to stories of famous actors, athletes, activists, leaders, professionals, and missionaries who are honoring God in what they do and using their gifts and talents to further God's Kingdom.</li> <li>- Lead them in studying, praying and learning more about unreached people groups. Learn words and phrases in different languages.</li> <li>- Encourage them to go on a short-term trip, serving among the unreached.</li> <li>- For those who are beginning to earn an income, guide them in how to give back and partner with those who are going to work among the unreached.</li> </ul>
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