

Copyright

A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow

Companion Guidebook for Parents and Grandparents

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Parents and caregivers should adapt activities and discussions to the age, development, abilities, and individual needs of each child.

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Children should be encouraged to tell a parent, guardian, or trusted caregiver whenever something frightens, hurts, confuses, or concerns them.

The Shepherd's Meadow

The Shepherd's Meadow is a Joe Soares Music children's music and teaching project.

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A Note to Parents & Grandparents

Dear Parent,

Dear Grandparent,

A child's day is full of ordinary moments.

Waking up.

Getting dressed.

Eating breakfast.

Playing.

Helping.

Sharing.

Using kind words.

Eating again.

Slowing down.

Praying.

Going to sleep.

To an adult, those moments can seem small.

To a little child, they are life.

And every one of them can become an opportunity to teach something about God.

A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow was created to help parents and grandparents bring simple biblical truth into the everyday routines of children ages two to five.

This album begins in the morning with:

Good Morning, Jesus

and ends at bedtime with:

Jesus Watches Over Me.

In between, children sing about gratitude, how God made them, food, helping, kindness, sharing, words, trusting God for what they need, prayer, and thankfulness at the end of the day.

The goal is not simply to give children twelve more songs to enjoy.

The goal is to help families connect those songs with real life.

When your child wakes up, you can say:

“Good morning. Who are we going to walk with today?”

When breakfast arrives:

“Who can we thank for our food?”

When toys need to be picked up:

“Do I see some happy helping hands?”

When another child wants a turn:

“Remember our sharing song?”

When kind words are needed:

“What can we say?”

When the day is finished:

“What can we thank God for today?”

And when the lights go out:

“Who cares for us while we sleep?”

Little moments.

Simple questions.

Biblical truth.

Repeated again and again.

That is what this guide is about.

Young children do not need long lessons every time something happens.

They need truth they can understand.

They need repetition.

They need adults who will open the Bible.

They need adults who will live the truth in front of them.

And they need to hear that following Jesus belongs in everyday life, not only at church.

This guide will help you take each song and connect it with Scripture, simple conversation, activities, prayer, and real family moments.

The pattern remains simple:

Sing one song.

Read one verse.

Ask one question.

Practice one truth.

Pray one short prayer.

Then come back to it tomorrow.

The song is not the authority.

The guide is not the authority.

God's Word is.

The music simply gives little minds something memorable to carry with them.

Our prayer is that when the child remembers the song, the truth behind it comes back too.

When they sing:

"God made me,"

they remember that God is their Creator.

When they sing:

"Thank You, God, for every bite,"

they remember gratitude.

When they sing:

"Be kind,"

they remember that kindness matters to God.

When they sing:

"Jesus watches over me,"

they remember they can pray and rest in His care.

These are simple lessons.

But simple does not mean unimportant.

We are helping little hearts begin learning how God's truth belongs in a whole day.

Morning.

Mealtime.

Playtime.

Family time.

Quiet time.

Bedtime.

All of it.

And as your child grows, the lessons can grow too.

For now, begin where little children live.

In the ordinary moments.

That is where much of discipleship begins.

Joe Soares

The Shepherd's Meadow

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Why This Guide Matters

The years between two and five may seem very young, but they are important years.

Children are listening.

They are watching.

They are repeating.

They are learning what matters long before they can explain why it matters.

A little child may not understand a long Bible lesson, but that child can understand:

God made me.

God loves me.

I can talk to God.

I can thank God.

I can help.

I can be kind.

I can share.

God cares for me.

Those simple truths become building blocks.

And one of the best places to teach them is in the ordinary rhythm of a child's day.

Faith Is Not Only for Sunday

Children should learn that God is not someone we talk about only when we go to church.

We can talk about God when we wake up.

We can thank Him when we eat.

We can ask for His help when we have trouble obeying.

We can remember His Word when we need to be kind.

We can pray when we are afraid.

We can thank Him before we go to sleep.

That is one of the reasons *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* follows a child from morning until bedtime.

The songs connect biblical truth with moments that happen again and again.

That repetition gives parents and grandparents opportunities to reinforce the lesson naturally.

You do not always have to announce:

“Now we are going to have a Bible lesson.”

Sometimes the lesson begins because breakfast is sitting on the table.

“Who should we thank for our food?”

Sometimes it begins when toys cover the floor.

“Can you be a happy helper?”

Sometimes another child reaches for the same toy.

“What did we learn about sharing?”

Sometimes your little one is frightened after the lights go out.

“Remember our song? We can pray when we're afraid.”

These are not interruptions to discipleship.

These are opportunities for discipleship.

Songs Can Follow Children Into Everyday Life

Music has an unusual ability to stay with us.

Adults can often remember songs they learned as children even when they have forgotten many other things from those years.

That is why we want these songs to contain more than catchy words.

We want the catchy words connected to truth.

A child who remembers:

“God made me, God made me”

has an opportunity to remember that God is the Creator.

A child who sings:

“Thank You, God, for every bite”

is practicing gratitude.

A child who remembers:

“Be kind, be kind, be kind today”

has a simple reminder when kindness becomes difficult.

And at bedtime:

“Jesus watches over me”

can remind a frightened little heart that Jesus cares and that we can pray.

The song is not replacing Scripture.

It is helping the child remember a truth that you can then connect directly to Scripture.

You Are More Important Than This Guide

This book can give you Bible verses.

It can give you questions.

It can suggest activities.

It can help you explain difficult ideas in preschool language.

But **you** are the person your child or grandchild is watching.

If we sing about kindness and then speak harshly, children notice.

If we teach gratitude while constantly complaining, children notice.

If we tell them prayer matters but they never hear us pray, children notice.

If we tell them to share but they see us living selfishly, children notice.

That does not mean parents and grandparents must be perfect.

We aren't.

In fact, some of the most valuable teaching moments happen when a child sees an adult recognize that he or she was wrong.

You can say:

“I shouldn't have spoken that way. Will you forgive me?”

That teaches something powerful.

Following Jesus is not pretending we never do wrong.

We need His help too.

Grandparents Have a Special Opportunity

A grandparent may not be present for every breakfast, every bath, every disagreement over a toy, or every bedtime.

But grandparents often have something enormously valuable:

influence.

A song in the car can become a conversation.

Lunch together can become an opportunity to thank God.

A walk outside can become a conversation about the God who made the world.

A difficult moment can become an opportunity to talk about kindness, patience, forgiveness, or prayer.

Bedtime during a sleepover can become a memory a child carries for years.

You do not need a classroom.

You need a relationship.

You need God's Word.

And you need a willingness to use the moments He gives you.

Small Lessons Can Produce Lasting Memories

Do not become discouraged if your two-year-old cannot explain the lesson back to you.

Do not turn every song into a test.

Do not worry if your child runs away halfway through a conversation because something interesting caught his attention.

Keep teaching.

Keep singing.

Keep opening the Bible.

Keep praying.

Keep living it.

Today the child may simply sing:

“Thank You, God.”

Later, that child can learn more about why we give thanks.

Today the child may understand:

“God made me.”

Later, you can teach more about creation and what it means to belong to our Creator.

Today the child may understand:

“I can pray when I'm scared.”

Later, that child can learn much more about prayer, faith, suffering, God's will, and trusting Him.

We are planting.

Growth takes time.

The Goal

The goal of this guide is not to produce a child who can perform twelve songs perfectly.

It is not to produce a preschooler who can give all the right answers.

It is not even to see how many Bible verses a young child can memorize.

Those things can be useful, but they are not the goal.

We want children to begin knowing **who God is, what He has said, and why His Word matters in their everyday lives.**

We want them to see that Jesus belongs in the whole day.

When they wake up.

When they eat.

When they play.

When they help.

When they speak.

When they are afraid.

When they pray.

When they go to sleep.

One day at a time.

One song at a time.

One Scripture at a time.

One little heart at a time.

How Toddlers Learn

Teaching a two-year-old is not the same as teaching a ten-year-old.

That sounds obvious, but it matters when we begin teaching biblical truth.

Young children are still learning language, attention, self-control, memory, and how the world around them works. A lesson that seems extremely simple to an adult may contain several completely new ideas for a preschooler.

That is why *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* uses short phrases, repetition, movement, familiar routines, and simple questions.

We are not watering down truth.

We are **bringing truth to a level a little child can begin to understand.**

Repetition Is Your Friend

Adults sometimes become tired of repetition long before children do.

A preschooler may want to hear the same song again.

And again.

And again.

That can actually help us.

When your child sings:

“God made me, God made me”

for the twentieth time, you do not need twenty different explanations.

Keep reinforcing the same simple truth:

“That’s right. God made you.”

Later you might add:

“And the Bible tells us that.”

Then:

“Do you remember the verse we read?”

Understanding can grow gradually.

Repetition helps make that possible.

Young Children Learn Through Routines

This is especially important for this album.

A young child's life contains many predictable events.

Wake up.

Get dressed.

Eat.

Play.

Clean up.

Eat again.

Get ready for bed.

Pray.

Sleep.

Instead of treating those routines as separate from spiritual teaching, we can attach biblical truth to them.

When your child wakes:

“Good morning, Jesus.”

When food arrives:

“Thank You, God, for every bite.”

When toys need cleaning up:

“Helping hands.”

When another child needs a turn:

“A little for me, a little for you.”

When bedtime comes:

“Jesus watches over me.”

Over time, the routine itself can become a reminder.

The food reminds the child to give thanks.

The toys remind the child to help.

The other child reminds him to share.

The darkness reminds him that he can pray.

This is one reason routine-based songs can be so useful.

Young Children Learn by Doing

Preschoolers were not designed to sit through long lectures.

They touch.

They point.

They move.

They imitate.

They ask questions.

They try things.

They get distracted.

Then they come back.

Use that.

When a song mentions hands, let your child show you his hands.

When it mentions toes, point to toes.

When you sing about helping, actually help someone.

When you sing about sharing, practice sharing something.

When you sing about kind words, practice saying them.

When you sing about prayer, pray.

The activity should reinforce the truth rather than merely entertain the child.

That distinction matters.

The goal is not:

“How can I keep my child busy?”

The better question is:

“How can I help my child understand this truth?”

Young Children Learn Through Imitation

Your child is watching you.

That means some of the most important lessons in this guide will never happen while the book is open.

Your child hears whether you say please.

Your child sees whether you give thanks.

Your child watches whether you help.

Your child notices how you treat people.

Your child hears how you speak when you are frustrated.

Your child sees whether prayer is actually part of your life.

If you want to teach gratitude, let your child hear you thank God.

If you want to teach kindness, let your child see you being kind.

If you want to teach helping, let your child help alongside you.

If you want to teach prayer, let your child hear you pray.

You are giving the lesson a living example.

Keep Questions Simple

Sometimes adults ask preschoolers questions that are far too complicated.

Instead of:

“What does this song teach us about God's providential care?”

Ask:

“Who takes care of us?”

Instead of:

“How can we demonstrate Christian kindness toward others?”

Ask:

“What can we do when someone is sad?”

Instead of:

“Why should Christians express gratitude?”

Ask:

“What can we say to God for our food?”

Simple questions are not inferior questions.

They are appropriate questions.

As your child grows, the questions can grow too.

Do Not Turn Every Lesson Into a Test

There is a difference between helping a child remember and constantly examining a child.

If every song ends with:

“What did that mean?”

“What was the verse?”

“What did I just tell you?”

“What are you supposed to do?”

the child may begin experiencing Bible time as a performance.

Sometimes simply say:

“That song reminds us that God made us.”

Then continue with your day.

Sometimes ask a question.

Sometimes demonstrate the lesson.

Sometimes read the verse.

Sometimes sing the song again.

There is room for all of it.

Use Real Moments

A lesson about sharing is useful.

A lesson about sharing **while two children both want the same toy** is memorable.

A lesson about gratitude is useful.

A lesson about gratitude **while everyone is sitting in front of dinner** connects truth with life.

A lesson about fear is useful.

A quiet reminder that your child can pray **when she wakes frightened during the night** meets her exactly where she is.

Watch for those moments.

You do not have to manufacture all of them.

Family life will provide plenty.

Keep Bible Time Positive, but Truthful

We want children to enjoy learning God's Word.

We can smile.

We can sing.

We can celebrate when they remember something.

But biblical teaching is not merely about producing happy feelings.

Children also need to begin learning that there is right and wrong.

Sometimes we obey.

Sometimes we disobey.

Sometimes we are kind.

Sometimes we are selfish.

Sometimes we tell the truth.

Sometimes we do wrong and need forgiveness.

Those truths can be introduced gently without pretending that every choice is equally good.

A child can begin understanding:

“God tells us what is right.”

That foundation becomes increasingly important as the child grows.

Attention Spans Are Short

A five-minute lesson that your child actually hears is better than a twenty-minute lesson spent trying to make a preschooler sit still.

That is why many activities in this guide are deliberately short.

Sing.

Read.

Talk.

Practice.

Pray.

Done.

You can always return later.

There is no prize for finishing an entire section in one sitting.

Children Develop at Different Rates

One three-year-old may speak in long sentences.

Another may answer with one or two words.

One child may memorize a chorus quickly.

Another may simply sway to the music.

One may ask endless questions.

Another may quietly listen.

Do not make another child's development the standard for yours.

Meet the child in front of you.

If your child can answer:

“God did.”

Wonderful.

If an older preschooler can explain:

“God made me, so I should thank Him,”

you can build from there.

The truth remains the same.

The depth of the conversation changes.

Keep Coming Back to God's Word

The songs help children remember.

The activities help children experience the lesson.

The questions help children think.

But Scripture tells us what is true.

That is why every song chapter in this guide will bring you back to the Bible.

Even if your child remembers only a few words of the verse, let him see you open the Bible.

Let her learn that these truths did not originate in a song.

They did not originate in this guide.

They come from God's Word.

Over time, that lesson may become one of the most important lessons of all:

When we want to know what is true, we go to the Bible.

How to Use This Guide

This guide was designed to fit into family life, not make family life more complicated.

You do not need to prepare a lesson.

You do not need a classroom.

You do not need special teaching experience.

You do not even need to complete every activity in each chapter.

You need a few minutes, an open Bible, and a willingness to talk with your child or grandchild about God during the ordinary moments of the day.

The basic pattern is simple:

Listen.

Read.

Talk.

Practice.

Pray.

That is enough to begin.

Start With the Song

Each chapter corresponds with one song from *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow*.

Begin by listening together.

Do not worry about explaining everything the first time.

Let your child enjoy the music.

Sing along.

Do the movements.

Notice which words your child begins repeating.

After several listens, you may discover that your child already knows the hook:

“Good morning, Jesus.”

“God made me.”

“Thank You, God, for every bite.”

“Helping hands.”

“Be kind.”

“Share, share, share.”

“Jesus watches over me.”

Those remembered phrases give you natural openings for conversation.

Open the Bible

Every chapter includes a Scripture foundation from the **King James Version**.

Whenever possible, actually open your Bible and read the verse.

Even if your child cannot understand every word yet, there is value in seeing where the teaching comes from.

You might say:

“This is God's Word. Let's see what the Bible says.”

Then read the verse.

For a two-year-old, you may emphasize only a few understandable words.

For example:

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

Psalms 139:14

You might simply explain:

“God made you. The Bible says God made you wonderfully.”

An older preschooler may be ready for a little more discussion.

The important thing is establishing the connection:

We believe this because God's Word teaches it.

Use the Main Truth

Each song chapter will contain one **Main Truth**.

Keep returning to it.

For *Happy God Made Me*, it might be:

God made me, knows me, and cares for me.

For Thank You for My Food:

God provides for us, so we should be thankful.

For Be Kind:

God wants us to show kindness to others.

For My Little Prayer Before I Sleep:

I can talk to God and thank Him before I sleep.

You do not have to teach five lessons from one song.

Teach **one truth clearly**.

There will be plenty of time for more.

Choose Questions for Your Child's Age

Throughout the guide, you will find conversation ideas appropriate for younger and older preschoolers.

For ages **2–3**, questions should usually be short and concrete:

“Who made you?”

“Who can we thank?”

“Can you help?”

“What kind of words should we use?”

“Can you pray?”

For ages **4–5**, you can begin asking questions that require a little more thought:

“What is something God gave you that you can thank Him for?”

“How could you help someone today?”

“What could you do if another child wants a turn?”

“What can you do when you feel afraid at night?”

Do not worry if your child gives an unexpected answer.

Conversation is part of learning.

Guide gently.

Use the Everyday Moment

This is perhaps the most important feature of this particular guide.

Each song belongs naturally somewhere in a child's day.

You do not have to teach all twelve songs in order every day.

Use them when they fit.

In the morning, sing **Good Morning, Jesus**.

At breakfast or lunch, remember **Thank You for My Food**.

During cleanup, use **A Happy Helper**.

During playtime, remember **Be Kind** and **Share, Share, Share**.

When your child asks for something, remember **Thank You, Please, and Kind Words**.

As evening comes, sing **Thank You, God, for Today**.

At bedtime, use **My Little Prayer Before I Sleep** and **Jesus Watches Over Me**.

The routine itself becomes part of the lesson.

Try the Activity

Each chapter will include a simple family activity.

These are not intended to become elaborate craft projects requiring a trip to the store.

Most will use things you already have or simply involve doing something together.

You may:

pick up toys together,

practice sharing,

name things you are thankful for,

help prepare the table,

practice kind words,

look at things God created,

or pray for someone you love.

The purpose is not merely to keep little hands occupied.

The activity helps move the lesson from:

“I heard it”

to:

“I did it.”

Pray Simply

Preschool prayers do not need to be long.

In fact, they usually should not be.

You might pray:

“Thank You, God, for our food. Amen.”

Or:

“Jesus, help me be kind today. Amen.”

Or:

“Thank You, God, for making me. Amen.”

As children become comfortable, encourage them to add their own words.

If they say:

“Thank You for Mommy.”

“Thank You for Grandpa.”

“Thank You for Scout.”

“Thank You for my banana.”

That is okay.

They are learning to talk to God.

Do not make prayer sound as though children need special vocabulary before God will listen.

Teach reverence, but also teach them that they may genuinely speak to Him.

Do Not Force the Schedule

You can use this guide in several ways.

You may spend **one week on each song**, creating a twelve-week family journey.

You may follow the album through a single day.

You may choose whichever song addresses something your family is currently working on.

Or you may simply use the guide when a natural teaching opportunity appears.

If your child is struggling with sharing today, you do not have to say:

“We cannot discuss that until Week Seven.”

Go to the sharing chapter.

Use it.

That is what the guide is for.

Repeat Without Making It Feel Like School

Preschoolers need repetition, but repetition does not have to mean sitting at a table doing the same lesson every morning.

Listen to the song in the car.

Sing the hook while cleaning.

Mention the Bible verse at breakfast.

Practice the lesson while playing.

Talk about it during a walk.

Pray about it at bedtime.

The same truth can appear in several different moments.

That is often more effective than one long lesson.

When Your Child Gets It Wrong

There will be days when your child sings **Be Kind** and then is unkind five minutes later.

That does not mean the song failed.

There will be days when your child sings **Share, Share, Share** and then refuses to share.

There will be days when a happy helper does not feel particularly happy about helping.

That is real life.

Use those moments for teaching.

You might say:

“Remember what we've been learning about kindness?”

Then help the child practice kindness.

Avoid using the song as a weapon:

“You sang the song, so why can't you behave?”

The goal is instruction, not humiliation.

Young children are learning.

Correct them when correction is needed, but keep pointing them toward what is right.

Let the Songs Become Family Language

Over time, certain phrases may become part of your household.

“Helping hands.”

“Kind words.”

“A little for me, a little for you.”

“Thank You, God.”

“Jesus watches over me.”

That is a good thing.

You are creating short reminders that point back to larger biblical truths.

Eventually, your child may not need the reminder.

But while those little words are useful, use them.

Keep the Goal in View

Completing the guide is not the goal.

Checking twelve chapters off a list is not the goal.

Having a child memorize every chorus is not the goal.

The goal is to help a little child begin connecting **God's truth with everyday life.**

If one morning your three-year-old wakes up and says:

“Good morning, Jesus,”

something is happening.

If your child sees dinner and says:

“Thank You, God,”

something is happening.

If another child is sad and your little one tries to be kind, something is happening.

If the bedroom becomes dark and your child remembers:

“Jesus watches over me,”

something is happening.

Those are the moments this guide was created to encourage.

Keep it simple.

Keep it biblical.

Keep it loving.

And keep pointing those little hearts toward Jesus.

A Special Word to Grandparents

There is something special about being a grandparent.

You have already watched one generation grow.

Now you have the opportunity to love, encourage, teach, and influence another.

You may not be responsible for every part of your grandchild's day. You may not be there every morning when they wake up or every night when they go to sleep.

But the moments you do have matter.

A ride in the car matters.

Breakfast together matters.

An afternoon in the backyard matters.

A trip to the park matters.

