



HELPING CHILDREN TO ENGAGE WITH READING GOD'S WORD

We all would love for our kids to be hungry to read the Bible, but the reality is that some kids just aren't very interested. It might be that they genuinely just aren't interested in the Bible. This could be for a number of reasons. Maybe they've found it boring in the past or just don't want to be a Christian. Or maybe it's not the Bible as such that's the problem but the way they have been trying to access it.

PLEASE REMEMBER – although the Bible is a huge part of our faith, a kid can be an active, connected Christian and still not seem to touch their Bible much. They are still developing and growing in their faith. But we do want to encourage them to discover for themselves what an amazing book it is. Here are a just a few ideas for sharing the Bible with your children in different ways.

1. Ensure they have a Bible they can access and enjoy.

The Bible can be a daunting book to read! There are children's and youth versions of the Bible that can make reading it a much easier task. Look for ones which are laid out attractively, maybe with helpful explanations of difficult concepts, pictures and maps, or boxes where ideas are unpacked. I would recommend the Hands on Bible or Adventure Bible.

Bibles where you can journal are currently very popular and encourage children and young people to reflect on what they are reading. Other children may prefer a Bible story book such as The Jesus Storybook Bible or a picture version such as the Action Bible. Scripture Union's Diary of a Disciple series present the books of Luke and Acts in a popular, accessible way for 8 to 11 year olds.

And Bibles don't have to be only read - some children or young people may find audio versions easier or prefer a Bible app or may enjoy accessing Bible stories on Youtube. Other young people may love having a Bible which enables them to study it well, so they might prefer a study Bible with a concordance, cross-referencing and a reading plan. Games like the Guardians of Ancora can also foster a knowledge of the Bible which is helpful.

2. Help them see it as one big story, rather than a set of random stories, poems and history lessons.

The Bible is the story of how God created the world out of his great love, but it was broken and we are all affected, but how we get to partner with God as he puts things right. Phil Vischer's What's in the Bible has an amazing set of DVDs taking kids through the entire Bible which children and younger teens might enjoy (we still watch them now!). For older children and teens, the Bible Project videos are great, covering Bible themes and ideas as well as videos for each book of the Bible.

3. Buy them a Bible even if they don't want one.

If you don't have a Bible you can't read it! You can say to a young person, 'I want to make sure you have a Bible in case you ever need one. I can choose it for you, but I'd really like to know which one you'd prefer', and ask them to choose. That way you are creating a window into how important you think the Bible is as well as making sure they have one.

4. Create windows into the importance of Scripture for you.

Talk about the impact the Bible has had on you: for example, 'I was reading the Bible today and wow! I read this verse and it just jumped off the page at me'. Share the different ways you access Scripture - maybe through a daily verse or reading notes or by meeting up with a friend (virtually!).