

A Volunteer's Guide to . . .

Talking About Faith



with Preschoolers

Repeat simple Bible verses: "Do not be afraid, for the Lord your God is with you."

"How can we share with our friends?" (Sharing is the foundation for service.)

"Who made you? God made you."

"What do you think it would feel like to be in the belly of a giant fish like Jonah? What do you think it smelled like? What do you think it sounded like?" (Engage them in the story using their senses and their imagination.)

"We're so grateful for (name of family member or friend). Let's pray and thank God for them together!"

"We can't see God, but we can know God is always with us."

"There's a story in the Bible about that. Let's read it together." (Use an age-appropriate storybook Bible.)

"Jesus wants to be your friend forever."

"God loves you so much."

"I'm sorry you feel that way." or "I'm glad you feel that way. Let's talk to God about that."



How to Talk About Faith

Faith conversations in the preschool phase are all about wonder.

→ Is there anything better than being a small part of a kid's story as they discover and rediscover the answer to this question: "Who is God?" In the preschool phase, these little humans (who think like artists) can relate to an invisible God because they can imagine.

God is 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.

The key to faith conversations with a preschooler is keeping them developmentally appropriate by matching your faith language with how they encounter the world. In other words, in order to have meaningful faith conversations with a preschooler, get in a preschooler's world.

In this Phase . . . As a volunteer, when you **embrace their physical needs**, you help a preschooler know God's love and meet God's family.

Preschoolers are motivated by safety. You can show preschoolers what God is like by being a safe and loving adult presence.

In Your Conversations . . .

BEFORE

Remember the phase. Faith will be a life-long conversation for kids, and not everything has to be (or should be) explained in one conversation. Sometimes it's just better to let them put a monkey in the manger scene and spend your hour talking about the wonder of Jesus being born rather than correcting their historical and geographical understanding of Bethlehem.

Say what matters most. Consider what ideas or phrases you most want kids to understand and hear—and then repeat them over and over and over.

Get creative. Think about how you can add movement, fun, art, or music to the conversation.

DURING

Prepare to listen. Expect tangents, lots of questions, and distractions. That's absolutely okay! Try not to get frustrated if the conversation doesn't go as planned.

Ignite their imagination. They might get some of the details of a Bible story wrong, but if they remember how big God is and that Jesus loves them, it's still a win.

Engage their senses. Since preschoolers think like artists, they learn best through participation and activities.

Make it short or add variety. The attention span of the average three-year-old is about eight minutes. So either make the conversation short or add several different activities to keep them engaged.

Repetition is your friend. The same simple Bible verses and stories taught over time boost their confidence as they understand and memorize.

AFTER

Find opportunities to connect ideas. Look for ways to repeat the big idea you talked about in future conversations and activities.

Cue the parent. Let parents know what you talked about at church—bonus points if you can tell them the way their unique kid responded or reacted during group time.

¹ Campbell, Jennifer. 2018. "Kinesthetic Learning Activities for Toddlers and Preschoolers | Red Apple Reading Blog." December 1, 2018.