A sleepover matters.

A quiet conversation matters.

A song sung together matters.

And sometimes the things a grandparent teaches become memories that stay with a child for the rest of his or her life.

Feed My Lambs

Part of the heart behind *The Shepherd's Meadow* came from a simple phrase Jesus spoke:

“Feed my lambs.”

John 21:15, KJV

Jesus was speaking to Peter, and we should be careful not to take those words out of their biblical setting and pretend they were spoken directly to grandparents.

But those words carry a beautiful picture.

Lambs need to be fed.

Our little ones do too.

They need physical food, certainly.

But they also need truth.

They need to hear about God.

They need to hear His Word.

They need to learn who Jesus is.

They need adults who care enough about their souls to teach them.

Becoming a grandparent can make that responsibility feel very personal.

You look into the face of this little person who has entered your family, and suddenly another generation is standing in front of you.

What will they know about God?

What will they believe?

What will they remember?

What will we give them while we have the opportunity?

Your Grandchildren Need More Than Presents

Grandparents love giving things to grandchildren.

A new toy.

A stuffed animal.

A book.

A special treat.

There is nothing wrong with enjoying those things together.

But some of the greatest gifts you can give cannot be wrapped.

Give them your time.

Give them your attention.

Give them your prayers.

Give them memories.

Give them truth.

Give them the sound of Grandpa or Grandma opening the Bible and saying:

“Let's see what God says.”

A toy may eventually disappear.

A song connected to God's Word may still be remembered decades later.

Tell Them What God Has Done

Grandparents possess something children do not have yet.

Years.

You have lived long enough to have stories.

Tell them.

Not every story needs to be dramatic.

Tell them about prayers God answered.

Tell them about times you were afraid and learned to trust Him.

Tell them about mistakes you made and what God taught you.

Tell them how you came to know Jesus.

Tell them why you believe the Bible.

Tell them about people in your family who loved the Lord.

Let your grandchildren understand that Christianity is not merely something printed in a book on the shelf.

God has been part of your life.

Psalms speak about passing truth from one generation to another:

“We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.”

Psalms 78:4, KJV

That is a wonderful picture of generational faithfulness.

Tell the next generation.

Do Not Compete With the Parents

Grandparents have influence, but parents have an important God-given responsibility in the lives of their children.

Your role should strengthen the family, not undermine it.

If Mom says no, Grandpa should not secretly become the yes.

If Dad establishes a reasonable rule, Grandma should not make herself the hero by ignoring it.

Children should not learn:

“Mom and Dad have rules, but Grandma lets me do whatever I want.”

You can be fun without undermining authority.

You can create wonderful memories while respecting the child's parents.

And when appropriate, ask them:

“What are you working on with the kids right now?”

Maybe they are teaching gratitude.

Maybe sharing has been difficult.

Maybe bedtime has become stressful.

Maybe their child is struggling with fear.

Then you can reinforce the same lesson.

That can be enormously helpful.

Use the Songs Naturally

You do not need to sit your grandchild down and announce:

“Grandpa has prepared today's theological instruction.”

Play the album.

Sing together.

Let the songs create opportunities.

When **Happy God Made Me** plays, point to your nose.

“Who made Grandpa's funny nose?”

Let them answer.

When **A Happy Helper** plays, clean something together.

When **Share, Share, Share** plays, practice taking turns.

When **Thank You for My Food** plays, pray before lunch.

When **Thank You, God, for Today** plays, ask:

“What was your favorite thing today?”

Then thank God for it together.

When **Jesus Watches Over Me** plays at bedtime, remind them that if they become frightened, they can pray.

These are little conversations.

But little conversations add up.

Pray for Them When They Cannot Hear You

Some of the most important things you do for your grandchildren may happen when they are nowhere near you.

Pray for them.

Pray that they will hear and understand God's Word.

Pray for their parents.

Pray for wisdom in how you influence them.

Pray that as they grow, they will recognize sin and understand their need for a Saviour.

Pray that they will come to genuine faith in Jesus Christ.

Pray for the people who will influence them.

Pray for the decisions they will someday make.

Your grandchild may currently be concerned mostly with snacks, toys, and whether Scout will chase a ball.

You can see farther down the road.

Pray for the person that little child is becoming.

Do Not Assume a Child Is Saved Because He Knows the Songs

This is important.

A child can sing about Jesus without knowing Jesus.

A child can memorize Bible verses without understanding the gospel.

A child can give the expected answers because he has heard them many times.

We should rejoice when children learn biblical truth, but we should not confuse familiarity with conversion.

Our job is not to manufacture a salvation experience.

Keep teaching.

Explain sin honestly and appropriately.

Teach who Jesus is.

Teach what He did.

Teach His death and resurrection.

Answer questions.

Pray.

And trust God with the child's heart.

The Shepherd's Meadow can help introduce truth.

Only God can change a heart.

You Do Not Have to Be a Perfect Grandparent

You will make mistakes.

You may lose patience.

You may miss opportunities.

You may wish you had done some things differently when raising your own children.

Do not allow regret to keep you from using the opportunities you have now.

If you are wrong, admit it.

If you need forgiveness, ask for it.

If you do not know the answer to a Bible question, say:

"I don't know. Let's look it up."

That teaches something valuable too.

Your grandchildren do not need you to pretend you know everything.

They need to see that **God's Word is where we go for truth.**

One Day They Will Be Older

The little hand holding yours will not always be little.

The child asking you to play the song again will grow.

The toys will disappear.

The tiny shoes will be replaced.

The questions will become bigger.

And someday your grandchild may remember things you did together that you had almost forgotten.

Perhaps one of those memories will be sitting beside you while you opened your Bible.

Perhaps it will be hearing you pray their name.

Perhaps it will be singing about Jesus in the car.

Perhaps it will be thanking God before eating together.

Perhaps it will be lying in a guest bed at Grandpa and Grandma's house and hearing:

“You don't have to be afraid. We can pray.”

You cannot control which memories remain.

But you can decide what you will put into the years you have.

Love them.

Listen to them.

Laugh with them.

Teach them.

Pray for them.

Open God's Word with them.

And while those little lambs are within your reach,

feed them.

The Five-Minute Family Devotion

Family devotions with preschoolers do not need to be long to be meaningful.

In fact, trying to turn Bible time with a two, three, or four-year-old into a thirty-minute lesson can work against what you are trying to accomplish.

Little children move.

They ask questions.

They notice the bird outside the window.

They suddenly remember that Scout has a ball.

They may listen carefully for two minutes and then decide they need a drink of water.

That is normal.

The goal is not to see how long you can keep a preschooler sitting still.

The goal is to put **God's truth into that little heart clearly, faithfully, and repeatedly.**

Five minutes can do a great deal.

A Simple Five-Minute Pattern

Throughout this guide, you will find a short devotion connected to each song.

You can follow the same five-part pattern every time:

1. Sing

Listen to the song or sing the main chorus together.

2. Read

Open the Bible and read one short passage or verse.

3. Talk

Explain one simple truth and ask one or two questions.

4. Do

Practice something connected to the lesson.

5. Pray

Finish with a short prayer.

That's it.

You do not have to cover everything in the chapter.

You can always come back another day.

Minute One: Sing

Begin with the song.

Music helps signal:

“We are going to talk about something we've been singing.”

You may listen to the entire song, but you do not have to.

Sometimes just sing the hook.

For example:

“God made me, God made me...”

Then say:

“Do you know what our Bible tells us? God really did make you.”

Now the song has opened the door to Scripture.

For **Be Kind**, you might sing:

“Be kind, be kind, be kind today.”

Then ask:

“Let's see what the Bible says about being kind.”

The song catches the child's attention.

The Bible gives the truth its authority.

Minute Two: Read

Open your Bible.

This matters even when your child cannot read.

Let your child see that you are not making up the lesson.

Say:

“Let's read God's Word.”

Then read the verse.

You do not need to explain every unfamiliar word.

Suppose you are using:

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

For a preschooler, you might say:

“Did you hear that? God tells us to be kind to one another.”

That may be enough for today.

Another day you can talk about what **tenderhearted** means.

We are building understanding over time.

Minute Three: Talk

Choose **one truth**.

Not four.

Not seven.

One.

If the song is **Thank You for My Food**, your truth might be:

God gives us good things, and we should thank Him.

Ask:

“Who should we thank for our food?”

Your two-year-old may answer:

“God.”

Good.

You do not need to turn that into a ten-minute explanation.

With an older preschooler, ask:

“What is something God has given you that you're thankful for?”

Now the child has to think about the truth and apply it.

Keep the conversation natural.

Minute Four: Do

Give the child something simple to do.

If the lesson is about helping:

“Let's put these three toys away together.”

If the lesson is about sharing:

“Here are four crackers. Can you give me one?”

If the lesson is about kind words:

“Pretend Grandpa gives you your cup. What could you say?”

If the lesson is about gratitude:

“Let's each name one thing we're thankful for.”

If the lesson is about prayer:

“Who would you like to pray for tonight?”

The activity helps turn an idea into something the child can experience.

Minute Five: Pray

Finish simply.

A preschool prayer does not need an introduction, three points, and a conclusion.

Try:

“Thank You, God, for making us. Help us remember that You love and care for us. Amen.”

Or:

“Jesus, help us be kind with our words and our hands today. Amen.”

Or:

“Thank You, God, for our food. Thank You for taking care of us. Amen.”

As children become comfortable, invite them to pray too.

You might say:

“Would you like to thank God for something?”

Do not pressure them.

If the child says:

“Thank You, God, for Scout. Amen.”

Wonderful.

Prayer has begun to become personal.

What If Five Minutes Is Too Long?

Then use three.

There is nothing sacred about the number five.

Sing one line.

Read one verse.

Say one truth.

Pray.

Done.

A two-minute conversation that your child actually understands is better than fifteen minutes that produces frustration for everyone.

What If My Child Wants More?

Keep going.

Some children will surprise you.

A four or five-year-old may begin asking:

“Why?”

“Who made God?”

“Where is Jesus?”

“Why do we pray if God already knows?”

“Why did Jesus die?”

Do not be afraid of questions.

You do not have to have an instant answer to everything.

If you know, answer simply and biblically.

If you do not know, say:

“That’s a good question. Let’s find out what the Bible says.”

There is no shame in looking something up.

You are also teaching your child **where answers should come from.**

Do Not Rush Through the Bible to Get to the Activity

Activities are fun.

Songs are memorable.

Questions are useful.

But do not allow the entertaining parts of the devotion to become more important than Scripture.

The pattern is not:

Song + craft + snack = Bible lesson.

God’s Word belongs at the center.

Even if you read only one verse, read it.

Even if your child understands only part of it, begin establishing the habit:

We open the Bible because the Bible tells us what God has said.

Use the Same Truth Later

The five-minute devotion may end.

The lesson does not have to.

Suppose this morning you talked about **A Happy Helper.**

Later you need help carrying napkins to the table.

Ask:

“Do I know a happy helper?”

Your child may remember the song.

Now the morning devotion has entered real life.

Or perhaps you studied **Be Kind**.

Two hours later, your child speaks harshly to a sibling.

You can say:

“Remember what God's Word taught us this morning? Let's practice being kind.”

That is when the lesson begins becoming more than information.

A Sample Five-Minute Devotion

Here is how simple this can be.

Imagine today's song is **Happy God Made Me**.

Sing:

“God made me, God made me,
From my head down to my feet.”

Read:

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

Psalms 139:14, KJV

Talk:

“Who made you?”

“God.”

“Did God make your hands?”

“Yes.”

“Did God make your toes?”

“Yes.”

Do:

Wiggle your fingers.

Wiggle your toes.

Point to your eyes, ears, nose, hands, and feet.

Say:

“God made all of you.”

Pray:

“Thank You, God, for making me. Thank You for my eyes, my ears, my hands, and my feet. Help me use them in ways that please You. Amen.”

You are finished.

It was simple.

But your child heard a song, saw the Bible opened, heard Scripture, answered questions, experienced the lesson physically, and prayed.

That is a lot for five minutes.

Five Minutes Today, A Foundation for Tomorrow

Do not measure the value of these moments only by what your child can repeat immediately.

You are building patterns.

We sing about God.

We open God's Word.

We talk about what it means.

We practice it.

We pray.

Then tomorrow we do it again.

Five minutes may seem small.

But five minutes repeated through breakfasts, car rides, playtimes, visits with Grandma and Grandpa, and quiet moments before bed can become hundreds of opportunities to put truth before a growing child.

Keep it short when it needs to be short.

Keep it natural.

Keep it centered on Scripture.

And keep coming back.

The Bible Is Our Foundation

The songs in *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* were written to help little children remember biblical truth.

This guide was written to help parents and grandparents explain that truth.

But neither the songs nor this guide are the foundation.

The Bible is.

That distinction matters.

A catchy song can help a child remember something, but being catchy does not make something true.

A beautiful story can communicate an idea, but being beautiful does not make something true.

A parent, grandparent, teacher, pastor, author, or songwriter can make a mistake.

God's Word is where we must return.

“Thy word is truth.”

John 17:17, KJV

That is why throughout this guide you will repeatedly see the words:

Let's see what the Bible says.

We want those words to become familiar in our homes.

Let Them See You Open the Bible

Your preschooler may not be able to read yet.

Open the Bible anyway.

Let your child see it in your hands.

When a song says that God made us, say:

“Let's see what God's Word says.”

When you are talking about kindness:

“Let's see what God's Word says.”

When your child is frightened:

“Let's see what God's Word says.”

When you are teaching gratitude:

“Let's see what God's Word says.”

There is a lesson contained in that little habit:

The answer is not simply whatever Dad, Mom, Grandpa, or Grandma thinks. We want to know what God has said.

That lesson becomes increasingly important as a child grows.

Songs Help Us Remember

God created us with the ability to remember music remarkably well.

A melody can stay in our minds.

Rhymes can make words easier to recall.

Repetition can help a young child remember a phrase before that child could ever memorize a paragraph of explanation.

That is one reason we use music.

A child may suddenly sing:

“Be kind, be kind, be kind today.”

Wonderful.

Now connect it to Scripture:

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

The song becomes a memory aid.

Scripture remains the authority.

Do Not Be Afraid of the KJV

The Scripture passages in this guide are from the **King James Version**.

Some words will be unfamiliar to preschoolers.

That is okay.

Children learn unfamiliar words all the time.

You simply explain them.

Consider:

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good...”

Psalms 107:1, KJV

A preschooler may not understand the word **unto**.

You can say:

“That means we should give thanks to the Lord because He is good.”

You have not replaced Scripture.

You have helped your child understand it.

Another example is:

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

Ask:

“Do you know what tenderhearted means?”

Then explain:

“It means we care about other people. We don't want to be hard and mean toward them.”

That is teaching.

Read the Verse Before Explaining It

Whenever possible, read the actual Scripture first.

Then explain.

That order helps establish an important pattern.

Bible first. Explanation second.

Instead of saying:

“God says we should share,”

and stopping there, show your child where the lesson comes from.

Instead of only saying:

“God made you,”

open Psalm 139.

Instead of only saying:

“God knows what you need,”

open Matthew 6.

Instead of only saying:

“You can sleep because God cares for you,”

open Psalm 4.

The child may not remember the reference.

That is fine.

The child is learning something more basic:

God has spoken.

Context Matters

As adults, we also have a responsibility to handle Scripture carefully.

A Bible verse should not become a slogan simply because a few words fit our lesson.

We should ask:

Who is speaking?

Who is being addressed?

What is happening in the passage?

What does the verse actually mean?

That is especially important when teaching children because we are helping form their earliest understanding of Scripture.

For example, in the grandparent section we considered Jesus' words:

“Feed my lambs.”

John 21:15, KJV

Those words beautifully fit the imagery of *The Shepherd's Meadow*, but Jesus was speaking specifically to Peter in that passage.

We should not tell a grandparent:

“Jesus spoke these words directly to you.”

He did not.

We can, however, recognize the biblical picture of caring for and feeding those entrusted to us while being honest about the passage itself.

That is how we want to handle Scripture throughout this guide.

Be Careful With Promises

Children's songs often contain reassuring statements.

We need to make sure our reassurance is true.

For example:

“Jesus watches over me”

does not mean:

“Nothing painful will ever happen to me.”

Christians experience sickness.

Christians experience loss.

Christians sometimes become frightened.

Christians experience suffering.

We should not promise children something God has not promised.

Instead, we teach:

God knows me.

God cares for me.

God hears when I pray.

I can trust Him when I am afraid.

He has not forgotten me.

Those truths are strong enough.

We do not need to exaggerate them.

Be Careful With God's Provision

The same principle applies to **God Gives Us What We Need**.

A little child could easily hear:

“God gives us what we need”

and eventually interpret that as:

“If I need something, God will always give it to me exactly when and how I expect.”

That is not the lesson.

Jesus taught:

“...your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Matthew 6:32, KJV

God knows our needs.

We can pray.

We can trust Him.

We can receive what He gives with gratitude.

And as children grow, we can help them understand that God's care does not mean life will always be easy.

Teach the Whole Truth as They Grow

Preschool teaching begins simply.

But it should not remain permanently simple.

At two:

God made me.

Later:

What does it mean that God is Creator?

At three:

Jesus loves me.

Later:

Who is Jesus?

Why did He come?

At four:

I can pray when I'm afraid.

Later:

What is prayer?

Does God always answer the way we want?

At five:

I did something wrong.

Later:

What is sin?

Why do we need a Saviour?

The early lessons are beginnings.

Keep building.

Children's Songs Are Not the Gospel

This deserves special attention.

A child may know every song on this album and still need to understand the gospel.

Christian behavior is not salvation.

Being kind does not save us.

Sharing does not save us.

Helping does not save us.

Saying please does not save us.

Praying a bedtime prayer does not earn salvation.

Children need to understand, as they become able, that all of us are sinners.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”

Romans 3:23, KJV

They need to know who Jesus is.

They need to know that He died for our sins and rose again.

“...Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;
And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”

1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV

And they need to understand that salvation is not something we earn by being good.

Do not rush a preschooler into repeating words he does not understand simply so you can say he “prayed the prayer.”

Teach faithfully.

Answer questions.

Explain the gospel clearly.

Pray for your child.

Let understanding develop.

The Bible Corrects Us Too

Sometimes we will open Scripture to teach our children and discover that the lesson applies just as strongly to us.

We tell our children:

“Be kind.”

Then we realize our own words have been harsh.

We teach:

“Thank God for what He gives us.”

Then we remember how much we have complained.

We teach:

“Help others.”

Then we recognize our own selfishness.

We teach:

“Pray.”

Then realize how little we have prayed.

That is not a reason to stop teaching.

It is a reason to let God's Word teach **the whole family**.

The Bible is not merely a tool adults use to correct children.

We are under its authority too.

Keep Coming Back

As you move through the twelve songs in this guide, there will be activities, questions, prayers, conversations, and practical suggestions.

Use them.

Enjoy them.

Change them when necessary for your family.

But keep returning to the same place:

What does God's Word say?

Songs will change.

Children will grow.

This guide may eventually sit forgotten on a shelf.

But the truth your child needs will still be found in the same place.

“For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.”

Psalms 119:89, KJV

Build the songs around Scripture.

Build the lessons around Scripture.

Build your teaching around Scripture.

And teach your children and grandchildren where to look for truth.

The Bible is our foundation.

Before We Begin the Songs

We have spent some time talking about how young children learn, why Scripture must remain our foundation, and how parents and grandparents can use the ordinary moments of a day to teach truth.

Now we are ready to walk through the songs.

A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow was designed differently from an album made up of twelve unrelated children's songs.

It has a beginning.

It has an ending.

And everything in between follows the natural rhythm of a child's day.

We begin when little eyes open in the morning:

Good Morning, Jesus.

Then we thank God for the new day He has given us.

We remember that God made us.

We thank Him for our food.

We learn to help.

We practice kindness.

We learn to share.

We practice words such as please and thank you.

We remember that God knows what we need.

As evening comes, we look back and thank God for the day.

Then we pray.

Finally, we close our eyes remembering that Jesus cares for us.

Morning to bedtime.

A whole day of little opportunities to point a child toward God.

The Songs Are Starting Points

You do not have to explain every line of every song.

In fact, you probably shouldn't.

Choose the truth your child is ready to understand and build from there.

Suppose your two-year-old loves **Happy God Made Me**.

For now, the lesson may simply be:

“Who made you?”

“God!”

That's a good beginning.

A four or five-year-old may be ready for more:

“What are some things God made your hands able to do?”

“Can we use our hands to help someone?”

“Can we use our hands to hurt someone?”

“Which one would please God?”

The same song can grow with the child.

We Are Teaching More Than Good Behavior

Several songs on this album deal with behavior.

Help.

Be kind.

Share.

Use good words.

Those are valuable lessons, but we must be careful.

The message of this guide is not:

Good children make God happy, so try harder to be good.

Christianity is much more than producing polite children.

A child can learn to say please and still need Jesus.

