

Age	What to do
	Each of the things listed for the younger children, you can continue to do with them as they get older.
	<p>Try to be in the Bible with them every day, even if only for 5 minutes of reading and discussion. If you miss a day or two a week, it's okay, but aim for all.</p> <p>Don't read them devotions. Read them the Bible and Bible content (see 2 Timothy 3:15-17; the "writings" spoken of in verse 15 refer to teaching materials they had for children, which were based on the Scriptures). The hope is that, over the years, they develop a habit of spending time in the Bible most every day.</p>
<p>Birth to 3 years</p>	<p>Sing worship songs to them. This can turn into singing together. Not only is this a way for them to learn to praise God, but singing is also a great way to get truth into them at an early age.</p> <p>Pray over them daily (I say "over them" referring to praying for them, out loud, in their presence, and often times putting your hand on their arm, shoulder, head, etc.). I would suggest doing this as long as they are in your home. Even when they start praying their own prayers, continue to pray over them. Here are some ideas of times - when you do Bible time with them, when they go to bed, and actually before any event is a good time (school, going to spend time with other people, traveling somewhere, etc.). Right before you pray, you might want to say something like, "Let's talk to God." Language like that can demonstrate that praying is normal and comfortable, like a conversation.</p> <p>If you read to them, you can read from the Bible.</p> <p>As soon as they are old enough, start teaching them to pray themselves in age appropriate ways. Here are some categories you may want to teach them to pray through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Praise God</u> for something that He is, maybe something you discovered in the Bible that day - <u>Thank God</u> for something God has done that they learned in the Bible, for something from their day, for something they have - family, parents, education, food, clothes, house, etc. - <u>Confess sin</u>: anything they have done that day that is wrong; encourage them to really think about it - <u>For some need/want in their own life</u> - <u>For some other person's need</u>: you don't have to introduce all of those categories at one time, but you may want to work them into praying in categories (categories are helpful for all of us to help lead us through our prayer time)

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<p>Birth to 3 years <i>continued</i></p>	<p>Communicating Biblical Values Through Everyday Stuff</p> <p><u>Value: God is the Creator</u> Examples: As you go through your day, point to things and say, “God made that. God made everything.” Say to your child/children sometimes, “God made you.” After a while, start asking them who made whatever thing.</p> <p><u>Value: Knowing what God is like</u> Examples: “God knows everything,” “God is good,” “God is smart/wise,” “God is powerful.”</p> <p><u>Value: We are loved by God/Jesus</u> Examples: Sometimes, instead of just saying to your child, “I love you,” say something like, “I love you, and so does Jesus.” After a while, start asking them, “Who does God love?”</p> <p><u>Value: Being a child of God</u> Example: “You’re my child. And, we can become children of God, in Jesus.”</p> <p><u>Value: Trusting Jesus</u> Example: This is something you should include in praying for them regularly. Also, look for opportunities in conversation to tell them you look forward to them trusting Jesus.</p> <p><u>Value: Being thankful</u> When something good happens say, “Thank you Jesus.” If it’s significant even say, “Let’s thank Jesus for that,” and do even a brief prayer.</p> <p><u>Value: Obedience to parents, and eventually God</u> Example: When you give them an instruction to do something, you could follow up with something like, “Now let’s obey your parent.”</p> <p><u>Value: Avoiding sin</u> Example: When they do something that is clearly sin, like stealing or lying, say, “We don’t do that, because it’s sin.” You shouldn’t say it in a mean voice. You may struggle to tell your sweet little child they have sinned, but they need to learn that this is true of us.</p> <p><u>Value: Confessing/apologizing, eventually to God</u> When they wrong someone, teach them to say, “I apologize for (whatever they did). That was wrong. Will you forgive me?”</p> <p><u>Value: Basing our lives on God’s word</u> Example: When they ask you a question, think what the Bible says about that topic. If you can think of something, you should say, “Well, the Bible teaches... So we should...”</p> <p><u>Value: Christians are our family</u> Example: When going to church or talking about going to church, say something like, “It’s time to go be with our family in Christ.” If you are going to have dinner with some other Christians, say something like, “We are having our brothers and sisters in Christ over for dinner.”</p> <p><u>Value: Serving</u> When you ask them to do a task, like pick up toys, you could say something like, “We don’t want Mommy to have to pick up your toys,” or, “We don’t want Daddy to hurt his foot on your toys.” “Let’s serve our family, by picking up toys. We want to be servants.”</p> <p><u>Value: Truth</u> Example: If they are ever telling a lie, or you can tell they are being tempted to, you could say, “Now let’s tell the truth, because God values truth.”</p> <p><u>Value: Giving</u> Have them help you give your offering somehow, and tell them that you are, “Giving to God,” even if you think they are too young to really understand.</p> <p><u>Value: Witnessing</u> If you run into a friend, a neighbor, or whoever, who doesn’t trust Jesus, after you leave that person, say to your child/children, “Let’s pray for (the person’s name) to trust Jesus.” Then pray for them, including that you would speak to them about Jesus if God wants that.</p>

