

It's Just A Phase . . . So Don't Miss It

As a parent, you want to invest your time in things that matter. Like having the right conversation with your child at the right time, with the right things to say at your fingertips. These conversation guides will help you navigate the critical issues you face at each phase, as you imagine the end for your child. They are based on research from **The Phase Project**, a collaborative, ongoing effort assembling classic and innovative research with practical application.



Elementary

FAITH

PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

. . . for great conversations with kids

Faith. It's only five letters, but it's a big word—especially for kids. How we talk about faith at each phase of a person's life matters for how they'll think about faith in the phases to come. Elementary kids have an active imagination that leads them to ask questions about their world and what they experience. As they learn new stories from the Bible, you'll be amazed at the questions they start to consider. The best thing to remember is to treat each question with care. How you respond to your kids each time they have questions about faith will determine if they continue you to talk to you about their faith. Your role is to:

Provoke
DISCOVERY



So they will . . .
**TRUST GOD'S CHARACTER
& EXPERIENCE GOD'S FAMILY**

This guide is designed to help you meet your elementary-age kid where they are now, giving you some words to say and not to say as you navigate the critical issue of faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind:

Authentic Faith: trusting Jesus in a way that transforms how I love God, myself, and the rest of the world.

WHAT TO SAY:

"I don't know. Let's find out together." *(It's okay if you don't know everything. Use that as an opportunity to discover something new about God.)*

"Have you read anything in the Bible that means a lot to you?"

"Did you know there are 66 books in the Bible and they all connect to tell one story?"

"I wonder what God's Word says about that. Let's look together . . ."

"No question is too big or too small for God to handle."

"What's something you're struggling with that I can pray with you about?"

"That reminds me of a time when I went through something similar. Here's what I learned . . ." *(Tell your own faith stories.)*

"Can I tell you about the first time I trusted Jesus?"

"Let's think of some ways we could serve someone else." *(Help kids live out their faith through service.)*

"Having faith may not always be easy, but we can trust God no matter what."

"I know it's hard to tell sometimes, but what do you think is the wise choice in this situation?"

"If you were in the same situation, how would you want to be treated?"

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"We don't ask questions like that."

"I don't struggle with trusting God." *(Everyone at some point struggles with their faith and doubt. Make it personal and be honest about your struggles and how you worked through them.)*

"If you really had faith, you wouldn't feel like this." *(Anxiety, hurt, sadness, etc.)*

"God wants you to read your Bible every single day." *(Reading your Bible regularly is an important faith skill, but don't set unrealistic expectations for elementary kids.)*

"Singing is the way we worship God." *(Singing is a way we worship God. Help kids understand they can worship God simply by how they live their life.)*

"If you really loved God, you would . . ."

JUST REMEMBER

Every PHASE is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The elementary years are the discovery years. Discovery happens when you ask questions. So encourage your child to ask all their questions—especially ones about their faith—but know that you don't have to have all the right answers. This is the perfect time to reinforce the idea that you're a safe person to talk to and you welcome and honor their curiosity.