A child can share a toy and still need Jesus.

A child can clean up a room and still need Jesus.

A child can memorize every song on this album and still need Jesus.

We teach children what God says is right because God's Word matters.

At the same time, as they grow in understanding, we teach them that none of us perfectly does what is right.

Adults don't either.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”

Romans 3:23, KJV

That truth will eventually help a child understand why we need a Saviour.

So when we teach good behavior, we are not teaching children how to earn God's acceptance.

We are beginning to teach them **God's ways**.

Do Not Rush the Gospel

Because we care about children's souls, there can be a temptation to hurry them toward a moment of decision before they understand what they are being asked.

We do not need to do that.

Teach them who God is.

Teach them that He made them.

Teach them that He is good.

Teach them what sin is.

Teach them who Jesus is.

Teach them that Jesus died for our sins.

Teach them that He was buried and rose again.

Answer their questions.

And when they ask serious questions about salvation, take those questions seriously.

But do not put words in their mouths simply to produce a testimony.

We want genuine faith, not merely repeated words.

Expect Imperfect Days

This album is called *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow*.

It is not called *A Perfect Day in The Shepherd's Meadow*.

Some mornings begin with crying.

Some breakfasts end up on the floor.

Some happy helpers are not very happy.

Sometimes nobody wants to share.

Sometimes kind words disappear just when you need them most.

Sometimes bedtime is anything but peaceful.

That is family life.

The songs are not pretending otherwise.

Those difficult moments may actually provide some of the best opportunities for teaching.

If your child refuses to help, you have an opportunity to talk about helping.

If your child grabs a toy, you have an opportunity to practice sharing.

If your child speaks unkindly, you have an opportunity to practice kind words.

If your child becomes frightened at bedtime, you have an opportunity to pray together.

Do not wait for perfect conditions.

Use real life.

Correction Can Be Loving

Teaching biblical truth does not mean we never correct children.

Little children need boundaries.

They need to hear the word no.

They need to learn that some behavior is wrong.

They need adults willing to correct them consistently and lovingly.

But correction should help the child understand what was wrong and what should happen instead.

“You hit your brother. We don't hurt people. Let's use gentle hands.”

“You took the toy from her. Let's give it back and practice taking turns.”

“That was not true. We tell the truth.”

“You spoke unkindly. Let's try those words again.”

Then, when appropriate, connect the correction to God's Word.

The goal is not simply:

Stop doing that because I'm irritated.

We are helping children begin understanding right and wrong.

Celebrate What Is Right

Notice the good moments too.

When your child helps without being asked:

“I saw those helping hands.”

When your child shares:

“That was kind of you to give her a turn.”

When your child says thank you:

“I like hearing thankful words.”

When your child remembers to pray:

“I'm glad you remembered that we can talk to God.”

Be careful not to make every act of obedience dependent upon a prize.

We want children eventually to understand that doing right has value beyond receiving a sticker, treat, or applause.

But encouragement matters.

Notice growth.

Follow the Child's Questions

Sometimes the best lesson will not be the one you planned.

You may be teaching gratitude and your child suddenly asks:

“Where is God?”

That is worth discussing.

You may be talking about creation and hear:

“Did God make Jesus?”

Now you have an important question.

You may be discussing bedtime prayer and your child asks:

“Why can't I see Jesus?”

Do not become frustrated because the conversation left the page.

The page did its job.

It started a conversation.

Answer according to your child's level of understanding and keep returning to Scripture.

Use Scout and the Meadow as Helpers, Not the Message

The Shepherd's Meadow is intentionally warm and inviting.

There are children.

There are sheep.

There are birds and woodland animals.

There is Scout, the Goldendoodle.

Those familiar characters can make the world of the songs enjoyable for little children.

Use them.

Ask:

“Can you find Scout?”

“Where are the sheep?”

“Who is helping?”

“What do you think happened here?”

But remember what all of this is pointing toward.

Scout isn't the lesson.

The Meadow isn't the lesson.

Even the songs aren't ultimately the lesson.

God's truth is the lesson.

The characters simply help us invite little children into the conversation.

There Is No Perfect Way to Use This Book

Some families will work through one chapter each week.

Some grandparents will pull out the guide only when grandchildren visit.

Some parents will use a song when a particular problem arises.

Some children will want the same chapter every night for a week.

That's fine.

You are not behind.

There is no test at the end.

Use the material in whatever way helps you faithfully teach the child God has placed in front of you.

Now We Begin the Day

The Meadow is quiet.

Morning has come.

A new day is beginning.

And before breakfast, before playtime, before chores, before all the little adventures and challenges that may come, we begin with a simple thought:

Jesus belongs in my day.

That brings us to our first song:

Song 1

Good Morning, Jesus

Morning gives parents and grandparents one of the simplest opportunities to begin putting faith into everyday life.

Before the television comes on.

Before breakfast.

Before toys and errands and all the activity of the day.

A child can begin with a simple thought:

Jesus is part of my day.

Good Morning, Jesus helps establish that habit.

The goal is not to teach a child that Jesus went to sleep and has now awakened. We are teaching the child to begin the day **thinking about Jesus, talking to Him, and remembering that we can follow Him throughout the day.**

Main Truth

I can begin every day remembering Jesus and asking Him to help me follow Him.

God's Word

“This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Psalms 118:24, KJV

And:

“O LORD, in the morning shalt thou hear my voice...”

Psalms 5:3, KJV

These verses give us two wonderful morning truths.

God gave us this day.

And:

We can talk to God at the beginning of it.

For a preschooler, that can become:

“God gave us another day. We can thank Him and talk to Him this morning.”

What This Song Teaches

Young children quickly develop morning routines.

Wake up.

Call for Mom or Dad.

Find a favorite toy.

Look for breakfast.

Get dressed.

Ask what they are doing today.

There is nothing wrong with those things.

But we can add something important to the routine:

Remember Jesus.

That does not require a long morning devotion.

Sometimes it may be nothing more than:

“Good morning. God gave us another day.”

Or:

“Before we get up, let's thank God for today.”

Eventually your child may begin doing it without being reminded.

That is what we are trying to encourage.

What Does “Good Morning, Jesus” Mean?

A young child may take words very literally.

So if your child asks whether Jesus sleeps, this is a good opportunity to explain.

When we say:

“Good Morning, Jesus,”

we are not waking Jesus up.

We are saying:

“Jesus, I'm awake, a new day has begun, and I want to remember You today.”

God does not need sleep.

The Bible says:

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

Psalm 121:4, KJV

You probably do not need to explain all of this unless your child asks.

But it is helpful for the adult to understand what we mean.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep the questions extremely simple.

Who gave us this new day?

God.

Can we talk to God in the morning?

Yes.

Can Jesus help us today?

Yes.

What can we say when we wake up?

Thank You, God.

You might also look outside together.

“Is it morning?”

“Can you see the sunshine?”

“God gave us another day.”

That may be the entire lesson.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin thinking beyond one-word answers.

Ask:

What is something you're thankful for this morning?

What are you excited to do today?

Is there anything you want God's help with today?

How could you follow Jesus today?

If your child says:

“I don't know,”

give examples.

“Could we be kind today?”

“Could we help somebody?”

“Could we tell the truth?”

“Could we pray?”

Now the child begins connecting the morning song with choices that will happen later.

An Everyday Morning Habit

Try creating a simple three-part morning routine:

Thank God.

“Thank You, God, for this new day.”

Think of someone.

“Who can we pray for this morning?”

Ask for help.

“Jesus, help us follow You today.”

This can take less than one minute.

The value comes from doing it regularly.

Family Activity: Look Out the Window

Take your child to a window or step outside together.

Ask what they can see.

The sky.

Clouds.

Trees.

Birds.

Sunshine.

Rain.

Flowers.

Whatever is actually there.

Then say:

“God gave us another day to live in His world.”

Let the child choose one thing to thank God for.

It might be profound.

It might be:

“Thank You for that squirrel.”

Both are fine.

The child is practicing gratitude.

A Morning Helping Challenge

Before the day becomes busy, ask:

“What is one way we could help somebody today?”

Let your child choose something simple.

Help carry something.

Put toys away.

Give Scout his water with an adult.

Help set the table.

Bring something to Grandma.

Then remember the conversation later.

“You said this morning you wanted to help somebody. Here's our chance.”

Now morning Bible time has followed the child into the day.

When the Morning Is Not Happy

Not every child wakes up smiling.

Some mornings begin with tears.

Some begin too early.

Some begin after a difficult night.

Sometimes the parent is tired too.

You do not have to manufacture cheerfulness.

The truth does not depend upon everybody waking up happy.

You can simply say:

“It looks like you're having a hard morning. God still gave us this day. Let's ask Him to help us.”

That may be more meaningful than forcing an enthusiastic performance.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for giving us another day. Thank You for loving us and caring for us. Help us follow Jesus today. Help us be kind, truthful, thankful, and helpful. Thank You for hearing us when we pray. Amen.

For a younger child, shorten it:

Thank You, God, for this new day. Help me follow Jesus today. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

There is a difference between teaching a child to **include Jesus in the day** and teaching a child to perform a religious ritual every morning.

We want the first.

The words themselves are not magic.

A child is not more spiritual because he says “Good Morning, Jesus” before getting out of bed.

The value is in what the habit points toward.

We are teaching:

God is real.

Jesus matters outside of church.

Prayer belongs in ordinary life.

God's Word has something to say about how we live today.

As children grow, those ideas can deepen considerably.

For now, we begin simply.

Memory Verse

“This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Psalms 118:24, KJV

For ages 2–3, you may work only on:

“This is the day which the LORD hath made.”

For ages 4–5, try the complete verse.

Do not worry if memorization takes time.

Sing the song.

Say the verse.

Come back tomorrow.

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Good Morning, Jesus* or sing its main hook together.

Read

“This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Psalms 118:24, KJV

Talk

Say:

“God gave us this day. We don't know everything that will happen today, but we can begin by thanking Him.”

Ask:

“What is one thing you're thankful for this morning?”

Do

Look outside together and find one thing God made.

Then choose one way you can help someone today.

Pray

“Thank You, God, for this new day. Help me follow Jesus today. Amen.”

Final Word

Tomorrow morning will probably look ordinary.

There may be breakfast to make.

Shoes to find.

A dog waiting at the door.

Places to go.

Things to do.

That is exactly the point.

We are teaching children that Jesus belongs in those ordinary days.

Before everything gets moving, give your little one a simple reminder:

God gave us this day.

We can talk to Him.

We can follow Jesus today.

And then begin.

Song 2

Thank You for a Brand-New Day

The first song helped us begin the morning remembering Jesus.

Now we take the next small step:

Thank God for the day He has given us.

For a young child, gratitude begins with very simple things.

The sunshine.

Breakfast.

Mom and Dad.

Grandma and Grandpa.

A favorite toy.

A bird outside.

Scout waiting to play.

A hug.

A brand-new morning.

Thank You for a Brand-New Day helps children begin learning that the ordinary things they enjoy are reasons to give thanks to God.

Main Truth

God has given me another day, and I can thank Him for it.

God's Word

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.”

Psalms 107:1, KJV

And:

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18, KJV

For a preschooler, the lesson is simple:

God is good, and we can thank Him.

What This Song Teaches

Gratitude does not always come naturally.

Children quickly learn:

“I want that.”

“That's mine.”

“Can I have another one?”

“I wanted the blue one.”

Adults can do the same thing with more sophisticated vocabulary.

Thankfulness turns our attention away from what we do not have and helps us recognize what we have been given.

That is a habit worth beginning early.

When your child wakes up, there are already things to thank God for.

A place to sleep.

Another morning.

People who care for them.

Food.

Clothing.

The ability to see, hear, move, laugh, learn, and play.

We do not need to teach a preschooler to make a long list.

We can begin with one thing.

“Thank You, God, for today.”

A New Day Is a Gift

Young children do not think much about yesterday, tomorrow, or the passing of years.

They live very much in the present.

That makes this lesson particularly natural.

Today is here.

What will we do with it?

We can help.

We can learn.

We can play.

We can love.

We can pray.

We can make good choices.

We can make wrong choices and need correction.

There will be opportunities throughout the day to practice everything we are learning.

But before any of that happens, we can begin with gratitude.

Thank You, God, for another day.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep gratitude concrete.

Ask:

Who gave us this day?

God.

What can we say to God?

Thank You.

Then point to something the child understands.

“Thank You, God, for breakfast.”

“Thank You, God, for Mommy.”

“Thank You, God, for Grandpa.”

“Thank You, God, for Scout.”

You can also ask:

What makes you happy this morning?

Whatever the child names gives you an opportunity to say:

“Let's thank God for that.”

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin thinking more intentionally about gratitude.

Ask:

What are three things you're thankful for today?

Who is someone you're thankful for?

What is something outside that God made?

What is something you have that you sometimes forget to be thankful for?

That last question may need examples.

“Do we always remember to be thankful for our bed?”

“Our food?”

“Clean water?”

“Our family?”

Now gratitude begins moving beyond favorite toys and treats.

Gratitude Is More Than Saying “Thank You”

A child can learn to say the words **thank you** without actually becoming thankful.

That is still an important beginning.

We teach the words first.

But eventually we want the child to understand the heart behind them.

Suppose Grandma gives your child something.

You might say:

“What do you say?”

“Thank you.”

Good.

Later you can add:

“Grandma thought about you and gave you something. Wasn't that kind?”

Now the child begins noticing the giver, not merely the gift.

We can do something similar when teaching gratitude toward God.

We do not merely say:

“I like sunshine.”

We say:

“Thank You, God, for the sunshine.”

We are teaching children to look beyond the gift and recognize the Giver.

What About Difficult Days?

“In every thing give thanks” does not mean we pretend everything that happens is good.

A child can have a difficult day.

Someone can become sick.

A toy can break.

A friend can be unkind.

A child can get hurt.

We do not need to respond:

“You have to be happy because we're supposed to be thankful.”

Instead, we can acknowledge what happened.

“That hurt.”

“You're disappointed.”

“You miss Mommy.”

Then we can still help the child recognize something true:

“Even when today is hard, God has not stopped being good.”

That is a much deeper understanding of gratitude, and it will develop as the child grows.

Family Activity: The Morning Thank-You Hunt

Walk through the house or outside together and find **five things** you can thank God for.

For example:

A bed.

A cup of water.

A tree.

Shoes.

A family photograph.

For each one, let the child say:

“Thank You, God, for ____.”

With a two-year-old, three items may be plenty.

An older preschooler may want to keep going.

Let them.

You may be surprised by what they notice.

Start a Thank-You Jar

Place a simple jar or container somewhere the family can see it.

Throughout the week, write down things your child says he or she is thankful for.

Your child might say:

“My puppy.”

“Pancakes.”

“Grandpa.”

“The moon.”

“My red truck.”

Put them in the jar.

At the end of the week, pull out several and thank God together.

Do not worry if some answers seem small.

We are developing the habit of noticing.

When Your Child Complains

Complaining gives us a natural opportunity to practice gratitude.

Suppose your child says:

“I don't want this cup. I wanted the green one.”

You do not have to give a speech about starving children somewhere else.

Simply say:

“I know you wanted the green one. But we can still be thankful that we have a cup and something to drink.”

That is enough.

Gratitude does not mean children never have preferences.

It means preferences do not have to control their attitude.

Parents and Grandparents Must Practice It Too

Children notice adult complaining.

Traffic.

Weather.

Prices.

Work.

Other people.

The restaurant.

The television.

The temperature.

The line at the store.

Then we tell the child:

“Be thankful.”

They are listening to both lessons.

If we want gratitude to become part of our children's lives, it should increasingly become part of ours.

Let them hear you say:

“God gave us a beautiful morning.”

“I'm thankful we have this food.”

“I'm thankful we get to spend today together.”

“Thank You, Lord, for taking care of us.”

That does not require pretending life is perfect.

It means intentionally recognizing God's goodness.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for this brand-new day. Thank You for our family, our food, our home, and the people who love us. Help us notice the good things You have given us and remember to say thank You. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for today. Thank You for loving me. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Biblical gratitude is much more than positive thinking.

We are not teaching children merely to “look on the bright side.”

Thanksgiving has an object.

We give thanks **to God**.

That is an important distinction.

Psalms 107:1 does not merely tell us to feel thankful:

“O give thanks unto the LORD...”

Our gratitude is directed toward the One we recognize as good.

That also means gratitude should not depend entirely upon circumstances.

There will eventually be days when your child cannot honestly say:

“Everything today was wonderful.”

Neither can we.

Christian thanksgiving does not require us to call suffering pleasant.

It recognizes God's goodness even when life contains things we would never have chosen.

That is a truth preschoolers will only begin to understand, but we can lay the foundation now.

Memory Verse

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good...”

Psalm 107:1, KJV

For ages 2–3:

“O give thanks unto the LORD.”

For ages 4–5, work toward:

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good.”

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Thank You for a Brand-New Day* or sing the main hook together.

Read

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good...”

Psalm 107:1, KJV

Talk

Say:

“God has given us another day. The Bible tells us to give thanks to Him.”

Ask:

“What is one thing you want to thank God for?”

Do

Look around and find three things you can thank God for.

Let the child name them.

Pray

“Thank You, God, for this new day. Thank You for all the good things You have given us. Help us remember to be thankful today. Amen.”

Final Word

Tomorrow morning, your child may not remember Psalm 107:1.

They may not remember this lesson.

But perhaps they will look outside and say:

“Thank You, God.”

That is a beginning.

Keep helping them notice.

Keep helping them give thanks.

Keep reminding them where good gifts ultimately come from.

A brand-new day gives us brand-new opportunities to practice gratitude.

And tomorrow, we move to an even more personal truth:

Song 3

Happy God Made Me

Little children are naturally curious about themselves.

They discover their fingers.

Their toes.

Their eyes.

Their ears.

Their voice.

They learn to run, jump, clap, draw, build, sing, and eventually ask an endless supply of questions.

Happy God Made Me takes that natural curiosity and points it toward a foundational biblical truth:

God made me.

This song is not intended to teach children that everything they do is right or that life should always make them feel happy.

It teaches something much more basic.

I am not an accident. God is my Creator.

Main Truth

God made me wonderfully, and I can thank Him for the person He made me to be.

God's Word

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

Psalms 139:14, KJV

And:

“Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves...”

Psalms 100:3, KJV

For a preschooler:

God made you.

That is where we begin.

What This Song Teaches

The song walks children through parts of their bodies they already recognize:

Eyes.

Ears.

Hands.

Feet.

A nose.

Fingers.

Toes.

Then it connects those familiar things with their Creator.

God made my eyes.

God made my ears.

God made my hands.

God made my feet.

The purpose is not an anatomy lesson.

We are teaching a child to look at himself and recognize:

God made me.

And because God made us, we should thank Him.

“Wonderfully Made” Does Not Mean Everyone Is the Same

Look at a group of children and you immediately see differences.

Different hair.

Different eyes.

Different heights.

Different voices.

Different abilities.

Different personalities.

One child runs quickly.

Another does not.

One speaks early.

Another takes longer.

One loves music.

Another wants to build things.

One child may live with a disability or physical limitation.

When we teach:

“God made me wonderfully,”

we should never turn that into:

“God makes everyone's body work exactly the same way.”

That simply is not true.

Psalm 139 points us toward the wonder of God's knowledge and His work in forming human life.

We can teach children to value themselves and others without pretending differences do not exist.

Talking With Ages 2–3

This lesson can be wonderfully simple and physical.

Ask:

Who made you?

God.

Who made your eyes?

God.

Who made your hands?

God.

Who made your toes?

God.

Then point.

“Show me your nose.”

“Wiggle your fingers.”

“Tap your feet.”

“Where are your ears?”

Your child is learning through movement while hearing the same truth repeatedly:

God made me.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin thinking about what they can do with what God has given them.

Ask:

What can you do with your eyes?

See.

What can you do with your ears?

Listen.

What can you do with your hands?

Help.

What can you do with your feet?

Walk.

Then go one step further:

“How can we use our hands to do something good?”

“How can we use our ears when someone is talking?”

“How can our mouths say kind words?”

Now creation begins connecting with responsibility.

My Body Belongs to God

As children grow, this truth can become an important foundation.

Our bodies are not merely for doing whatever we want.

God gave us abilities that can be used in good ways or wrong ways.

Hands can help.

Hands can also hurt.

A mouth can encourage.

A mouth can also speak cruelly.

Feet can take us toward someone who needs help.

They can also carry us somewhere we should not go.

For a preschooler, keep it simple:

“God gave you your hands. Let's use them for something good.”

That idea will grow with the child.

Be Careful With Appearance

Children begin noticing physical differences earlier than adults sometimes realize.

One child has curly hair.

Another has straight hair.

Someone is taller.

Someone is smaller.

Someone wears glasses.

Someone has a birthmark.

Someone moves differently.

These moments give us an opportunity to teach respect.

We do not need to pretend differences do not exist.