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3 - 4 years	<p>Pray over them daily (I say “over them” referring to praying for them, out loud, in their presence, and often times putting your hand on their arm, shoulder, head, etc.). I would suggest doing this as long as they are in your home. Even when they start praying their own prayers, continue to pray over them. Here are some ideas of times - when you do Bible time with them, when they go to bed, and actually before any event is a good time (school, going to spend time with other people, traveling somewhere, etc.).</p> <p>Teach them to pray themselves in age appropriate ways. Here are some categories you may want to teach them to pray through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Praise God for something that He is, maybe something you discovered in the Bible that day - How do they want to be, based on what they learned in the Bible - Thank God for something God has done that they learned in the Bible, for something from their day, for something they have - family, parents, education, food, clothes, house, etc. - Confess sin: anything they have done that day that is wrong, agree with God that it is wrong, and ask for forgiveness. Encourage them to really think about it. After they do, maybe say, “And does God forgive you? Yes, every time.” (1 John 1:9-10) - For some need/want in their own life: may be a big need, or just something fairly routine maybe in the next day - For some other person’s need: you don’t have to introduce all of those categories at one time, but you may want to work them into praying in categories (categories are helpful for all of us to help lead us through our prayer time) <p>Get a Bible that has pictures and short summaries of Bible content. Ideally, don’t just get a book of “stories,” but a Bible that goes from Genesis to Revelation, and has teaching that is not just stories. Not saying it has to have the whole text of the Bible, but just that it has content from all around the Bible (as opposed to, for example, just stories of creation, David and Goliath, and the flood). Make sure it contains a good amount about Jesus.</p> <p>Read it to them, showing the pictures. Make sure to make a clear, simple, main point. David defeating Goliath is not about being brave; it’s about trusting God’s ability to defeat the enemies of His faithful people. Then, this is important, ask them to tell you what they learned.</p> <p>Start using steps of Bible study. You don’t have to teach them the steps at this age. But you start using the steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpretation (you just do this step for them): Why was this being said/written to the original recipients? What was the meaning/point the speaker/writer likely wanted them to understand? - Timeless truth (you just do this step for them): Is there anything about the interpretation that was just for their time or their culture? If so, what truth can we still extract from this that could apply to any time or culture? - Application (you can ask them these questions): Is there something in your life that this has to do with? From what you learned, is there something you could do? <p>Start having them memorize scripture. If you get this from your church, you can use what they give you. If you don’t, just pick a simple verse. Pick something simple, and in an easy version of the Bible. This doesn’t have to be overwhelming for them or you. You could even just do one per month; that would still be 12 verses per year. Even just having them read it every day, as opposed to trying to “memorize” it, is fine.</p> <p>You want to infuse a biblical worldview and thinking into everything. So, be alert to stuff that is happening in their lives. As you have conversations with them, where you are teaching them how to think about things and how to do things, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject. As you have conversations with them, where you are correcting them, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject and how God thinks/feels about it. You don’t have to know the chapter and verse; tell them the principles you know. Tell them how you try to think about and live those things God’s ways.</p>

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5 - 7 years	<p>Pray over them daily (I say “over them” referring to praying for them, out loud, in their presence, and often times putting your hand on their arm, shoulder, head, etc.). I would suggest doing this as long as they are in your home. Even when they start praying their own prayers, continue to pray over them. Here are some ideas of times - when you do Bible time with them, when they go to bed, and actually before any event is a good time (school, going to spend time with other people, traveling somewhere, etc.).</p> <p>It would be good to establish a fairly set time every day to have “quiet time.” Call it “quiet time.” The hope is that they would start developing a habit of doing this that will carry on for their whole lives, as it was modeled by Jesus (Mark 1:35, Luke 5:15, Matt. 14:23). During that time, study the Bible and have them pray.</p> <p>Have them pray themselves, but have them pray out loud, because you are still teaching them about prayer. Here are some categories you may want to teach them to pray through (categories are helpful for all of us to help lead us through our prayer time):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Praise God</u> for something that He is, maybe something you discovered in the Bible that day - <u>How do they want to be</u>, based on what they learned in the Bible - <u>Thank God</u> for something God has done that they learned in the Bible, for something from their day, for something they have - family, parents, education, food, clothes, house, etc. - <u>Confess sin</u>: anything they have done that day that is wrong, agree with God that it is wrong and ask for forgiveness. Encourage them to really think about it. After they do, maybe say, “And does God forgive you? Yes, every time.” (1 John 1:9-10) - <u>For some need/want in their own life</u>: may be a big need, or just something fairly routine maybe in the next day - <u>For some other person’s need</u>: you don’t have to introduce all of those categories at one time, but you may want to work them into praying in categories (categories are helpful for all of us to help lead us through our prayer time) <p>Get a Bible that is the complete text of the Bible, in simple language, like the NIV. The New International Reader’s Version (NIRV) is a translation specifically for young children. The writers of the NIRV took the NIV and made it easier to read by using shorter words and easy-to-understand language. The result is a Bible translation that reads at about a 3rd grade level. New Living Translation (NLT) is another fairly simple translation.