

# Ten Ways

## TO HELP YOUR FAMILY GROW IN FAITH



For many Christian parents and caregivers, the idea of helping children grow in faith is intimidating. We ask ourselves questions like these: “What if I mess up and teach them something wrong?” “How can I do this when my own faith is wavering?” or “I didn’t grow up as a Christian. What if I don’t know enough?”

Before you do anything else, exhale. Family faith formation is a journey, not a destination, and growing in faith is an adventure, not a checklist. Along that journey there will be moments of discovery and joy, hard times, and times of confusion. But your guide on this adventure is none other than the Holy Spirit—so embrace the journey!

### 1. BE A SIGNPOST

Your job as a Christian parent is to point your family toward God. Look for opportunities to do that in your daily life together. Whenever you see something true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy (Phil. 4:8), take special notice. Thank God together for that person, place, or thing.

### 2. EXPLORE GOD’S STORY

If it’s hard to gather the whole family for after-dinner devotions, find other ways and times to explore God’s story together. For example, pick up a pack of the excellent [God’s Big Story](https://FaithAliveResources.org) cards ([FaithAliveResources.org](https://FaithAliveResources.org)) and use them as discussion starters. Consider choosing, memorizing, and displaying a family “theme verse.” Or post a short passage on your refrigerator on Sunday morning, and then talk about it at the end of the week after you’ve had time to “live into it” together.

### 3. SHARE YOUR STORIES

Sharing faith stories with family, friends, and church members is one of the best ways to grow in faith. To get the ball rolling, ask questions like these:

- Where did you see God today?
- Tell about a time when you felt that God was really close to you.
- Tell about a turning point in your life and how God was involved.

### 4. GROW WITH GOD’S PEOPLE

God created us as people who need community. Show your kids that the body of Christ is an important part of your life by spending time with other members of your faith family as you worship, serve, learn, and have fun together.

## 5. FIND YOUR “FAITHFUL FIVE”

Growing faith takes a village. Your extended family, your friends, and your church family can have a profound impact on your children’s faith. In fact, according to the folks at Fuller Youth Institute, the involvement of at least five non-family adults is key to kids’ faith formation. Who are (or who could be) your kids’ “faithful five”?

## 6. CELEBRATE MILESTONES

Baptisms, birthdays, graduations, and personal “firsts” are all milestones that families can mark together in ways that point to God. Gather for a prayer of thanks, and bless the person who has reached a milestone. Record the milestone in a family milestone journal or scrapbook along with photos. Give a special gift that commemorates the milestone. And have cake!

## 7. REACH OUT

Becoming more like Jesus means weaving service and hospitality into your family life. Reach out beyond your usual social circle and open your doors and hearts to others. There are so many ways to do this! Volunteer together for people and causes you care about. Get to know the people in your neighborhood. Care for members of your church and community who are hurting. Be the hands and feet of Jesus.

## 8. TAKE A REST

God wants us to do his work in the world, but God also knows that rest is important for our physical and spiritual health. Develop some family Sabbath practices as you carve out regular time for rest and recreation. Worship together. Play together. Turn the technology off for a while. Go on a picnic. Read good books to each other. Recharge your batteries.

## 9. STAY WARM

“In a comprehensive study of relational dynamics in more than 300 families spanning 35 years, family warmth was more correlated with faith transmission than any other relational factor,” say the folks at the Fuller Youth Institute. Let your kids know that your family is a safe place where they are loved and where they can explore faith questions and doubts. No question or problem is too big for God or for your family to explore together.

## 10. FILL YOUR TOOLBOX

Whether you learn best by reading, listening, or doing, there are lots of great family faith formation resources out there, including books, podcasts, blogs, and parent groups. You’ll find many of them in the [Family Faith Formation toolkit](https://crcna.org/FaithFormation/toolkits) ([crcna.org/FaithFormation/toolkits](https://crcna.org/FaithFormation/toolkits)) and at [tinyurl.com/FamilyFaithResources](https://tinyurl.com/FamilyFaithResources).

This resource has been developed by Thrive. If you have questions or would like support in ministry, please email [thrive@crcna.org](mailto:thrive@crcna.org).