Instead:

“God made people in many different ways. We should treat people kindly.”

Avoid making physical appearance the primary basis for praise.

If children constantly hear:

“You're so pretty.”

“You're so handsome.”

“You're the cutest.”

they can begin learning that appearance is what gives them value.

There is nothing wrong with telling a child she is beautiful.

Just make sure she also hears:

“You were very kind.”

“You worked hard.”

“You helped someone.”

“You told the truth.”

“God made you, and you are important to Him.”

When a Child Says, “I Can't”

Sooner or later, children notice something another child can do that they cannot.

“I can't run that fast.”

“I can't draw that.”

“I can't reach.”

“I can't read.”

Do not automatically answer:

“You can do anything!”

That sounds encouraging, but it is not true.

None of us can do everything.

A better response might be:

“You can't do that yet. Let's practice.”

Or:

“That is difficult for you, but there are many things you can do.”

Or sometimes simply:

“That’s okay. Everybody is different.”

Our confidence does not need to be built upon the idea that we can accomplish anything imaginable.

Our foundation is stronger:

God made me. God knows me. My value does not depend upon being better than somebody else.

Family Activity: Head to Toes

Stand together and work from head to toes.

Point to each body part and ask what it can do.

Eyes: see.

Ears: hear.

Mouth: speak, sing, eat.

Hands: hold, build, help.

Feet: walk, run, jump.

Then ask:

“How could we use that to do something good?”

For example:

“My eyes can notice someone who needs help.”

“My ears can listen when Mommy speaks.”

“My mouth can say kind words.”

“My hands can help clean up.”

“My feet can walk over and help Grandpa.”

Keep it playful and simple.

Family Activity: God Made Each of Us

Look at family photographs.

Find Mom.

Dad.

Grandma.

Grandpa.

Brothers.

Sisters.

Cousins.

Your child.

Ask:

“Did God make Grandpa?”

“Yes.”

“Did God make Mommy?”

“Yes.”

“Did God make you?”

“Yes!”

Then say:

“God made people, and every person should be treated with care.”

This helps move the lesson beyond:

God made me

toward:

God made other people too.

What About Animals?

Children may naturally extend the conversation.

“Did God make Scout?”

Yes.

“Did God make sheep?”

Yes.

“Did God make otters?”

Yes.

“Did God make birds?”

Yes.

Genesis teaches us that God created living creatures.

This gives you another opportunity to expand the child's understanding of God as Creator.

But maintain an important distinction as children grow.

Human beings hold a unique place in God's creation.

“So God created man in his own image...”

Genesis 1:27, KJV

We can love animals without teaching children that human beings are simply another kind of animal with no special place in God's creation.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for making me. Thank You for my eyes, ears, hands, feet, fingers, and toes. Help me use what You have given me to do what is right and to help others. Thank You for knowing me and caring for me. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for making me. Help me use my hands to help and my mouth to be kind. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Psalms 139 gives us much more than a children's message about self-esteem.

David is marveling at God's intimate knowledge of him.

Earlier he writes:

“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.”

Psalms 139:1, KJV

The wonder is not simply:

“I'm wonderful.”

The wonder is:

God knows me completely. God formed me. His knowledge is beyond mine.

That distinction keeps the lesson centered on God rather than turning it into self-celebration.

Our culture often tells children:

“Believe in yourself.”

Scripture gives us something deeper than confidence in ourselves.

We want children ultimately to learn to trust **God**.

So we can celebrate how God made a child without making the child the center of everything.

The proper response to being wonderfully made is the response David gives:

“I will praise thee.”

Memory Verse

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

Psalms 139:14, KJV

For ages 2–3:

“I am... wonderfully made.”

For ages 4–5, begin learning:

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

And make sure the child understands who **“thee”** refers to.

We are praising God.

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Happy God Made Me* or sing:

**“God made me, God made me,
From my head down to my feet.”**

Read

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

Psalm 139:14, KJV

Talk

Ask:

“Who made you?”

God.

“Who made your hands?”

God.

“What is something good we can do with our hands?”

Let the child answer.

Do

Wiggle fingers.

Tap feet.

Blink eyes.

Touch ears.

Then choose one thing to use for good today.

Maybe:

“Today these hands are going to help.”

Pray

“Thank You, God, for making me. Help me use what You have given me in ways that please You. Amen.”

Final Word

A little child standing in front of a mirror sees a face.

Eyes.

A nose.

A smile.

Maybe messy hair.

We want to help that child eventually see something more.

God made me.

That truth should not produce pride.

It should produce gratitude.

God made my hands.

Let me use them well.

God gave me a voice.

Let me use it well.

God made other people too.

Let me treat them well.

And when little voices sing:

“I'm happy God made me,”

we can point them toward the One who deserves the praise.

Next comes another ordinary part of every child's day, and one of the easiest places to begin practicing gratitude:

Song 4

Thank You for My Food

Mealtime happens again and again.

Breakfast.

Lunch.

Dinner.

Snacks.

That makes food one of the easiest everyday opportunities to teach a young child about gratitude.

Thank You for My Food takes something a child experiences several times every day and connects it with a simple truth:

What I receive is an opportunity to give thanks to God.

We are not merely teaching children to say a prayer because everyone is waiting to eat.

We want them to begin understanding **why** we give thanks.

Main Truth

God provides for us, and we should receive our food with thanksgiving.

God's Word

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:”

1 Timothy 4:4, KJV

Jesus also gave thanks before distributing food:

“And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples...”

John 6:11, KJV

For a preschooler, the lesson can simply be:

We thank God for our food.

What This Song Teaches

Children understand hunger.

They understand:

“I'm hungry.”

“I want a snack.”

“What's for dinner?”

They may not yet understand everything involved in putting that food in front of them.

Someone earned money.

Someone bought groceries.

Someone prepared the meal.

Farmers grew food.

People transported it.

Stores stocked it.

And behind all of those ordinary means stands God's provision in His creation.

The rain.

The soil.

The plants.

The animals.

The ability to work.

The people who care for us.

For a preschooler, we do not need to explain the entire food supply chain before handing over the banana.

Begin simply:

“God has given us food. Let's thank Him.”

Why Do We Pray Before We Eat?

Young children sometimes learn routines before they understand them.

Sit down.

Fold hands.

Close eyes.

Say prayer.

Eat.

Those habits can be helpful, but we do not want prayer to become merely the thing we have to finish before everyone is allowed to touch the food.

Explain it.

“We’re thanking God for what He has given us.”

That changes the emphasis.

Prayer is not a magic formula that makes food safe.

It is not a payment we owe God before eating.

It is an opportunity to express gratitude.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep the conversation connected to what is directly in front of the child.

What are we having?

Banana.

Who can we thank for our food?

God.

What can we say?

Thank You, God.

You can point to individual foods:

“Thank You, God, for our apples.”

“Thank You, God, for our bread.”

“Thank You, God, for our strawberries.”

The lesson is happening at the table.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin looking behind the meal.

Ask:

Where do apples grow?

Who made plants able to grow?

Who prepared our dinner?

Who went to the store?

Should we thank the person who made our food too?

This helps children understand that gratitude toward God does not prevent us from thanking people.

We can thank both.

“Thank you, Mom, for making dinner.”

And:

“Thank You, God, for giving us food.”

What If the Child Does Not Like the Food?

This is where the lesson becomes practical.

It is easy to sing **Thank You for My Food** while eating a favorite treat.

Then broccoli appears.

Or peas.

Or whatever food currently occupies the bottom position in your child's personal ranking system.

A child does not have to pretend to like something.

There is a difference between:

“I don't really like peas.”

and:

“Yuck! This is disgusting!”

We can teach children to express preferences without becoming rude or ungrateful.

Try:

“You don't have to say you like it. But someone prepared this food for you, so let's use kind words.”

Now several lessons from the album begin working together.

Gratitude.

Kindness.

Words.

Food Is Not Guaranteed for Everyone

As children grow, mealtime can also introduce compassion.

Some families have more than enough food.

Others struggle.

We do not need to frighten preschoolers with details they are not ready to process.

But we can begin teaching:

“Some people do not have as much food as we do. We should be thankful, and when we can help people who need food, that's a good thing to do.”

Perhaps your family donates food.

Let your child participate.

Give them a can or package to place in the donation box.

Say:

“We have food, and we're going to share some food with another family.”

Now gratitude begins producing generosity.

Family Activity: Where Did My Food Come From?

Choose one item from the meal.

An apple works well.

Ask:

“Where did this come from?”

A store.

“Before the store?”

Perhaps a truck.

“Before that?”

A farm or orchard.

“Where did the apple grow?”

On a tree.

Then ask:

“Who made trees?”

God.

You can do this with bread, vegetables, fruit, or other simple foods.

The point is not to explain every industrial step.

It is to help children begin seeing that food does not magically appear on the table.

Many things happened before that bite reached them.

Family Activity: Help Prepare the Meal

Give your child one age-appropriate responsibility.

Carry napkins.

Put spoons on the table.

Wash fruit with help.

Place something in a bowl.

Carry an unbreakable cup.

Then say:

“Look at that. You're helping prepare our meal.”

Now **Thank You for My Food** connects naturally with the next part of the album:

A Happy Helper.

Let the Child Pray Sometimes

If your child is willing, allow him or her to give thanks for the meal.

Do not require a polished prayer.

You may hear:

“Thank You, God, for macaroni and Scout and Mommy and my truck and amen.”

That's okay.

The child is learning.

You can gradually model a simple mealtime prayer:

“Thank You, God, for our food. Thank You for taking care of us. Amen.”

Over time, encourage the child to use his or her own words.

Avoid Making Prayer a Performance

Be careful when children pray in front of other people.

A cute preschool prayer can make adults smile.

Sometimes everyone laughs because the child says something unexpected.

The child may then learn:

Prayer gets me attention.

We want prayer directed toward God, not performed for an audience.

Enjoy the innocence of children's prayers, but resist turning them into entertainment.

If a child says something funny, you do not have to make a production out of it.

Let the prayer remain prayer.

What About Wasting Food?

Gratitude can also influence how we treat what we have.

That does not mean forcing a child to eat everything on the plate after the child is full.

But we can begin teaching children not to be careless.

Start with small portions.

Take more if needed.

Save leftovers when appropriate.

Avoid deliberately throwing or playing with food.

You might say:

“We want to take care of the food we've been given.”

That is a more useful lesson than making every meal a battle over an empty plate.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the food You have given us. Thank You for the people who grew it, prepared it, and put it on our table. Help us to be thankful for what we have and willing to share with others. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for my food. Thank You for taking care of me. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

There is an important biblical balance here.

We say God provides, but that does not mean food normally falls from heaven onto our tables.

God often provides through ordinary means.

Work.

Farming.

Buying.

Cooking.

Family.

Community.

That means we can teach children to recognize both God's provision and human effort.

We can thank God for dinner while also thanking the person who spent an hour preparing it.

We should also avoid teaching a simplistic formula:

“If you trust God, you will always have plenty of food.”

There are faithful believers throughout the world who experience poverty and hunger.

Scripture does not give us permission to judge their faith by the contents of their pantry.

Instead, abundance should make us grateful and attentive to people in need.

“But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

1 John 3:17, KJV

Thankfulness should not make us smug.

It should help make us generous.

Memory Verse

“...nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:”

1 Timothy 4:4, KJV

For ages 2–3, I would use the simpler concept rather than expecting them to memorize an awkward fragment:

“Thank You, God, for my food.”

That is not presented as a Bible quotation. It is simply the lesson they are learning.

For ages 4–5, begin with:

“...if it be received with thanksgiving.”

You can also use the easier-to-understand thanksgiving verse from earlier in the guide:

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good...”

Psalms 107:1, KJV

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Thank You for My Food* or sing its main hook together.

Read

“And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks...”

John 6:11, KJV

Talk

Say:

“Jesus gave thanks for food. We can thank God for our food too.”

Ask:

“What food are you thankful for today?”

Then ask:

“Who prepared our food?”

Encourage the child to thank that person too.

Do

Let your child help with one simple mealtime job.

Carry napkins.

Set out spoons.

Wash a piece of fruit.

Pray

“Thank You, God, for our food. Thank You for the people who helped provide it. Help us to be thankful and willing to share. Amen.”

Final Word

Mealtime will happen again tomorrow.

And probably several times before then.

That means this lesson does not require a special occasion.

Every plate is another opportunity.

Every snack is another reminder.

Every family meal gives us another chance to teach:

We have received something good.

We should be thankful.

And sometimes thankfulness can move little hands to do something else.

Help carry the napkins.

Help clear the table.

Help put something away.

Which brings us naturally to:

Song 5

A Happy Helper

Little children often want to help.

They want to carry something.

Stir something.

Push the button.

Hold the broom.

Feed the dog.

Put something in the basket.

Sometimes their “help” makes the job take twice as long.

Let them help anyway.

A Happy Helper takes that natural desire and begins teaching something bigger:

Helping other people is one way I can show love.

A child does not have to wait until he is big to become useful. There are things little hands can do right now.

Main Truth

God wants us to care about others, and even little hands can help.

God's Word

“...by love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13, KJV

And:

“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

Philippians 2:4, KJV

For a preschooler:

We can help other people because we care about them.

What This Song Teaches

Helping begins when children learn to notice that the world does not revolve entirely around them.

Someone needs something carried.

The toys need to be picked up.

Scout needs fresh water.

Grandma dropped something.

Dad is bringing groceries inside.

Mom is preparing dinner.

A younger child needs assistance.

There are opportunities everywhere.

At first, children will usually need someone to point them out:

“Would you like to help me?”

Eventually we want the child to begin noticing:

“Someone needs help. Maybe I can do something.”

That is a significant step.

Helping Is More Than Doing Chores

Chores are valuable.

Children should learn that being part of a family includes responsibilities.

But helping is bigger than completing assigned tasks.

A chore says:

“This is my job.”

Helping sometimes says:

“That's not my job, but I can help anyway.”

Suppose a sibling spills something.

A child might say:

“I didn't do it.”

Perhaps that's true.

But there is another question:

“Could you help?”

That begins teaching a child to look beyond blame and toward another person's need.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Make helping very concrete.

Ask:

Can your little hands help?

Yes.

Can you put this toy in the basket?

Yes.

Can you carry this napkin?

Yes.

Can you bring Scout's bowl to me?

Yes.

Then acknowledge what happened:

“You helped!”

Connect it to the lesson:

“Those were helping hands.”

At this age, action will often teach more effectively than explanation.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin looking for needs themselves.

Ask:

What is something you can do to help our family today?

How could you help if someone dropped something?

What could you do if Grandpa was carrying several things?

How could you help a younger child?

Then ask an important question:

Do we only help when someone gives us a prize?

No.

We help because helping others is good.

A Happy Helper Is Not Happy Every Minute

The title is *A Happy Helper*, but we should be careful with what we teach from that phrase.

Sometimes helping is fun.

Sometimes it isn't.

Picking up toys may not feel exciting.

Carrying dirty clothes to the hamper may not produce great joy.

Helping clean up something you did not spill may feel unfair.

We do not want children to think:

“If I don't feel happy about helping, I don't have to help.”

Feelings matter, but feelings do not determine what is right.

A child can learn:

“I may not feel like helping right now, but I can still choose to help.”

That is an important lesson that will become increasingly valuable as the child grows.

Jesus Gave Us the Greatest Example of Serving

As children become able to understand more, we can point them toward Jesus.

Jesus said:

“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister...”

Mark 10:45, KJV

The word **minister** here carries the idea of serving.

For a preschooler, explain:

“Jesus did not come only expecting everybody to do things for Him. Jesus served others.”

One vivid example comes when Jesus washed His disciples' feet in John 13.

The Lord Himself took the place of a servant.

That gives our lesson a much deeper foundation than simply:

“Good children help.”

We help because serving others reflects something Jesus Himself demonstrated.

Family Activity: The Helping Hands Hunt

Tell your child:

“We're going to look for three things our hands can help with.”

Walk around together.

Maybe:

Put a toy away.

Carry a towel.

Put a book on the shelf.

Give Scout fresh water with an adult.

Place napkins on the table.

Put dirty clothes in the hamper.

After each task, hold up your hands and say:

“Helping hands!”

Keep it simple and fun.

But actually accomplish something useful.

Let Them Help Even When It Takes Longer

This may be the hardest part of the chapter for adults.

Sometimes it is easier to say:

“I'll do it.”

You can put the laundry away faster.

You can sweep better.

You can prepare the food without worrying about little hands.

You can certainly fill the dog's water bowl without getting half of it on the floor.

But efficiency is not always the most important goal.

A child learns to help by helping.

Give age-appropriate opportunities.

Accept imperfect results.

Teach them how to improve.

One day those little hands will become capable hands.

Do Not Redo Everything in Front of Them

Suppose your child carefully makes the bed.

It is crooked.

Very crooked.

You immediately remake it.

What might the child hear?

“My help wasn't good enough.”

Sometimes something truly does need to be corrected.

Teach gently:

“Let's fix this corner together.”

But when perfection does not matter, consider leaving it.

A proudly folded towel that looks nothing like a rectangle may still represent something important:

A child tried to help.

Helping Without Being Asked

This is a wonderful next step for older preschoolers.

When you notice it, point it out.

“You saw that those toys needed to be picked up, and you helped without anyone asking you.”

“You saw Grandma drop that, and you picked it up for her.”

“You noticed Scout needed water and told me.”

Now the child is not merely following a command.

The child is beginning to **notice other people's needs**.

That is what we want to develop.

Helping Is Not About Getting Praise

Praise can encourage children.

But we do not want to create a little helper who asks after every task:

“What do I get?”

Sometimes the answer should simply be:

“You helped our family. Thank you.”

Children can gradually learn that some good things are worth doing even when nobody gives them a sticker, candy, money, or applause.

Jesus taught:

“...thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”

Matthew 6:18, KJV

The immediate context concerns fasting, so we should not pull the verse out and make it specifically about preschool chores.

But the broader teaching in Matthew 6 reminds adults that righteousness is not supposed to be performed merely to receive human attention.

That principle is worth remembering as we teach children.

When a Child Refuses to Help

There will be times when:

“Would you like to help?”

gets a very confident:

“No.”

If the task is optional, that may be the end of it.

But some responsibilities are not optional.

There is a difference between:

“Would you like to help Grandpa wash the car?”

and:

“You need to put your toys away.”

Do not phrase a required responsibility as though it were a choice if it isn't.

Instead:

“It's time to put the toys away. I'll help you get started.”

Then follow through.

Children need both opportunities to volunteer **and responsibilities they are expected to complete.**

Help Without Taking Over

There is another side to helping.

Sometimes children try to “help” someone who does not need or want help.

An older sibling is building something.

A younger child reaches in.

“I'M HELPING!”

The structure collapses.

Now everyone is unhappy.

We can teach:

“Helping means caring about what the other person needs. Sometimes we should ask first.”

Try:

“Can I help you?”

That is an excellent phrase for children to learn.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for giving us hands that can help. Help us notice when someone needs us. Teach us to serve others with love, even when the job is not our favorite thing to do. Amen.

For younger children:

Jesus, help me use my little hands to help someone today. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

It is easy to turn service into another behavior-management technique.

“Jesus wants helpers, so clean your room.”

There may be truth somewhere in that sentence, but we want to build something deeper than compliance.

Biblical service involves looking beyond ourselves.

Paul wrote:

“...by love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13, KJV

Notice the connection:

by love.

We are not merely producing efficient little workers.

We are teaching children that other people matter.

That lesson begins with carrying a napkin and picking up a toy.

Later it may mean giving time.

Sacrificing comfort.

Caring for someone who is sick.

Serving when nobody notices.

Helping someone who cannot repay us.

The preschool chore is small.

The character being developed through it may become much larger.

And once again, adults must model the lesson.

If children hear us constantly saying:

“That’s not my problem.”

“Someone else can do it.”

“That’s not my job.”

they are receiving a lesson about service too.

Let them occasionally see us help when we did not have to.

Memory Verse

“...by love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13, KJV

This is short enough that even many preschoolers can begin learning it.

For ages 2–3:

“Serve one another.”

For ages 4–5:

“By love serve one another.”

Explain **serve** simply:

“To serve someone means we help and care for them.”

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *A Happy Helper* or sing its main hook together.

Read

“...by love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13, KJV

Talk

Say:

“To serve someone means we help them. Even little hands can help.”

Ask:

“What can your hands help with today?”

Do

Choose one real job.

Put away three toys.

Carry napkins.

Put a book away.

Help fill Scout's water bowl.

Do it together.

Pray

“Jesus, help me notice when someone needs help. Help me use my hands to serve others with love. Amen.”

Final Word

Little hands cannot do everything.

They cannot carry the heaviest bag.

They cannot cook dinner alone.

They cannot solve every problem.

But they can do something.

They can carry.

Pick up.

Put away.

Bring.

Share.

Comfort.

Serve.

And perhaps one day, instead of hearing:

“Will you help me?”

you will hear a little voice ask:

“Can I help?”