</p> <p>Go through whole books of the Bible with your child/children. One of the easiest ways to make it more manageable to do this daily is, teach them the same section of the Bible that you are reading yourself. That way, you have already been through the text and understand it. Read them the text, in their version, and simplify it verbally. Ideally, do some sort of object lesson, not only to help with understanding, but to help them remember, and to make it more fun. Ask them some questions, based on the text. Then, ask them to tell you what they learned.</p> <p>This stage of life requires a little more planning to do the object lessons. Have some little visual or physical thing that you use to help with the Bible lesson. It could be a picture you find or draw. You can grab a toy or action figure to illustrate the lesson. You can roll play the scene together. It doesn’t have to be super complex, or done perfectly, but a little planning will make it go much better.</p> <p>Start teaching them to use steps in Bible study. Even use these words with them so it gets in their vocabulary and habits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Interpretation</u>: Why was this being said/written to the original recipients? What was the meaning/point the speaker/writer likely wanted them to understand? - <u>Timeless truth</u>: Is there anything about the interpretation that was just for their time or their culture? If so, what truth can we still extract from this that could apply to any time or culture? - <u>Application</u>: How can you apply that truth to your life (even right now)? And what do you plan to do to apply it? <p>Have them memorize scripture. If you get this from your church, you can use what they give you. If you don’t, just pick a simple verse. Pick something simple, and in an easy version of the Bible. This doesn’t have to be overwhelming for them or you. You could even just do one per month; that would still be 12 verses per year. Even just having them read it every day, as opposed to trying to “memorize” it, is fine.</p> <p>You want to infuse a biblical worldview and thinking into everything. So, be alert to stuff that is happening in their lives. As you have conversations with them, where you are teaching them how to think about things and how to do things, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject. As you have conversations with them, where you are correcting them, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject and how God thinks/feels about it. You don’t have to know the chapter and verse; tell them the principles you know. Tell them how you try to think about and live those things God’s ways.</p>

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8 - 10 years	<p>Pray over them daily (I say “over them” referring to praying for them, out loud, in their presence, and often times putting your hand on their arm, shoulder, head, etc.). I would suggest doing this as long as they are in your home. Even when they start praying their own prayers, continue to pray over them. Here are some ideas of times - when you do Bible time with them, when they go to bed, and actually before any event is a good time (school, going to spend time with other people, traveling somewhere, etc.).</p> <p>It would be good to establish a fairly set time every day to have “quiet time.” Call it “quiet time.” The hope is that they would start developing a habit of doing this that will carry on for their whole lives, as it was modeled by Jesus (Mark 1:35, Luke 5:15, Matt. 14:23). During that time, study the Bible and have them pray.</p> <p>Have them pray themselves. Probably still have them pray out loud, because you are still teaching them about prayer. Here are some categories you may want to teach them to pray through (categories are helpful for all of us to help lead us through our prayer time):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Praise God</u> for something that He is, maybe something you discovered in the Bible that day - <u>How do they want to be</u>, based on what they learned in the Bible - <u>Thank God</u> for something God has done that they learned in the Bible, for something from their day, for something they have - family, parents, education, food, clothes, house, etc. - <u>Confess sin</u>: anything they have done that day that is wrong, agree with God that it is wrong and ask for forgiveness. Encourage them to really think about it. After they do, maybe say, “And does God forgive you? Yes, every time.” (1 John 1:9-10) - <u>For some need/want in their own life</u>: may be a big need, or just something fairly routine maybe in the next day - <u>For some other person’s need</u>: you don’t have to introduce all of those categories at one time, but you may want to work them into praying in categories (categories are helpful for all of us to help lead us through our prayer time) <p>You could get them a little more literal translation of the Bible at this point, although it wouldn’t be bad to stay with the same translation you used from ages 5-7 (for example, if you have been using NIV, you could move into New Living Translation).