That is worth encouraging.

Because once a child begins noticing other people, another lesson follows naturally.

Helping is one way to show it.

So is kindness.

Song 6

Be Kind

Kindness sounds simple.

Be nice.

Use gentle hands.

Say something kind.

Help someone who is hurting.

But young children quickly discover that kindness is easiest when everyone else is being kind too.

The harder lesson comes when someone takes the toy we wanted.

Someone knocks down our blocks.

A brother or sister bothers us.

We are tired.

We are frustrated.

We do not get our way.

Be Kind helps put a short, memorable reminder into a child's mind:

Be kind, be kind, be kind today.

But we want children to understand that kindness is more than a phrase in a song.

God tells us to be kind to one another.

Main Truth

God wants me to treat other people with kindness.

God's Word

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

And:

“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love...”

Romans 12:10, KJV

For a preschooler, Ephesians 4:32 gives us an especially simple instruction:

“Be ye kind one to another.”

What This Song Teaches

Kindness can be expressed through many little choices.

A gentle hand.

A kind voice.

Helping someone.

Waiting for a turn.

Comforting someone who is sad.

Inviting another child to play.

Giving something back.

Listening.

Saying something encouraging.

Children do not need to understand every dimension of biblical kindness before they can begin practicing it.

Start with:

“What would be kind?”

That question can become very useful.

What Does Kind Mean?

Preschoolers may sing the word **kind** without knowing exactly what it means.

Give them examples.

Kindness is:

Caring about another person and treating that person in a good and loving way.

For a two-year-old, make it even simpler:

“Kind means we care and use gentle words and gentle hands.”

Then show them.

If another child falls:

“What would be kind?”

Help them up.

If someone is crying:

“What would be kind?”

Ask if they are okay.

If a child has no toy:

“What would be kind?”

Perhaps share one.

Now **kind** becomes something the child can recognize.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Use situations the child understands.

Are hitting hands kind hands?

No.

Are helping hands kind hands?

Yes.

If someone is sad, can we help them?

Yes.

Can we use kind words?

Yes.

You can also practice facial expressions and tone.

Say:

“Give me the cup!”

Then:

“May I please have the cup?”

Ask:

“Which one sounded kind?”

Even very young children can often hear the difference.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin considering what kindness requires in harder situations.

Ask:

Is it easy to be kind when someone is kind to you?

Usually.

What if someone makes you angry?

Can we still choose kind words?

What could you do if you see another child sitting alone?

What could you do if someone gets hurt?

What could you say if your friend is sad?

Then ask:

Does being kind mean we always give another person whatever they want?

No.

That distinction becomes important.

Kindness Does Not Mean Saying Yes to Everything

Children should not learn that kindness means they must always comply with another person's request.

A child can say:

“No, thank you.”

A child can say:

“I don't want to do that.”

A child can ask an adult for help.

A child can have reasonable boundaries.

A child should never be taught that being “kind” requires allowing another person to hurt them, frighten them, or touch them inappropriately.

Kindness is not the absence of boundaries.

We can say no without being cruel.

That is an important distinction to establish as children grow.

Gentle Hands

For very young children, kindness often begins physically.

Hands can:

Help.

Hug appropriately.

Carry.

Share.

Comfort.

Hands can also:

Hit.

Push.

Pinch.

Grab.

Throw.

When a child uses hands to hurt, correct clearly:

“We don't hit. Hitting hurts.”

Then teach what to do instead.

“If you're angry, use your words.”

“Come get me.”

“Tell him you want a turn.”

“Move away.”

Correction works best when children are not only told what **not** to do but are also taught what they **can** do.

Kind Words

Words matter too.

A preschooler may discover very quickly that words can produce a reaction.

“You can't play.”

“I don't like you.”

“That's stupid.”

“You aren't my friend.”

Sometimes children repeat language without fully understanding its effect.

Do not merely say:

“That's not nice.”

Be specific.

“That hurt her feelings.”

“We don't use words to hurt people.”

“Let's try saying that again with kind words.”

This prepares us for Track 8, where words receive even more attention.

When Someone Is Unkind First

This is where kindness becomes more difficult.

A child says:

“But he was mean to me!”

That may be completely true.

We should not ignore what the other child did.

Say:

“He should not have done that.”

Then add:

“But we still need to choose what **we** do next.”

That is an important lesson.

Another person's wrong choice does not automatically make our wrong choice right.

As children grow, this becomes an opportunity to introduce Jesus' much more challenging teaching:

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you...”

Matthew 5:44, KJV

A preschooler will not grasp everything in that verse.

But the foundation can begin:

We do not have to become mean because someone else was mean.

Kindness and Forgiveness Are Connected

Ephesians 4:32 continues:

“...forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

Forgiveness will require more explanation as children mature, but little children can begin learning:

Someone may do something wrong.

We may become hurt or angry.

We should not spend our lives trying to hurt them back.

Later, children will need a much fuller biblical understanding of forgiveness.

For now, we can begin with:

“We don't try to get even.”

Family Activity: Kind or Unkind?

Give your child simple examples and let them answer:

Kind or unkind?

Helping someone pick up crayons.

Kind.

Pushing someone out of the way.

Unkind.

Inviting someone to play.

Kind.

Calling someone a mean name.

Unkind.

Helping Grandpa carry something.

Kind.

Taking someone's toy without asking.

Unkind.

Comforting someone who is crying.

Kind.

Then reverse the activity.

Ask your child to give **you** examples.

You may get some interesting answers.

Family Activity: Secret Kindness

Choose one person.

Mom.

Dad.

Grandma.

Grandpa.

A sibling.

A neighbor.

Ask:

“What kind thing could we do for them without being asked?”

Perhaps:

Make a picture.

Help with something.

Put something away.

Bring them a drink with adult help.

Leave a little note.

Then do it.

The purpose is to help children discover that kindness can begin with **noticing another person**.

Catch Kindness Happening

Adults tend to notice misbehavior because it demands attention.

Try deliberately noticing kindness too.

“I saw you help your sister.”

“You moved over so he could sit beside you.”

“You asked if she was okay.”

“You gave him a turn.”

“That was kind.”

Be specific.

The child learns which behavior you are talking about.

Do Not Make Kindness a Personality Label

Avoid saying:

“You're the kind one.”

especially when comparing siblings.

One child should not become **the kind child** while another becomes **the difficult child**.

Children make choices.

Sometimes kind ones.

Sometimes unkind ones.

Talk about the action:

“That was a kind thing to do.”

Then continue teaching.

Parents and Grandparents Set the Tone

Children learn kindness partly by watching how adults treat people who cannot do anything for them.

A restaurant server.

A cashier.

A stranger.

Someone driving slowly.

Someone who makes a mistake.

A family member who is irritating us.

If children hear us sing:

“Be kind, be kind, be kind today”

and then hear us tear another person apart in the car, they receive two lessons.

The example may speak louder than the song.

Kindness is not merely something we demand from children.

God's instruction applies to us too.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for showing us what is good. Help us be kind to other people. Help us use gentle hands and kind words. When someone is sad or needs help, help us notice and care. When we are angry, help us choose what is right. Amen.

For younger children:

Jesus, help me use kind words and gentle hands today. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Ephesians 4:32 gives us more than a rule for polite behavior:

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

Biblical kindness is connected with a **tender heart** and **forgiveness**.

That means kindness is deeper than manners.

A person can learn socially appropriate behavior while remaining completely self-centered.

We are trying to point children toward something more.

Notice others.

Care.

Serve.

Forgive.

Do not retaliate simply because you were wronged.

And ultimately, Scripture points the believer beyond his own goodness to what God has done for us in Christ.

Preschoolers will not understand all of that today.

But the little lesson:

“Be kind one to another”

is a good place to begin.

Memory Verse

“And be ye kind one to another...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

For ages 2–3:

“Be ye kind.”

For ages 4–5:

“Be ye kind one to another.”

As the child grows, add more of the verse.

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Be Kind* or sing its hook:

“Be kind, be kind, be kind today.”

Read

“And be ye kind one to another...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

Talk

Say:

“God tells us to be kind to one another.”

Ask:

“What is one kind thing we could do today?”

For a younger child, offer choices:

“Could we help someone?”

“Could we use kind words?”

“Could we give someone a turn?”

Do

Choose one act of kindness and do it together.

Keep it small and real.

Pray

“Jesus, help me be kind today. Help me use kind words, gentle hands, and notice when someone needs me. Amen.”

Final Word

Kindness often happens in very small moments.

A hand reaches out.

A toy is offered.

A place is made at the table.

A gentle word replaces a harsh one.

Someone notices a tear.

Someone decides not to hit back.

Those moments may seem little.

But little children are learning how to treat the people around them.

Give them a phrase they can remember:

Be kind.

Give them examples they can follow.

Most importantly, let them see kindness lived in front of them.

And very soon, kindness will require another difficult preschool skill:

letting someone else have some too.

Song 7

Share, Share, Share

Sharing can be difficult when you are little.

A favorite toy does not feel like just another object.

It is **my** truck.

My doll.

My crayons.

My turn.

Then another child reaches for it.

Suddenly, everything we have been singing about kindness becomes very practical.

Share, Share, Share helps children begin learning that they do not always have to keep everything for themselves.

But there is an important distinction for parents and grandparents:

Biblical generosity is not the same as forcing a child to surrender everything simply because another child wants it.

We want to teach generosity, consideration, and taking turns, while also helping children understand appropriate ownership and boundaries.

Main Truth

God wants us to care about others and to be willing to share what we have.

God's Word

“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Hebrews 13:16, KJV

The word **communicate** here carries the idea of sharing with others.

We also read:

“Give, and it shall be given unto you...”

Luke 6:38, KJV

For a preschooler, keep the lesson simple:

God wants us to be generous and willing to share.

What This Song Teaches

Sharing is one of the first ways a child encounters the tension between:

What I want

and:

What someone else wants.

That is valuable.

Children need to learn that other people have feelings and desires too.

Sometimes sharing means giving someone some of what we have.

Sometimes it means taking turns.

Sometimes it means allowing another child to use something for a while.

Sometimes it means giving something away completely.

Those are related ideas, but they are not identical.

Young children can gradually learn all of them.

“A Little for Me, A Little for You”

This is an especially useful idea when something can actually be divided.

Crackers.

Blocks.

Crayons.

Pieces of fruit.

Craft supplies.

You might say:

“You have six crayons, and your sister doesn't have any. Could we share some?”

Then physically divide them.

“A little for me, a little for you.”

Now the child can see what sharing means.

But not everything can be divided.

There is only one red truck.

Now we need another skill:

taking turns.

Sharing and Taking Turns Are Different

Adults often tell children:

“Share!”

when what we actually mean is:

“Give the other child a turn.”

Suppose your child is playing with a toy and another child immediately wants it.

We do not necessarily need to snatch it away and say:

“You have to share.”

Instead:

“She's waiting for a turn. You can play for a little while, and then we'll let her have a turn.”

Now both children are learning something.

One learns to eventually release the toy.

The other learns to wait.

Those are both valuable lessons.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Use concrete objects.

Give your child four blocks.

Keep none for yourself.

Ask:

“Do I have any blocks?”

No.

“Could you share one with me?”

When the child gives you one, say:

“Thank you for sharing.”

Then give it back.

You can practice with crackers, crayons, or other safe items.

Keep the lesson positive and brief.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin thinking about another person's perspective.

Ask:

How would you feel if everyone had a crayon except you?

What could someone do?

What if there is only one toy and two children want it?

Take turns.

What could you do if your friend forgot a snack and you had plenty?

Share.

Then ask:

Is sharing always easy?

Probably not.

That gives you an opportunity to say:

“Doing what is right isn't always easy.”

Sharing Does Not Mean Everything Belongs to Everyone

This distinction is important.

A child should be allowed to understand:

Some things belong to me.

Teaching ownership is not selfish.

If a child receives a special gift, it is reasonable for that child to understand that the item belongs to him or her.

Generosity means we learn not to hold everything with a selfish heart.

It does not mean:

“Anyone who asks for anything I own must receive it immediately.”

There may also be special items that should be put away before other children come to play.

A fragile keepsake.

A favorite bedtime toy.

Something valuable.

Something unsafe for younger children.

That is okay.

We can teach generosity without eliminating reasonable boundaries.

Never Use “Sharing” to Override Personal Safety

There is an even more important boundary.

Children should never be taught that sharing means other people are entitled to their bodies, physical affection, or personal space.

A child does not have to give someone a hug because an adult says:

“Come on. Share some love.”

We can encourage affection without forcing it.

Toys can be shared.

Food can be shared.

Crayons can be shared.

A child's body is not something we teach them to share.

That distinction may not be part of the song, but it is important for adults using the language of sharing.

When Sharing Causes a Meltdown

Sometimes you will carefully explain turns, generosity, kindness, and God's Word.

The child will still scream:

“MINE!”

Welcome to preschool.

Do not assume the lesson failed.

A child can understand a truth before developing the self-control to consistently practice it.

Stay calm.

State the expectation.

“I know you want the truck. It is his turn right now. Your turn is next.”

Or:

“You have plenty of crackers. We're going to share some with your sister.”

You do not need a sermon during the meltdown.

Teach when the child is able to listen.

Practice again later.

Family Activity: Share the Snack

Choose something easily divided.

Place several pieces on a plate.

Ask:

“How many people are here?”

Then help your child divide the snack.

“One for you.”

“One for me.”

“One for Grandma.”

If Scout is nearby, don't automatically include him unless the food is actually safe and appropriate for a dog.

The point is simple:

We have something, and we can make sure someone else has some too.

Then thank God together for having enough to share.

Family Activity: The Two-Minute Turn

Choose one toy.

Use a simple timer.

One child plays.

When the timer sounds, the other child gets a turn.

Keep the turns short enough for preschool attention spans.

Say:

“Now it's your turn.”

Then:

“Now it's her turn.”

This helps make **taking turns** visible and predictable.

The child learns:

Giving up the toy does not mean it disappears forever.

My turn can come again.

Practice Generosity Outside the Family

Sharing becomes more meaningful when it extends beyond siblings.

Let your child help choose food for a food pantry.

Choose a gently used toy to give away.

Help prepare something for another family.

Bring cookies to a neighbor.

Give clothing that has been outgrown.

Explain simply:

“We have something we can share with someone else.”

Children begin learning that generosity can extend beyond the people living in their house.

Do Not Force Children to Give Away Their Favorite Possessions

There is a difference between teaching generosity and manufacturing a dramatic sacrifice.

Do not suddenly hold up a child's favorite stuffed animal and say:

“If you really love Jesus, you'll give this away.”

That can confuse generosity with coercion.

Instead, when giving something away, involve the child appropriately.

“Here are some toys you've grown out of. Would you like to choose one or two that another child could enjoy?”

As children mature, they can make increasingly meaningful choices about generosity.

Watch How Adults Share

Once again, children are watching us.

Do they see adults being generous?

Do they see us share food?

Share time?

Help neighbors?

Give to people in need?

Or do they hear:

“That's mine.”

“I paid for it.”

“They can get their own.”

Children will eventually notice whether generosity is something adults teach or something adults actually practice.

Let them see it.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the things You have given us. Help us not to think only about ourselves. Help us share, take turns, and notice when someone else needs something. Give us generous hearts. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for what I have. Help me share with others. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Biblical generosity is much larger than preschool sharing.

Paul told Timothy:

“That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;”

1 Timothy 6:18, KJV

Again, **communicate** here carries the older sense of sharing.

Notice the heart behind it:

ready

and

willing.

That is where we ultimately want to go.

Not merely:

“I gave it because Dad made me.”

But:

“I saw a need, and I wanted to help.”

That kind of generosity takes time to develop.

And it should never be confused with earning God's favor.

We do not share so God will love us more.

We do not give things away to purchase blessings.

We do not teach children:

“If you give one toy, God will give you ten toys.”

That turns generosity into a transaction.

We give because God has taught us to care about others.

Memory Verse

“But to do good and to communicate forget not...”

Hebrews 13:16, KJV

Because **communicate** will not naturally mean “share” to a preschooler today, explain it.

For ages 2–3, use the biblical principle in simple language:

“God wants me to share.”

Make clear that this is the lesson, not a direct Bible quotation.

For ages 4–5, you can begin teaching the actual verse and explain:

“In this verse, *communicate* means being willing to share what we have.”

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Share, Share, Share* or sing its main hook together.

Read

“But to do good and to communicate forget not...”

Hebrews 13:16, KJV

Talk

Say:

“The Bible teaches us to do good and be willing to share.”

Ask:

“What is something we could share today?”

Then:

“What can we do when two people want the same toy?”

Take turns.

Do

Give your child several blocks, crayons, or pieces of an appropriate snack.

Practice:

“A little for me, a little for you.”

Or practice taking turns with one toy.

Pray

“Thank You, God, for what You have given us. Help us be willing to share and care about what other people need. Amen.”

Final Word

For a little child, sharing may begin with one cracker.

One crayon.

One block.

One turn on the swing.

Those are small things.

But underneath them is a much larger lesson:

Other people matter too.

I do not always have to be first.

I do not always have to have the most.

I can wait.

I can give.

I can share.

And as children learn to share what is in their hands, we can begin teaching them to pay attention to something else they give to people every day:

Song 8

Thank You, Please, and Kind Words

Words are powerful, even when they come from very small mouths.

“Please.”

“Thank you.”

“Can I help?”

“I’m sorry.”

“You can play with me.”

Those words can encourage, comfort, and show respect.

But little mouths can also learn words that hurt.

“Give me that!”

“Go away!”

“I don’t like you!”

“You can’t play!”

Thank You, Please, and Kind Words is about more than teaching good manners. Manners are useful, but the deeper lesson is this:

God cares about how we speak to other people.

Main Truth

God wants me to use my words in ways that are kind, thankful, and helpful.

God’s Word

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

Proverbs 16:24, KJV

And:

“Let your speech be alway with grace...”

Colossians 4:6, KJV

For preschoolers, we can put the lesson simply:

My words matter. I can choose kind words.

What This Song Teaches

“Please” and “thank you” are among the first manners many children learn.

That is good.

But we want to teach more than the correct words to produce at the correct time.

We want children to begin understanding why those words matter.

Please recognizes that I am asking another person for something rather than demanding it.

Thank you recognizes that someone has done something for me.

Kind words recognize that the person I am speaking to matters.

The goal is not simply a polite child.

The goal is a child beginning to understand that words should be used with care.

Manners and the Heart

A child can say:

“THANK YOU!”

in a voice that sounds anything but thankful.

A child can say:

“Pleeeeeease!”

after being told no ten times.

A child can apologize while rolling his eyes and immediately repeat the same behavior.

Words alone do not guarantee the right attitude.

But words are still worth teaching.

Young children often learn the outward action before they fully understand the heart behind it.

We teach:

“Say thank you.”

Then over time:

“Do you know why we say thank you?”

Because someone did something for us.

Now manners begin connecting with gratitude.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep this extremely practical.

Hand your child something.

Ask:

What can you say?

“Thank you.”

Have the child ask for something.

Prompt:

“May I have it, please?”

Then practice kind words:

“Can you say, ‘Come play with me’?”

“Can you say, ‘Are you okay?’”

“Can you say, ‘I love you’?”

Children this age learn very effectively by imitation.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin thinking about how words affect others.

Ask:

How do you feel when someone says something kind to you?

How might someone feel if we call them a mean name?

Can we tell the truth and still use kind words?

Yes.

What could you say if you want something another child has?

What could you say if someone helps you?

What could you say if someone looks sad?

The goal is to help children choose words rather than merely repeat a memorized phrase.

Kind Words Must Also Be True Words

This is an important balance.

Being kind does not mean saying something that is not true.

Suppose a child asks:

“Do you like my drawing?”

We do not need to teach children to lie in the name of kindness.

We can teach them to look for something truthful and encouraging.

“I like the big sun you drew.”

“You used lots of colors.”

“You worked hard on that.”

As children grow, they need to understand that **truth and kindness belong together**.

We do not use “I’m just telling the truth” as permission to be cruel.

And we do not use “I’m trying to be nice” as permission to lie.

Tone Matters Too

Consider these two sentences:

“May I have some water, please?”

“May I have some water, PLEASE?!”

Same words.

Different message.

Children need help learning that communication includes tone.

You can make this into a simple game.

Say the same sentence several ways.

Kindly.

Angrily.

Sadly.

Demandingly.

Ask:

“Which one sounded kind?”

Preschoolers are often very good at identifying tone when they hear it from someone else.

When “Please” Does Not Mean Yes

This is a lesson almost every preschooler eventually needs.

A child asks:

“Can I have another cookie?”

“No.”

“PLEEEEEEEASE?”

“No.”

“But I said please!”

Explain:

“Please is a kind way to ask. It doesn't mean the answer always has to be yes.”

That is important.

Good manners are not a tool for controlling another person's answer.

Sometimes the answer is no.

The child can learn to accept that without turning a request into a demand.

“Thank You” Should Become More Than a Prompt

Parents sometimes spend years saying:

“What do you say?”

There is nothing wrong with reminding young children.

But watch for opportunities to help gratitude become spontaneous.

When your child says thank you without prompting, notice it.

“I heard you thank Grandma without anyone reminding you.”

That is growth.

Eventually, we want gratitude to become something the child notices for himself.

Words Can Hurt

Physical injuries are easy for young children to understand.

“You hit him. That hurt.”

Words are less visible.

There may be no bruise.

No scrape.

No broken toy.

But words can still hurt someone.

Proverbs says:

“There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.”

Proverbs 12:18, KJV

A preschooler does not need a lengthy discussion of figurative language.

Simply explain:

“The Bible says words can hurt people. We want our words to help, not hurt.”

That is a powerful foundation.

What Do We Do After Hurtful Words?

Suppose your child says something cruel.

Do not stop with:

“Say sorry.”

First, identify what happened.

“You told your sister, ‘Nobody likes you.’ Those words were meant to hurt her.”

Then:

“That was wrong. What should you do?”

Help the child apologize appropriately.

“I’m sorry I said that. It was unkind.”

Depending upon the situation, the child may also need to make something right.

A forced, mumbled “sorry” followed immediately by play may not teach very much.

We will deal more deeply with apology and forgiveness in other Shepherd's Meadow material, but this song gives us an opportunity to begin.

Family Activity: Change the Words

Give your child an unkind or demanding sentence and ask them to make it better.

“Give me that!”

Could become:

“May I have a turn, please?”

“Go away!”

Could become:

“I'd like to play by myself for a little while, please.”

“You're stupid!”

Could become:

“I don't like what happened.”

“Get me water!”

Could become:

“May I please have some water?”

This is useful because we are not merely telling children what not to say.

We are giving them words they **can** use.

Family Activity: The Kind Word Circle

Sit together as a family.

Each person says one truthful, kind thing about another person.

For example:

“Grandpa makes me laugh.”

“Mommy takes care of me.”

“She shared with me today.”

“Daddy helped me fix my toy.”

For younger children, provide prompts.

“What is something Grandma does that you like?”

The purpose is to practice deliberately using words to encourage others.

Use Words to Express Gratitude to People

This song gives us an opportunity to connect Tracks 2 and 4 with everyday relationships.

We have already taught children to thank God.

Now help them thank people too.

“Thank you for making dinner.”

“Thank you for helping me.”

“Thank you for playing with me.”

“Thank you for reading my book.”

“Thank you for taking me to the park.”

Gratitude that remains unspoken is easily missed.

Teach children to express it.

Adults Need This Lesson Too

Children hear how adults speak when they are irritated.

They hear sarcasm.

They hear criticism.

They hear the way spouses speak to one another.

They hear how we speak about people after those people leave.

Then we tell them:

“Use kind words.”

Once again, God's Word is not only for correcting children.

“Let your speech be always with grace...”

Colossians 4:6, KJV

That verse belongs to us too.

Sometimes the adult may need to say:

“I spoke harshly. That was wrong. I'm sorry.”

That can become a powerful lesson because the child sees that adults are also accountable for their words.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for giving us voices and words. Help us use them well. Help us say thank you when someone helps us, please when we ask, and kind words when we speak to others. Keep us from using our words to hurt people. Amen.

For younger children:

Jesus, help me use kind words today. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Scripture takes speech seriously.

Jesus said:

“...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

Matthew 12:34, KJV

Our words often reveal what is happening inside us.

That means the ultimate goal cannot simply be vocabulary replacement.

A child who wants to hurt someone may learn to avoid certain prohibited words while finding new ways to accomplish the same purpose.

We want to address both.

What did you say?

And:

Why did you want to say it?

As children grow, that second question becomes increasingly important.

The Bible's teaching about speech reaches far beyond preschool manners.

Truthfulness.

Gossip.

Flattery.

Anger.

Encouragement.

Complaining.

Profanity.

False witness.

Teaching children early that **God cares about our words** establishes a foundation for much larger conversations later.

Memory Verse

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul...”

Proverbs 16:24, KJV

For ages 2–3, use the simple lesson:

“I can use kind words.”

Make clear that this is a teaching phrase, not a direct Bible quotation.

For ages 4–5, begin with:

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb...”

Explain that **pleasant words** are words that are good and gracious, and that honey was something sweet and desirable.

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Thank You, Please, and Kind Words* or sing its main hook.

Read

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul...”

Proverbs 16:24, KJV

Talk

Say:

“God cares about the words we use.”

Ask:

“What can we say when someone gives us something?”

Thank you.

“What can we say when we ask for something?”

Please.

“What kind of words should we use with people?”

Kind words.

Do

Practice changing three demanding or unkind sentences into better ones.

Keep it playful.

Pray

“Jesus, help me use my words well. Help me be thankful, polite, truthful, and kind. Amen.”

Final Word

Words cost us nothing to speak.

Yet they can give a great deal.

A thank you can show gratitude.

A please can show respect.

An encouraging sentence can brighten someone's day.

A gentle response can stop an argument from growing.

And an unkind word can do damage that cannot simply be taken back.

So teach the little words.

Please.

Thank you.

I'm sorry.

Can I help?

Are you okay?

But keep teaching beyond the words themselves.

We want little mouths to begin reflecting hearts that notice and care about other people.

And as children learn to be thankful for what others give them, we are ready for another important question:

What about the things God gives us?

Song 9

God Gives Us What We Need

Young children have many needs.

Food.

Water.

Clothing.

A safe place to sleep.

People to care for them.

They also have a remarkable ability to turn things they **want** into things they are absolutely certain they **need**.

“I NEED that toy.”

“I NEED another cookie.”

“I NEED the blue cup.”

God Gives Us What We Need gives us an opportunity to teach two important truths:

God knows what we need.

And:

A need is not always the same thing as a want.

As we teach this, however, we need to be careful not to promise children something Scripture does not promise. Trusting God does not mean we will always receive everything we want, or that life will never include hardship.

Our confidence is that **God knows us, cares for us, and knows our needs.**

Main Truth

God knows what I need, cares for me, and I can trust Him.

God's Word

Jesus said:

“...for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Matthew 6:32, KJV

And just a few verses earlier:

“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them...”

Matthew 6:26, KJV

These words come from Jesus' teaching about worry.

That context matters.

Jesus was not teaching:

“Ask God for anything you want and He will give it to you.”

He was teaching His hearers not to be consumed with worry about food, drink, and clothing. Their heavenly Father knew what they needed.

That gives us a beautiful preschool truth:

God knows what we need.

What This Song Teaches

Children naturally depend upon others.

A preschooler usually does not buy groceries.

He does not pay the electric bill.

She does not purchase her own clothes.

She does not provide her own home.

Children receive.

That makes these early years a natural time to begin teaching about provision.

When your child eats breakfast:

“We have food.”

When getting dressed:

“We have clothes.”

When drinking water:

“We have clean water.”

At bedtime:

“We have a place to sleep.”

Then:

“God has given us many things we need. Let's thank Him.”

Needs and Wants

This can become a fun and useful distinction.

Ask:

“Do we need water?”

Yes.

“Do we need food?”

Yes.

“Do we need twenty-seven stuffed animals?”

Probably not.

“Do we need shoes?”

Yes.

“Do we need every pair of shoes we see at the store?”

No.

“Do we need a place to sleep?”

Yes.

“Do we need the biggest house in town?”

No.

Preschoolers can begin understanding:

Wanting something does not automatically make it a need.

Adults can benefit from remembering that lesson too.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep everything concrete.

Point to familiar things.

Do we need food to eat?

Yes.

Do we need water to drink?

Yes.

Does God know what we need?

Yes.

Can we thank God for taking care of us?

Yes.

Then name something the child has:

“Thank You, God, for our food.”

“Thank You, God, for our home.”

“Thank You, God, for people who take care of us.”

The goal at this age is not to explain the theology of providence.

It is simply to begin recognizing God's care.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin distinguishing needs from wants.

Ask:

Is a sandwich a need or a want?

Food is a need.

Is your favorite kind of sandwich a need?

No. That is something you may want.

Are clothes a need?

Yes.

Is a particular shirt you see in the store a need?

Probably not.

Then ask:

Does God know what we need before we tell Him?

Yes.

Jesus said:

“...your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”

Matthew 6:8, KJV

Then comes the obvious preschool question:

“If God already knows, why do we pray?”

A simple answer is:

“Because God wants us to talk to Him and trust Him. Prayer is not just telling God information He doesn't know.”

That is enough for now.

Look at the Birds

Jesus gave us an object lesson that works wonderfully with children.

Birds.

Go outside.

Find one.

Watch it hop.

Fly.

Search for food.

Listen to it.

Then read or paraphrase the setting of Matthew 6:26 and read the verse itself from your Bible:

“Behold the fowls of the air... yet your heavenly Father feedeth them...”

Matthew 6:26, KJV

Tell your child:

“Jesus told people to look at the birds when He was teaching them about trusting God.”

Suddenly the bird in the backyard becomes part of the Bible lesson.

Does This Mean Nothing Bad Will Happen?

No.

This is where adults must be careful.

A child may hear:

“God gives us what we need”

and conclude:

“If I trust God, I will never be hungry, sick, hurt, or without something important.”

Scripture does not teach that God's people never suffer.

The apostle Paul knew hunger and hardship.

He wrote:

“...I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”

Philippians 4:11, KJV

And:

“I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound...”

Philippians 4:12, KJV

So we should not turn this song into a promise of a comfortable life.

Instead, teach what Jesus actually emphasized:

Our heavenly Father knows what we need.

We do not have to live consumed by worry.

We can pray.

We can trust Him.

What If a Child Asks About Someone Who Does Not Have Enough?

This is a good question.

Perhaps your child sees someone asking for food.

Maybe your family knows someone struggling financially.

The child may ask:

“If God gives people what they need, why doesn't that person have food?”

Do not invent an easy answer simply because the question is uncomfortable.

You can say:

“That’s a very good question. There are people in our world who do not have enough food. God cares about people in need, and He tells us to care about them too.”

Then ask:

“Is there something we can do to help?”

Sometimes **we may be part of the way someone's need is met.**

That connects this song beautifully with *A Happy Helper* and *Share, Share, Share*.

God Often Provides Through People

When we say:

“God gave us dinner,”

that does not mean dinner appeared miraculously on the table.

Someone worked.

Someone bought ingredients.

Someone prepared them.

A farmer may have grown them.

Many people may have been involved.

God's provision often comes through ordinary means.

Children can learn to recognize both.

Thank God.

And:

Thank the people who helped.

This keeps our teaching grounded in real life.

Family Activity: Need or Want?

Gather several objects or use pictures.

A cup of water.

A shirt.

A piece of fruit.

A toy.

A blanket.

A piece of candy.

Shoes.

A game.

Hold up each one and ask:

Need or want?

Some answers may require discussion.

That is fine.

The purpose is not to create a perfect philosophical definition of human necessity.

We are helping children begin recognizing that:

“I want it” and “I need it” are not the same sentence.

Family Activity: Find Five Things God Has Provided

Walk through your home and find five things your family needs.

Perhaps:

Food.

Water.

Clothing.

A bed.

People who care for one another.

For each one say:

“Thank You, God, for providing ____.”

Then add one important question:

“Do we know anyone who might need help with one of these things?”

That moves gratitude toward compassion.

When the Answer Is No

A child may pray for something he wants.

Then it does not happen.

This can become an important lesson.

Suppose the child prayed:

“Jesus, please let me get that bicycle.”

No bicycle appears.

Do not tell the child:

“You didn't have enough faith.”

Instead explain:

“We can ask God for things, but prayer doesn't mean God has to give us everything we ask for.”

God is not a vending machine.

Prayer is not a way to control Him.

As children grow, they can learn more about praying according to God's will.

For now:

We can ask.

God hears.

God knows what is best.

We can trust Him even when the answer is not what we wanted.

Contentment Begins Here

This song also opens the door to contentment.

Contentment does not mean we never want anything.

It means our happiness does not have to depend upon always getting more.

A preschooler sees another child's toy.

“I want that!”

You can acknowledge it.

“That is a neat toy.”

Then:

“But we don't have to own everything we like.”

That is a very useful sentence.

Especially because adults sometimes forget it too.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for knowing what we need. Thank You for our food, water, clothing, home, and the people who care for us. Help us trust You and be thankful for what we have. Help us notice people who need help and be willing to share. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for taking care of me. Help me trust You. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Matthew 6 is sometimes reduced to a promise that believers will always have everything they consider necessary.

That misses Jesus' emphasis.

The passage repeatedly addresses **anxiety**.

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink...”

Matthew 6:25, KJV

In this context, **“take no thought”** does not mean never plan or never think about tomorrow. Jesus is warning against anxious preoccupation.

He points to birds.

He points to lilies.

Then He reminds His hearers:

“...your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Matthew 6:32, KJV

The center of the lesson is not:

You will always possess everything you think you need.

It is:

Your Father knows. Therefore, trust Him rather than living under the control of worry.

That is a truth worth planting early.

Memory Verse

“...your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Matthew 6:32, KJV

For ages 2–3, use the teaching phrase:

“God knows what I need.”

Make clear in the guide that this is a simplified lesson, not a direct quotation.

For ages 4–5, begin with:

“Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need...”

Explain **knoweth** simply:

“It means He knows.”

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *God Gives Us What We Need* or sing its main hook.

Read

“Behold the fowls of the air... yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.”

Matthew 6:26, KJV

Talk

Say:

“Jesus talked about birds when He taught people not to worry. God knows what we need.”

Ask:

“What is something you need every day?”

Then:

“What is something you really like but don't actually need?”

Have some fun with the answers.

Do

Go outside and look for a bird.

If you cannot find one, look through a window or use a picture.

Then find three things God has provided for your family.

Pray

“Thank You, God, for knowing what we need. Help us trust You, be thankful for what we have, and help others when we can. Amen.”

Final Word

Children will ask for many things.

Some they need.

Some they want.

Some they will desperately want for approximately three days and then never touch again.

Through all of those little moments, we can keep returning to something Jesus taught:

Your heavenly Father knows.

We can ask Him.

We can trust Him.

We can be thankful.

And we can look around at what has already been given.

By now, our little day in the Meadow has been full.

Morning has come.

We have eaten.

Played.

Helped.

Practiced kindness.

Shared.

Used our words.

Learned to trust God's care.

Now the light begins to change.

The day is winding down.

Before we move toward bedtime, there is one more thing to do.

Look back over the day and say:

Thank You.

Song 10

Thank You, God, for Today

Morning began with:

“Thank You for a brand-new day.”

Now the sun is going down.

The toys have been played with. Meals have been eaten. There have probably been some happy moments, some difficult moments, and perhaps a few moments everyone would rather try again tomorrow.

Before we move toward bedtime, *Thank You, God, for Today* gives children an opportunity to look backward.

What happened today?

What did God give us?

What can we thank Him for?

This is more than another song about saying thank you. It begins teaching children a wonderful habit:

At the end of the day, remember God's goodness.

Main Truth

At the end of my day, I can remember God's goodness and thank Him for what He has given me.

God's Word

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.”

Psalms 107:1, KJV

And:

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...”

James 1:17, KJV

For a preschooler:

God is good, and I can thank Him for today.

What This Song Teaches

This song intentionally looks back over the entire day.

We have thanked God for family.

Food.

Play.

Helping hands.

Opportunities to share.

Kindness.

The things we have learned.

And now evening is drawing near.

That makes Track 10 an important turning point in the album.

The first part of *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* has been active.

Now everything begins becoming quieter.

After this song comes:

My Little Prayer Before I Sleep

and finally:

Jesus Watches Over Me.

So this song helps children make the transition from **doing** to **remembering**.

Teach Children to Look Back

Ask a preschooler:

“What did you do today?”

You may receive:

“I don't know.”

Apparently the entire day has already disappeared.

Help them.

“Did we eat breakfast?”

“Yes.”

“Did we go outside?”

“Yes.”

“Did you help me?”

“Yes.”

“Did we see Grandma?”

“Yes.”

“Was there anything today that made you happy?”

Now memories begin returning.

Then add:

“Let's thank God for those things.”

This does not need to become a formal nightly review.

It can simply become part of conversation.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep the questions concrete.

Did you have food today?

Yes.

Did you get to play today?

Yes.

Did someone take care of you today?

Yes.

What can we say to God?

Thank You.

You might ask:

“What was your favorite thing today?”

Whatever the answer is, use it.

“Then let's thank God for that.”

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin thinking more deeply.

Ask:

What was the best part of your day?

Who helped you today?

Did you help anyone?

Was anyone kind to you?

Were you kind to someone?

Was anything difficult today?

That final question matters.

We do not want children to think that thanking God requires pretending nothing unpleasant happened.

A day can contain both gratitude and difficulty.

Not Every Day Feels Good

Some days are hard.

A child may have been sick.

A friend may have hurt their feelings.

Something special may have been cancelled.

Mom or Dad may have had to leave.

A favorite toy may have broken.

Someone the child loves may be hurting.

We should not say:

“Come on. You need to be thankful.”

as though gratitude means sadness is forbidden.

Instead:

“I know that was hard.”

Then perhaps:

“Was there anything good we can still thank God for?”

Sometimes the answer may be small.

“Grandma hugged me.”

“Scout stayed with me.”

“Daddy read to me.”

“We had dinner together.”

We are not denying the hard thing.

We are learning that a hard thing does not erase every evidence of God's goodness.

What About a Bad Choice?

The end of the day is also an opportunity to talk about things that did not go well.

Maybe the child hit someone.

Refused to obey.

Told a lie.

Used hurtful words.

Do not turn every bedtime into an interrogation.

But if something important happened, you can revisit it calmly.

“Do you remember what happened when you got angry today?”

“Yes.”

“What did you do?”

“I hit him.”

“Was that right?”

“No.”

“What should you have done?”

This gives the child an opportunity to think after the emotion of the moment has passed.

If an apology or correction still needs to happen, help the child make it right.

Gratitude Is Not a Scorecard

Be careful not to turn this into:

“Tell me five good things or you cannot go to bed.”

The goal is not to complete an assignment.

We are developing a way of looking at life.

Sometimes your child may have ten things to say.

Sometimes one.

Sometimes the child will be exhausted and want nothing more than pajamas and bed.

That's okay.

Habits develop over time.

Family Activity: Three Thank-Yous

At the end of the day, each person names three things.

One person I'm thankful for.

One thing I'm thankful for.

One thing that happened today I'm thankful for.

For example:

“I'm thankful for Grandma.”

“I'm thankful for dinner.”

“I'm thankful we played outside.”

Then let the child ask the adults.

Children often enjoy hearing what Mom, Dad, Grandma, or Grandpa chooses.

And make sure the adults give real answers.

Family Activity: Walk Back Through the Day

Use your fingers to help remember.

Thumb:

Morning.

“What happened when we woke up?”

Pointer:

Food.

“What did we eat today?”

Middle:

Something we did.

“Where did we go or what did we play?”

Ring:

Someone we love.

“Who were we with today?”

Little finger:

Something small.

“What little thing made you happy?”

Then pray:

“Thank You, God, for our whole day.”

This can become a simple bedtime tradition.

Remember the People Behind the Day

Gratitude should include people too.

Ask:

“Who did something for you today?”

Perhaps:

Mom made breakfast.

Dad fixed something.

Grandma picked the child up.

A teacher helped.

A sibling shared.

Grandpa played a game.

Then ask:

“Did you thank them?”

If not, perhaps there is still time.

Or remember tomorrow.

Gratitude toward God should help us become more grateful toward people, not less.

Tomorrow Is Another Day

Preschoolers are learning constantly.

Some days go well.

Others do not.

One of the beautiful things about the end of a day is that tomorrow provides another opportunity.

If today included unkind words:

“Tomorrow we can practice kind words again.”

If sharing was difficult:

“Tomorrow we'll try again.”

If the child forgot to help:

“Tomorrow there will be more chances.”

We do not excuse wrong behavior.

But neither do we make a preschooler carry the weight of yesterday indefinitely.

Correct.

Teach.

Forgive appropriately.

Then move forward.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for today. Thank You for our family, our food, our home, and the things we were able to do. Thank You for the people who helped us and the

opportunities we had to help others. Forgive us for the things we did wrong and help us make better choices tomorrow. Thank You for Your goodness and care. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for today. Thank You for loving me and caring for me. Help me tomorrow. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

There is something spiritually healthy about remembering.

Scripture repeatedly calls God's people to remember what He has done.

David writes:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:”

Psalms 103:2, KJV

Forgetfulness is not merely a preschool problem.

Adults can spend an entire day surrounded by God's provision and end it remembering primarily the three things that irritated us.

Children are watching that too.

What do they hear at the end of our day?

Complaints?

Frustration?

Everything that went wrong?