</p> <p>Go through whole books of the Bible with your child/children. One of the easiest ways to make it more manageable to do this daily is, teach them the same section of the Bible that you are reading yourself. That way, you have already been through the text and understand it. Read them the text (at some point they may want to start reading it themselves). Ask them the interpretation and timeless truth questions. Make sure they get the main point(s) clear. Ask them the application questions.</p> <p>Use steps in Bible study. Even use these words with them so it gets in their vocabulary and habits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Interpretation</u>: Why was this being said/written to the original recipients? What was the meaning/point the speaker/writer likely wanted them to understand? - <u>Timeless truth</u>: Is there anything about the interpretation that was just for their time or their culture? If so, what truth can we still extract from this that could apply to any time or culture? - <u>Application</u>: How can you apply that truth to your life (even right now)? And what do you plan to do to apply it? <p>You can, maybe even should, still use object lessons when a concept is difficult to understand (this is helpful even through adulthood). But you should probably be weaning them off of <i>needing</i> this just to make the Bible time more fun.</p> <p>Have them memorize scripture. If you get this from your church, you can use what they give you. If you don’t, just pick a simple verse. Pick something simple, and in an easy version of the Bible. This doesn’t have to be overwhelming for them or you. You could even just do one per month; that would still be 12 verses per year. Even just having them read it every day, as opposed to trying to “memorize” it, is fine.</p> <p>You want to infuse a biblical worldview and thinking into everything. So, be alert to stuff that is happening in their lives. As you have conversations with them, where you are teaching them how to think about things and how to do things, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject. As you have conversations with them, where you are correcting them, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject and how God thinks/feels about it. You don’t have to know the chapter and verse; tell them the principles you know. Tell them how you try to think about and live those things God’s ways.</p>

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<p>11 years to (age that you start setting them off on their own will vary based on spiritual maturity, experience, personality, etc.)</p>	<p>Pray over them daily (I say “over them” referring to praying for them, out loud, in their presence, and often times putting your hand on their arm, shoulder, head, etc.). I would suggest doing this as long as they are in your home. Even when they start praying their own prayers, continue to pray over them. Here are some ideas of times - when you do Bible time with them, when they go to bed, and actually before any event is a good time (school, going to spend time with other people, traveling somewhere, etc.).</p> <p>At some point, you should probably encourage them to set their own time every day to have “quiet time,” and have them start doing it on their own. (The exception would be, if you are just introducing quiet time to your child at this age. See the previous age group for ideas on quiet time.)</p> <p>Have them pray themselves. When they have prayed consistently for years, they can start doing their prayers on their own (if not, then go back to the instructions for a younger age group). If they have been praying through the categories (see previous age group), you should suggest they continue to do that, because those are biblical categories for prayer. You could make them a prayer note book, with the categories in it, and blank pages in case they would want to record various things and people they want to be praying for.</p> <p>When they have been studying the Bible with you for years, they can start doing Bible study on their own (if not, then go back to the instructions for a younger age group). You should suggest they continue to go through whole books of the Bible and use the steps of Bible study they have learned (see previous age group). Also, if they have been studying the Bible for years, you should be working them toward a more literal, word for word, translation of the Bible (like NASB or ESV).</p> <p>As long as you keep doing Bible study with them: If they haven’t already started to want to do this at a younger age, now you should start having them read the text on their own, and trying to interpret it on their own, and coming up with timeless truths on their own. You could prompt them with the categories, saying, “Interpretation?”, “Timeless truth?”, “Your application?”. You don’t have to ask them the questions under each of those categories, if they are coming to the right ideas without you asking them the specific questions. You only jump in if you need to correct, clear up, and help as necessary.</p> <p>Have them memorize scripture. If you get this from your church, you can use what they give you. If you don’t, just pick a simple verse. Pick something simple, and in an easy version of the Bible. This doesn’t have to be overwhelming for them or you. You could even just do one per month; that would still be 12 verses per year. Even just having them read it every day, as opposed to trying to “memorize” it, is fine.</p> <p>You want to infuse a biblical worldview and thinking into everything. So, be alert to stuff that is happening in their lives. As you have conversations with them, where you are teaching them how to think about things and how to do things, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject. As you have conversations with them, where you are correcting them, tell them what the Bible has to say about the subject and how God thinks/feels about it. You don’t have to know the chapter and verse; tell them the principles you know. Tell them how you try to think about and live those things God’s ways.</p>