There is a place for discussing difficulties. Biblical gratitude does not require dishonesty.

But perhaps adults need the exercise in this chapter as much as children do.

What happened today that I should not forget?

Someone loved me.

Someone helped me.

I ate.

I had shelter.

I saw something beautiful.

A prayer was answered.

I had an opportunity to serve.

God's Word spoke to me.

There was grace for another day.

Remember.

Then give thanks.

Memory Verse

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:”

Psalms 103:2, KJV

For ages 2–3, use the teaching phrase:

“Thank You, God, for today.”

This is not presented as a Scripture quotation. It is simply the truth we want them to practice.

For ages 4–5, begin with:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

Explain **benefits** simply:

“The good things God has done and given.”

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Thank You, God, for Today* or sing the hook:

“Thank You, God, for today.

Thank You, God, for today.”

Read

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good...”

Psalms 107:1, KJV

Talk

Ask:

“What was your favorite part of today?”

“Who are you thankful for?”

“Was anything hard today?”

Let the child answer without rushing.

Do

Hold up three fingers.

Name three things from today for which you can thank God.

Let the adults participate too.

Pray

“Thank You, God, for today. Thank You for the good things You gave us. Thank You for staying with us through the hard things too. Help us remember Your goodness. Amen.”

Final Word

The sun is going down.

The day that began with **Good Morning, Jesus** is almost finished.

There were meals.

There was play.

There was helping.

Kindness.

Sharing.

Words spoken well, and perhaps some that needed correcting.

There were things we wanted and things we needed.

There were happy moments and perhaps difficult ones.

Now we gather all of it together in four little words:

Thank You, God, for today.

The Meadow is getting quieter.

The activities of the day are finished.

And now a little child is getting ready for bed.

There is one more conversation to have before those little eyes close.

Song 11

My Little Prayer Before I Sleep

The day is almost over.

The toys are being put away.

The lights are lower.

The busy sounds of the day are becoming quieter.

For many families, bedtime is one of the few times when everything finally slows down enough for a child and an adult to simply talk.

That makes bedtime a wonderful place to introduce a lifelong habit:

Before I sleep, I can talk to God.

My Little Prayer Before I Sleep is not intended to give children a special formula they must repeat every night.

It is teaching something much more important.

Prayer is talking to God, and I can pray to Him about the ordinary things in my little life.

Main Truth

I can talk to God anytime, including before I go to sleep. He hears when I pray.

God's Word

“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.”

Psalms 55:17, KJV

And:

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.”

Psalms 4:8, KJV

For a preschooler:

I can pray before I sleep. God hears me.

What This Song Teaches

Children sometimes think prayer belongs in certain places.

Church.

At the dinner table.

Beside the bed.

Those are good places to pray.

But prayer is not limited to them.

We can pray in the morning.

In the car.

Outside.

When we are happy.

When we are frightened.

When we need help.

When someone else needs help.

And at the end of the day, we can pray before we sleep.

Bedtime simply gives us a quiet opportunity to practice something children can eventually carry everywhere.

Prayer Is Not Magic Words

This distinction is important.

A bedtime prayer should not become a superstition.

A child should not believe:

“If I forget my prayer, something bad might happen tonight.”

Prayer does not work because we said exactly the right words in exactly the right order.

Jesus warned against meaningless repetition:

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions...”

Matthew 6:7, KJV

That does not mean repeating a familiar prayer is automatically wrong. Children learn through repetition, and familiar words can be meaningful.

The issue is believing that simply repeating words is what makes prayer effective.

We want children to understand:

I am talking to God.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep bedtime prayer very short.

Ask:

Who can we talk to before we sleep?

God.

Can we thank God for today?

Yes.

Can we ask God to help someone?

Yes.

Then pray together.

Perhaps:

“Thank You, God, for today. Thank You for Mommy and Daddy. Please help Grandma. Thank You for loving us. Amen.”

Thirty seconds may be plenty.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers can begin participating more actively.

Ask:

What do you want to thank God for tonight?

Did anything happen today that you want to talk to God about?

Is anyone you know sick or hurting?

Is there something you're worried about?

Is there something you did wrong that we need to talk about?

Then let the child pray in his or her own words.

Do not worry about grammar.

Do not interrupt to correct theology in the middle of every sentence.

Listen first.

If something important needs explanation, talk about it afterward.

A Simple Bedtime Prayer Pattern

If a child does not know what to say, use four simple ideas:

Thank You.

“Thank You, God, for today.”

I'm sorry.

“I'm sorry for what I did wrong.”

Please help.

“Please help me and the people I love.”

I trust You.

“Help me trust You while I sleep.”

You do not have to use all four every night.

They simply give children somewhere to begin.

Let Children Use Their Own Words

Sometimes adults unintentionally teach children that prayer must sound religious.

A child begins:

“God, I liked playing with Grandpa today and then Scout ran after the ball and...”

We may be tempted to redirect:

“No, pray properly.”

But the child is talking to God about his day.

That can be a very good beginning.

As children grow, we teach them more about prayer from Scripture.

But we do not need to make a preschooler's prayer sound like an adult church prayer.

Let little children sound like little children.

Pray for Other People

Bedtime is a natural time to begin teaching intercession.

That simply means praying for others.

Ask:

“Who should we pray for tonight?”

Perhaps the child chooses:

Grandma.

Grandpa.

A friend.

A teacher.

Someone who is sick.

Mom or Dad.

A sibling.

Sometimes the answer may be:

“Scout.”

You can help the child broaden the prayer:

“Yes, we can thank God for Scout. Is there a person we can pray for too?”

This gently teaches children to look beyond themselves.

When a Child Is Afraid

Nighttime fears are very real to little children.

Darkness.

Strange sounds.

A storm.

A bad dream.

Being alone.

Do not ridicule those fears.

“You're being silly.”

“There is nothing to be afraid of.”

That may not help.

Instead:

“I know that scared you.”

Then deal honestly with whatever caused the fear.

Check the room if appropriate.

Explain the sound.

Provide comfort.

And pray.

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

Notice what the verse does not say.

It does not say:

“I will never be afraid.”

It says:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

That is a much more useful truth.

Do Not Promise What God Has Not Promised

When comforting children, adults sometimes say:

“Nothing bad can happen because Jesus is watching you.”

We should not teach that.

Christians are not promised that nothing painful will ever happen.

Instead say:

“Jesus knows you.”

“God cares about you.”

“We can pray when we're afraid.”

“We can trust God.”

Those promises are strong enough.

We do not need to add promises Scripture has not made.

What If the Child Prays for Something That Does Not Happen?

A child may pray:

“Please make Grandma better.”

But Grandma remains sick.

Or:

“Please let Daddy come home tomorrow.”

But he cannot.

Or:

“Please bring my lost toy back.”

And the toy remains lost.

These moments matter.

Do not tell the child:

“You didn't pray hard enough.”

And do not pretend God promised the requested outcome.

Explain simply:

“God hears us when we pray, but He doesn't always answer by giving us exactly what we ask for.”

That is not always an easy answer.

But it is truthful.

We can ask God for what we desire while trusting Him with the answer.

Prayer and Confession

Bedtime can also provide a quiet opportunity to deal with something the child did wrong.

Suppose earlier the child lied.

After correction and any necessary apology, you can say:

“We should also talk to God about what happened.”

Do not teach the child merely to say:

“Sorry, God,”

as a way of escaping consequences.

Instead help the child understand:

“What you did was wrong. We tell God the truth about our sin.”

As children mature, this prepares them for a deeper understanding of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and ultimately the gospel.

Do Not Use God to Frighten a Child Into Obedience

Avoid statements such as:

“God saw what you did.”

if the purpose is merely to make the child afraid of God.

It is true that God sees and knows us.

But if we constantly introduce God only when the child misbehaves, we may unintentionally create an image of God as someone waiting to catch mistakes.

Teach the whole truth.

God knows when we do wrong.

God also hears us when we pray.

God is good.

God is holy.

God cares.

God's Word teaches us what is right.

We want children to know God truthfully, not merely fear getting caught.

Family Activity: Five Fingers of Prayer

Hold up one hand.

Use each finger as a simple reminder.

Thumb: Thank You

Name something from today.

Pointer: Someone Else

Choose someone to pray for.

Middle: Help Me

Ask God for help with something.

Ring: People I Love

Thank God for family and people who care for you.

Little Finger: Me

Talk to God about something in your own heart.

You do not have to use every finger every night.

The hand simply gives a preschooler a visual way to remember different things we can pray about.

Make a Little Prayer List

For older preschoolers, keep a short list beside the bed.

Perhaps three names.

Grandma

My friend

Daddy

When something changes, update the list.

If a prayer is answered in a recognizable way, tell the child:

“Remember when we prayed about that?”

This helps children connect prayer with real life.

But avoid making prayer into a scoreboard where every request must produce the result we wanted.

Parents and Grandparents Can Pray Blessing Over a Child

After the child prays, the adult can pray too.

There is something meaningful about children hearing someone who loves them speak their name in prayer.

“Lord, thank You for Emma. Help her grow in wisdom and truth. Help her learn to love Your Word. Protect her from evil and help us teach her faithfully.”

The child may not understand every word.

But they hear something important:

The people who love me pray for me.

Grandparents can do this too, even when grandchildren are not present.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for today. Thank You for hearing us when we pray. Thank You for the people who love and care for us. Forgive us for the things we have done wrong. Please help the people we love and help us trust You when we are afraid. Give us peaceful rest tonight. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for today. Thank You for loving me. Help me sleep and trust You tonight. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Prayer is one area where children can easily learn the form without understanding the substance.

They can bow their heads.

Fold their hands.

Close their eyes.

Say familiar words.

And still not understand why they are praying.

Those practices can help reduce distractions, but none of them is what makes prayer prayer.

Jesus taught:

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”

Matthew 6:9, KJV

The Lord's Prayer gives us a rich pattern that children can understand more deeply as they grow.

God's name.

His kingdom.

His will.

Daily provision.

Forgiveness.

Temptation.

Deliverance from evil.

For preschoolers, we begin much more simply.

But we should know where we are going.

We are not merely teaching:

“Say your prayers.”

We are teaching:

Know whom you are speaking to.

Thank Him.

Ask.

Confess.

Pray for others.

Trust Him with the answer.

That foundation can grow for a lifetime.

Memory Verse

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

This is an excellent preschool memory verse because it is short, honest, and useful.

For ages 2–3:

“I will trust in thee.”

For ages 4–5:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Explain:

“Thee means God.”

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *My Little Prayer Before I Sleep* or sing its main hook together.

Read

“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray... and he shall hear my voice.”

Psalms 55:17, KJV

Talk

Say:

“We can talk to God anytime. We can talk to Him before we go to sleep.”

Ask:

“What would you like to thank God for tonight?”

“Is there anyone you want us to pray for?”

“Is anything worrying you?”

Listen.

Do

Hold up one hand and use the Five Fingers of Prayer.

Choose as many fingers as the child wants tonight.

Pray

Let the child pray first if willing.

Then the adult can finish:

“Thank You, God, for hearing us. Help us trust You tonight and give us peaceful rest. Amen.”

Final Word

Soon the room will be quiet.

The conversation will end.

The lights will go out.

But before they do, give your child something more valuable than simply another bedtime routine.

Teach them:

I can talk to God.

I can thank Him.

I can tell Him when I am afraid.

I can pray for someone I love.

I can ask for help.

I can trust Him when I do not know what tomorrow will bring.

And then comes the final song.

The entire day that began with **Good Morning, Jesus** ends in the quiet of bedtime.

The child has prayed.

Now it is time to rest.

Song 12

Jesus Watches Over Me

The Meadow is quiet now.

The day began with **Good Morning, Jesus.**

There was breakfast and play. Little hands helped. Children practiced kindness, sharing, and good words. They learned to be thankful for what God provides. As evening came, they looked back over the day and gave thanks.

Then they prayed.

Now there is nothing left to do.

It is time to rest.

Jesus Watches Over Me closes the album with a simple reassurance for a little child:

When I close my eyes, God has not forgotten me. I can rest and trust Him.

This does not mean that Christians are promised a life in which nothing frightening, painful, or difficult ever happens.

It means something better and something true:

God knows me. God cares for me. I can trust Him.

Main Truth

God knows me and cares for me. I can trust Him when I lie down to sleep.

God's Word

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.”

Psalm 4:8, KJV

And:

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

Psalm 121:4, KJV

For a preschooler:

I go to sleep, but God never needs to sleep. I can trust Him.

What This Song Teaches

Bedtime can feel very different to a small child than it does to an adult.

Adults may be desperate to finally get into bed.

A preschooler may suddenly discover seventeen urgent reasons not to.

“I need water.”

“I need another hug.”

“I heard something.”

“What's that shadow?”

“Can you leave the door open?”

“Is Scout sleeping?”

“Can you check under the bed?”

Some of this is bedtime delay.

But some fears are very real to the child experiencing them.

This song gives us an opportunity to respond without mocking those fears and without making promises God has not made.

We can say:

“You are afraid right now. Let's remember what God's Word says.”

God Does Not Sleep

Psalms 121 gives children a fascinating truth.

They need sleep.

Mom needs sleep.

Dad needs sleep.

Grandma and Grandpa need sleep.

Even Scout eventually curls up and sleeps.

But God does not become tired and go to sleep.

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

Psalms 121:4, KJV

Explain:

“Slumber means sleep. God does not need to sleep like we do.”

A preschooler may find that remarkable.

“When I'm sleeping, God isn't sleeping?”

No.

That becomes a simple way of helping the child understand that God is not like us.

Talking With Ages 2–3

Keep the lesson short and comforting.

Do you need to sleep?

Yes.

Does God need to sleep?

No.

Can we pray when we're afraid?

Yes.

Does God know where you are?

Yes.

Then perhaps say:

“Close your eyes. It's time to rest. God knows you and cares for you.”

No lengthy bedtime theology is necessary.

Talking With Ages 4–5

Older preschoolers may have more questions.

What are you afraid of sometimes?

Let the child answer honestly.

Darkness.

Thunder.

Bad dreams.

Being alone.

A noise.

Then ask:

What can we do when we're afraid?

We can tell Mom or Dad.

We can pray.

We can remember what God's Word says.

Read:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

Notice again that Scripture does not shame the person for experiencing fear.

“What time I am afraid...”

Fear happened.

The response was:

“I will trust in thee.”

That is what we want children to learn.

Trust Does Not Mean Pretending

Never require a frightened child to say:

“I'm not scared.”

when the child obviously is.

Instead teach:

“I'm scared, but I can trust God.”

There is an enormous difference.

The first teaches children to deny what they feel.

The second teaches them what to do with what they feel.

That lesson will remain useful far beyond childhood.

Do Not Promise That Nothing Bad Can Happen

This is especially important with this song.

It would be easy to explain **Jesus Watches Over Me** by saying:

“Nothing bad can happen to you because Jesus is watching over you.”

We should not say that.

Christians become sick.

Christians are injured.

Christians experience storms, accidents, loss, and suffering.

Children eventually discover this.

If we have taught them that God's care means nothing painful can happen, real life may cause them to question whether God cared at all.

Instead teach what Scripture supports:

God knows you.

God cares for you.

God hears you when you pray.

God does not sleep.

You can trust Him when you're afraid.

Those truths do not need exaggeration.

Sometimes Fear Needs an Adult

Prayer should never replace ordinary care.

If your child says:

“Something is outside my window,”

check.

If your child says:

“I heard somebody in the house,”

an adult should determine what happened.

If the child is sick or hurting, take care of the physical need.

Do not respond to every concern with:

“Just trust Jesus and go back to sleep.”

Trusting God and taking reasonable action are not opposites.

A child should know:

If something is wrong, I can tell a trusted adult.

Nightmares

A nightmare can feel completely real to a young child.

Hold them.

Let them become fully awake.

Reassure them:

“You had a bad dream. You're awake now. I'm here.”

Then pray together.

You might use Psalm 56:3:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Do not create additional fear by trying to assign spiritual meaning to every nightmare.

Sometimes a bad dream is simply a bad dream.

Comfort the child and return to rest.

The Shepherd Picture

The Shepherd's Meadow gives us a natural bedtime picture.

A shepherd watches over sheep.

Sheep need care.

They can wander.

They need protection and guidance.

Scripture repeatedly uses shepherd imagery to help us understand God's care.

David wrote:

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

Psalms 23:1, KJV

And later:

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me...”

Psalms 23:4, KJV

Notice the reason for David's confidence:

“Thou art with me.”

The valley had not disappeared.

God's presence was the comfort.

That is a much stronger lesson than pretending valleys never exist.

Who Is the Shepherd?

Because this entire children's series takes place in **The Shepherd's Meadow**, make sure children eventually understand that the shepherd imagery is pointing beyond the fictional Meadow.

Jesus said:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

Scout may be part of the Meadow.

The sheep may be part of the pictures.

The children may be familiar characters.

But none of them is the center.

Jesus is.

And when we use the image of the Shepherd, we have a wonderful opportunity to begin teaching children who Jesus really is.

Family Activity: Who Is Sleeping?

At bedtime, name different members of the family.

“Will you sleep tonight?”

Yes.

“Will Mommy sleep?”

Yes.

“Will Grandpa sleep?”

Yes.

“Will Scout sleep?”

Yes.

Then ask:

“Does God need to sleep?”

No.

Read Psalm 121:4.

This simple contrast can make the verse memorable.

Family Activity: Bedtime Trust

Turn the lights down.

Sit quietly together.

Ask your child to name one thing that sometimes feels scary at night.

Do not laugh at the answer.

Then say together:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalm 56:3, KJV

Now ask:

“What can we do when we're afraid?”

Pray.

Tell a trusted adult.

Remember God's Word.

That gives the child practical responses rather than merely saying:

“Don't be scared.”

A Bedtime Blessing

After your child has prayed, consider ending the evening with a short prayer spoken over the child.

Perhaps:

“Lord, thank You for this little one You have given us to love. Help us teach Your truth faithfully. Give this child peaceful rest tonight and help this little heart learn to trust You. Amen.”

Grandparents can pray similarly when grandchildren sleep at their home.

And when grandchildren are somewhere else, grandparents can still pray.

The child does not have to hear every prayer for the prayer to matter.

When They Keep Calling You Back

There is also practical reality.

You have prayed.

You have hugged.

You have provided water.

You have checked the room.

You have tucked everyone in.

Then:

“Mom?”

Five minutes later:

“Dad?”

Then:

“Grandpa?”

Children sometimes discover that fear is an excellent bedtime extension strategy.

Comfort genuine fear.

But boundaries are still appropriate.

“You are safe. We prayed together. It is time to stay in bed and sleep.”

Spiritual reassurance does not require eliminating bedtime expectations.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You for caring for us. Thank You that You never need to sleep. When we are afraid, help us remember that we can trust You. Give us peaceful rest tonight and help us wake tomorrow ready for another day. Amen.

For younger children:

Thank You, God, for caring for me. Help me trust You while I sleep. Amen.

Digging Deeper for Parents & Grandparents

Psalms 121 is beautiful, but we should handle it carefully.

The psalm declares:

“The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.”

Psalms 121:7, KJV

We should not reduce that to a promise that God's people will never experience physical harm.

The Bible itself will not allow that interpretation.

Faithful servants of God suffered.

The apostles suffered.

Christ Himself suffered.

God's keeping power is greater than a promise of uninterrupted earthly comfort.

Likewise, when Jesus identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10, His care for the sheep reaches all the way to sacrifice:

“...the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

That brings us remarkably close to the gospel.

The Shepherd does more than make frightened sheep feel comfortable.

The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

As children grow, that is where The Shepherd's Meadow imagery should ultimately lead.

Not merely toward a pleasant picture of Jesus standing beside sheep.

Toward the cross.

Toward why Jesus came.

Toward His death for our sins.

Toward His resurrection.

Toward the child's own need for the Saviour.

The bedtime lesson is simple now.

But the Shepherd we are introducing is far greater than the child yet understands.

Memory Verse

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

This is worth repeating from the previous chapter because it fits the bedtime message so naturally.

For ages 2–3:

“I will trust in thee.”

For ages 4–5:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

You might also begin teaching:

“The LORD is my shepherd...”

Psalms 23:1, KJV

That verse connects beautifully with the entire Shepherd's Meadow series.

Five-Minute Family Devotion

Sing

Listen to *Jesus Watches Over Me* quietly as bedtime approaches.

Read

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep...”

Psalms 4:8, KJV

Then:

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

Psalms 121:4, KJV

Talk

Ask:

“Who needs to sleep tonight?”

Name family members.

Then ask:

“Does God need to sleep?”

No.

Ask:

“What can we do if we're afraid?”

Pray.

Tell someone.

Trust God.

Do

Tuck the child into bed.

Turn the lights down.

Say Psalm 56:3 together:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Pray

“Thank You, God, for knowing us and caring for us. Help us trust You and give us peaceful rest tonight. Amen.”

Final Word

And now our day in The Shepherd’s Meadow is finished.

It began with a little voice saying:

Good Morning, Jesus.

Through the day, we learned to give thanks.

To recognize that God made us.

To be thankful for food.

To help.

To be kind.

To share.

To use our words carefully.

To trust God with our needs.

Then the sun went down.

We thanked God for the day.

We prayed.

And now the little eyes close.

Tomorrow there will be another morning.

Another breakfast.

Another opportunity to help.

Another difficult moment when kindness must be chosen.

Another toy to share.

Another word to speak.

Another reason to give thanks.

That is why *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* was never really about creating one perfect day.

It is about filling **ordinary days with little reminders of God's truth.**

Morning to bedtime.

Again and again.

Until the songs are no longer simply songs children know.

The truths behind them are becoming truths they understand.

And someday, Lord willing, those little lambs will understand who the Good Shepherd really is.

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

The day is over.

The Meadow is quiet.

Good night.

A Final Word to Parents and Grandparents

The songs have finished.

The guidebook is almost finished.

But the teaching is not.

Tomorrow morning another ordinary day will begin.

Someone will wake up hungry.

Someone may not want to get dressed.

There may be toys on the floor, breakfast on the table, places to go, chores to finish, and a dog ready to be part of whatever happens next.

And scattered throughout that very ordinary day will be opportunities.

Opportunities to teach.

Opportunities to listen.

Opportunities to correct.

Opportunities to encourage.

Opportunities to pray.

Opportunities to point a little heart toward God.

That has been the purpose of *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* from the beginning.

You Don't Have to Do Everything

There are twelve songs in this album and many ideas in this guide.

You do not need to use all of them every day.

You shouldn't try.

There may be a morning when all you do is say:

“God gave us another day. Let's thank Him.”

There may be a difficult afternoon when you remember:

“Be ye kind one to another.”

There may be dinner around the table when your child offers a little prayer of thanks.

There may be a frightening night when the most important words in this entire book become:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

That is enough.

We are not trying to manufacture a perfect Christian childhood.

We are faithfully using the moments God gives us.

Repetition Is Your Friend

Your child may want to hear the same song again.

And again.

And again.

Adults sometimes become tired of repetition long before children do.

But repetition is one of the reasons music works so well with little ones.

The words begin becoming familiar.

Then the ideas become familiar.

Eventually, a situation happens and the child remembers the song.

A toy needs to be shared:

“Share, share, share.”

Someone needs help:

“A happy helper.”

The child becomes afraid:

“I will trust in thee.”

The sun is going down:

“Thank You, God, for today.”

That is when you begin seeing why the repetition mattered.

Do Not Measure Success Too Quickly

You may teach kindness in the morning and correct unkind behavior before lunch.

That does not mean the lesson failed.

You may sing about sharing and hear:

“MINE!”

five minutes later.

Keep teaching.

You may practice saying please and thank you, then spend the rest of the afternoon reminding your child to use them.

Keep teaching.

Children do not develop character because they heard one song or completed one devotion.

Neither do adults.

Growth takes time.

Let Them See It in You

Perhaps the most challenging lesson in this entire guide is not directed toward children.

It is directed toward us.

If we want thankful children, they should hear us giving thanks.

If we want kind children, they should see us treating people kindly.

If we want generous children, they should see us sharing.

If we want children who pray, they should know that we pray.

If we want children who trust God's Word, they should see us opening it.

Our example will never be perfect.

When we fail, there is another lesson available.

We can admit it.

“I was wrong.”

“I shouldn't have spoken that way.”

“Please forgive me.”

Children need to see adults submitting themselves to God's Word too.

Grandparents, Your Time Matters

Grandparents may not be present for every part of the child's day.

That does not make your influence unimportant.

Perhaps you have Saturday mornings.

An occasional afternoon.

A weekly visit.

A vacation.

A phone call.

A sleepover.

Use what you have.

Sing in the car.

Pray before lunch.

Read a Bible verse.

Ask what the child is thankful for.

Tell them something God has taught you.

Let them hear you pray their name.

You do not need to replace their parents.

Support them.

Encourage them.

Reinforce the truth being taught at home.

And treasure the opportunity to put something eternal into the life of another generation.

Parents, Ordinary Faithfulness Matters

You may not always feel as though you are doing something important.

You are packing lunches.

Cleaning spills.

Finding shoes.

Breaking up arguments.

Washing clothes.

Answering questions.

Getting everyone into bed.

Then doing much of it again tomorrow.

But those ordinary routines are where much of childhood happens.

They are also where much of teaching happens.

Moses told Israel:

“And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

Deuteronomy 6:7, KJV

Notice how ordinary those moments are.

Sitting.

Walking.

Lying down.

Getting up.

Faith was not supposed to be discussed only during a formal lesson.

God's truth belonged in everyday life.

That principle remains tremendously useful for parents today.

Remember What the Songs Cannot Do

These songs can teach.

They can help children remember.

They can begin conversations.

They can make Scripture-related truths familiar.

But songs cannot save a child.

Neither can this guidebook.

Neither can a parent or grandparent.

Salvation belongs to the Lord.

Our responsibility is to faithfully teach the truth.

Children need eventually to understand more than:

God made me.

God takes care of me.

Jesus loves me.

They need to understand sin.

They need to understand who Jesus Christ is.

They need to understand why He died.

They need to understand that He rose again.

They need to understand their own need for Him.

Paul summarized the gospel:

“...Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”

1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV

As children become capable of understanding, keep building toward those truths.

Do not manipulate.

Do not rush.

Do not manufacture a conversion.

Teach God's Word faithfully and pray.

Feed the Lambs

There is a reason children are at the heart of *The Shepherd's Meadow*.

Little ones need to be fed.

They need food for growing bodies.

They also need truth for growing hearts and minds.

Jesus told Peter:

“Feed my lambs.”

John 21:15, KJV

As we discussed earlier, those words were spoken specifically to Peter, and we should respect their biblical context.

But the picture has stayed close to my heart throughout this project.

Little lambs need care.

And the little ones God has placed within our reach need adults willing to give them truth.

That responsibility belongs especially to parents, with grandparents and other faithful adults able to provide valuable support.

One Day the Songs May Stop Playing

Your preschooler will not remain a preschooler.

One day the little voice singing these songs will sound different.

The toys will change.

The questions will change.

The problems will become larger.

And eventually your child or grandchild may no longer ask you to play *The Shepherd's Meadow*.

That's okay.

The goal was never to keep them little.

The goal was to put truth into those early years that could grow with them.

Perhaps they will forget some of the songs.

Perhaps they will forget some of the activities in this guide.

But may they remember that God's Word was opened in their home.

May they remember hearing someone pray for them.

May they remember that Jesus was not simply someone discussed at church.

May they remember that when questions came, someone said:

“Let's see what the Bible says.”

And above all, may the biblical truths planted during these little years eventually point them toward genuine faith in Jesus Christ.

Tomorrow Morning

Tonight the Meadow is quiet.

But tomorrow morning the sun comes up again.

And when it does, you do not need an elaborate plan.

You already know where to begin.

A little voice.

A brand-new day.

Another opportunity.

Good morning, Jesus.

And we begin again.

The Whole Day at a Glance

A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow follows a child through one ordinary day, from the first moments of morning until bedtime.

Each song introduces one simple truth that parents and grandparents can return to throughout everyday life.

You do not need to teach all twelve lessons at once. Use this section as a quick reference. Find the moment you are in, play the song, read the Scripture, and talk about the truth together.

1. Good Morning, Jesus

When: Waking up and beginning the day

Main Truth:

Jesus can be part of my whole day, beginning when I wake up.

God's Word:

"This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalms 118:24, KJV

Little Reminder:

God gave us another day. Let's begin it with Him.

Try This:

Before getting out of bed or while getting dressed, thank God together for the new day.

2. Thank You for a Brand-New Day

When: Early morning

Main Truth:

God has given me another day, and I can thank Him for it.

God's Word:

"O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."

Psalms 107:1, KJV

Little Reminder:

Look around. There is already something to thank God for.

Try This:

Ask your child to name one thing he or she is thankful for this morning.

3. Happy God Made Me

When: Getting dressed, washing up, or preparing for the day

Main Truth:

God made me wonderfully, and I can thank Him for the person He made me to be.

God's Word:

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made..."

Psalm 139:14, KJV

Little Reminder:

God made me.

Try This:

Wiggle fingers, tap feet, blink eyes, and name ways those body parts can be used for good.

4. Thank You for My Food

When: Breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack time

Main Truth:

God provides for us, and we should receive our food with thanksgiving.

God's Word:

"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:"

1 Timothy 4:4, KJV

Little Reminder:

Before we eat, we can thank God.

Try This:

Let your child say a simple prayer in his or her own words.

5. A Happy Helper

When: Chores and everyday family activities

Main Truth:

God wants us to care about others, and even little hands can help.

God's Word:

"...by love serve one another."

Galatians 5:13, KJV

Little Reminder:

Little hands can help.

Try This:

Give your child one real job: carry a napkin, put away a toy, bring something to someone, or help with Scout.

6. Be Kind

When: Playing with siblings, friends, or family

Main Truth:

God wants me to treat other people with kindness.

God's Word:

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another..."

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

Little Reminder:

What would be kind?

Try This:

When a situation arises, ask that question before telling the child what to do.

7. Share, Share, Share

When: Playtime, snack time, or whenever two children want the same thing

Main Truth:

God wants us to care about others and to be willing to share what we have.

God's Word:

“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Hebrews 13:16, KJV

Little Reminder:

A little for me, a little for you.

Try This:

Practice sharing something that can be divided or taking turns with something that cannot.

8. Thank You, Please, and Kind Words

When: All through the day

Main Truth:

God wants me to use my words in ways that are kind, thankful, and helpful.

God’s Word:

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

Proverbs 16:24, KJV

Little Reminder:

My words matter.

Try This:

Practice changing a demanding sentence into a kind one.

Instead of:

“Give me that!”

Try:

“May I have a turn, please?”

9. God Gives Us What We Need

When: During ordinary moments of provision

Main Truth:

God knows what I need, cares for me, and I can trust Him.

God’s Word:

“...for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Matthew 6:32, KJV

Little Reminder:

God knows what I need.

Try This:

Look around the house and find three things your family needs and has been provided.

Then thank God for them.

10. Thank You, God, for Today

When: Evening

Main Truth:

At the end of my day, I can remember God’s goodness and thank Him for what He has given me.

God’s Word:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:”

Psalms 103:2, KJV

Little Reminder:

What can we thank God for today?

Try This:

Let everyone name one person, one thing, and one moment from the day for which they are thankful.

11. My Little Prayer Before I Sleep

When: Bedtime

Main Truth:

I can talk to God anytime, including before I go to sleep. He hears when I pray.

God’s Word:

“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.”

Psalms 55:17, KJV

Little Reminder:
I can talk to God.

Try This:

Ask:

“What would you like to thank God for tonight?”

“Is there anyone you want to pray for?”

“Is anything worrying you?”

Then listen.

12. Jesus Watches Over Me

When: The lights go out and it is time to rest

Main Truth:

God knows me and cares for me. I can trust Him when I lie down to sleep.

God’s Word:

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.”

Psalms 4:8, KJV

And when a child is afraid:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

Little Reminder:

When I am afraid, I can trust God.

Try This:

Say Psalm 56:3 together before turning out the light.

One Day, Twelve Little Opportunities

You do not need a classroom.

You do not need an hour-long Bible lesson.

Much of what children learn happens while ordinary life is happening.

Morning: Thank God.

Getting ready: Remember who made us.

Mealtime: Give thanks.

Work: Help.

Play: Be kind.

With others: Share.

Talking: Use words carefully.

When we want something: Remember that God knows what we need.

Evening: Look back and give thanks.

Bedtime: Pray.

In the dark: Trust God.

And tomorrow morning, begin again.

These are little lessons.

But little lessons, repeated faithfully through little years, can become a foundation for much bigger truths.

Memory Verses from The Shepherd's Meadow

Little children are remarkably good at remembering words set to rhythm, repetition, and music.

That is one reason we created *The Shepherd's Meadow*.

But alongside the songs, we want children to begin remembering something even more important:

God's Word.

The verses in this section come directly from the **King James Version (KJV)** and correspond with the lessons throughout *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow*.

Do not feel that a two or three-year-old must memorize every verse.

Start small.

One phrase.

One verse.

Repeat it during ordinary moments.

As children grow, add more.

The goal is not to see how many verses a preschooler can recite.

The goal is to begin putting the words of Scripture into little hearts and minds.

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Psalms 119:11, KJV

Morning

This Is the Day

"This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalms 118:24, KJV

For younger children:

"This is the day which the LORD hath made."

Use it: When your child wakes up.

Give Thanks

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.”

Psalms 107:1, KJV

For younger children:

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good.”

Use it: When something happens for which you can thank God.

God Made Me

Wonderfully Made

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”

Psalms 139:14, KJV

For younger children:

“I am... wonderfully made.”

As children become older, make sure they understand the beginning of the verse too:

“I will praise thee.”

The focus is not simply upon ourselves. The response to God's work is praise **to God**.

Use it: While getting dressed, brushing hair, washing hands, or talking about how God made us.

God Made Us

“Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves...”

Psalms 100:3, KJV

For younger children:

“It is he that hath made us.”

Use it: When talking about who made us.

Mealtime

Receive With Thanksgiving

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:”

1 Timothy 4:4, KJV

For very young children, rather than shortening this into a confusing fragment, simply teach:

“We thank God for our food.”

That sentence is a teaching phrase, not a Bible quotation.

Use it: Before meals and snacks.

Helping

Serve One Another

“...by love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13, KJV

This may be one of the easiest verses in the album for a preschooler to remember.

For younger children:

“Serve one another.”

Then explain:

“Serving means helping and caring for someone.”

Use it: When carrying groceries, picking up toys, setting the table, or helping someone.

Kindness

Be Kind

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another...”

Ephesians 4:32, KJV

For younger children:

“Be ye kind one to another.”

Or begin with only:

“Be ye kind.”

Use it: Before playtime, when siblings disagree, or whenever someone needs kindness.

Sharing

Do Good and Share

“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Hebrews 13:16, KJV

Explain that **communicate** in this verse carries the idea of sharing.

Because that older use of the word may confuse a preschooler, do not pretend that:

“God wants me to share”

is the wording of the verse.

It is simply the lesson we draw from it.

Use it: When sharing snacks, toys, supplies, or helping someone who has a need.

Our Words

Pleasant Words

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

Proverbs 16:24, KJV

For younger children:

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb.”

Explain:

“A honeycomb has honey in it. Honey is sweet. God is teaching us that good words can be sweet and good for the person who hears them.”

Use it: When practicing please, thank you, encouragement, and kind words.

Words Can Help or Hurt

“There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.”

Proverbs 12:18, KJV

This one may be better taught than memorized during the preschool years.

Explain:

“Our words can hurt people, and our words can help people.”

Use it: After hurtful words or when teaching children how to respond kindly.

Trusting God for Our Needs

God Knows

“...for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”

Matthew 6:32, KJV

For younger children:

Rather than changing the Bible's wording and presenting it as Scripture, teach the simple truth:

“God knows what I need.”

Then show them the actual verse as they grow.

Use it: When discussing wants, needs, worry, or God's provision.

Look at the Birds

“Behold the fowls of the air... yet your heavenly Father feedeth them...”

Matthew 6:26, KJV

Use it: Go outside and look for birds.

Children may remember the verse much more easily after connecting it with something they can actually see.

Evening

Do Not Forget

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:”

Psalms 103:2, KJV

Explain **benefits**:

“The good things God has done and given.”

For younger children:

You may simply practice:

“Thank You, God, for today.”

Again, that is a prayer rather than a Scripture quotation.

Use it: When talking about the day before bedtime.

Prayer

God Hears

“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.”

Psalms 55:17, KJV

For younger children:

“He shall hear my voice.”

Explain:

“We can talk to God morning, daytime, or nighttime.”

Use it: Before prayer.

When I Am Afraid

I Will Trust

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

This is one I would especially encourage families to memorize.

It is short enough for little children and useful enough to carry throughout life.

For younger children:

“I will trust in thee.”

Explain:

“Thee means God.”

Use it: During storms, after a bad dream, in an unfamiliar place, or whenever a child feels afraid.

Bedtime

Lie Down in Peace

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.”

Psalms 4:8, KJV

For younger children:

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep.”

Use it: While tucking your child into bed.

God Does Not Sleep

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

Psalms 121:4, KJV

Explain:

“Slumber means sleep. We need to sleep. God does not.”

Use it: When a child is worried about going to sleep.

The Shepherd’s Meadow Verse

If your family chooses one verse to represent the entire *Shepherd’s Meadow* series, this is the one I would choose:

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

Psalms 23:1, KJV

It is short.

It is memorable.

And it connects naturally with the Meadow.

But as children grow, do not leave the Shepherd as merely a comforting picture.

Show them where Scripture ultimately takes us.

Jesus said:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

That is where The Shepherd’s Meadow should always point.

To Jesus Christ.

A Simple Memory Verse Plan

You do not need to introduce a new verse every day.

For preschoolers, I would rather see a child truly learn a few verses than rush through many.

One simple approach is to choose **one verse each week**.

Say it:

At breakfast.

In the car.

During bath time.

Before the corresponding song.

At bedtime.

Do not turn every mistake into:

“What’s your memory verse?”

Scripture should certainly correct us, but we do not want a preschooler’s primary association with the Bible to become getting in trouble.

Read God’s Word during happy moments too.

Six Verses I Would Start With

If twelve or more verses seem overwhelming, start with these six:

“This is the day which the LORD hath made...”

Psalms 118:24

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good...”

Psalms 107:1

“...by love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13

“And be ye kind one to another...”

Ephesians 4:32

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

Psalms 23:1

Six verses.

Six truths a little child can begin carrying around.

God made today.

Give thanks.

Serve others.

Be kind.

Trust God when afraid.

The Lord is my Shepherd.

Simple Prayers for Little Hearts

Children do not need complicated words to pray.

They do not need to sound like adults.

They do not need to memorize long prayers before they can begin talking to God.

Sometimes a little prayer may be only a few words:

“Thank You, God.”

“Please help me.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Help Grandma feel better.”

“I’m scared. Help me trust You.”

Those simple prayers can become the beginning of something that lasts a lifetime.

This section gives parents and grandparents short prayers that can be used throughout an ordinary day. Read them together, help younger children repeat them, and as children grow, encourage them to use their own words.

These are **sample prayers**, not formulas.

There are no magic words.

The goal is to teach children that they can talk to God throughout their day.

When I Wake Up

Dear God, thank You for this brand-new day. Thank You for taking care of me. Help me listen, learn, help others, and do what is right today. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for today. Help me follow You. Amen.

When I Am Thankful

Dear God, thank You for all the good things You have given me. Help me remember to be thankful and not always think about what I want next. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for being good to me. Amen.

Thank You for Making Me

Dear God, thank You for making me. Thank You for my eyes, my ears, my hands, my feet, and all the things I can do. Help me use what You have given me to do what is right. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for making me. Amen.

Before I Eat

Dear God, thank You for this food. Thank You for the people who helped provide and prepare it. Thank You for taking care of us. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for my food. Amen.

When I Want to Help

Dear God, show me how I can help today. Help me notice when someone needs me and use my little hands to serve others with love. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Jesus, help my little hands to help. Amen.

When I Need to Be Kind

Dear God, help me be kind. Help me use gentle hands and kind words. When someone is sad or needs help, help me notice and care. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Jesus, help me be kind today. Amen.

When Someone Has Been Unkind to Me

Dear God, what happened hurt me. Help me not to hurt someone back. Help me choose what is right and tell a trusted grown-up when I need help. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, I'm hurt. Please help me be kind and do what is right. Amen.

When I Need to Share

Dear God, thank You for what You have given me. Help me remember that other people matter too. Help me share when I can and take turns patiently. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for what I have. Help me share. Amen.

When I Need Kind Words

Dear God, help me think before I speak. Help my words be truthful and kind. Keep me from using my words to hurt someone. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Jesus, help me use kind words. Amen.

When I Want Something

Wanting something is not automatically wrong.

But this is a good opportunity to teach children that they can bring their desires to God without believing He must give them everything they request.

Dear God, You know what I want, and You know what I need. Help me be thankful for what I already have and trust You when I do not get what I want. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, You know what I need. Help me trust You. Amen.

When I Have Done Something Wrong

Children need to learn that prayer does not replace making things right with another person.

If we hurt someone, we may need to apologize.

If we take something, we may need to return it.

If we make a mess through disobedience, we may need to help clean it up.

And we should also be honest with God.

Dear God, what I did was wrong. I am sorry. Help me tell the truth about what I did, make it right where I can, and choose what is right next time. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, I'm sorry for what I did. Please help me do what is right. Amen.

When I Am Angry

Anger is a feeling children will experience.

The important lesson is what we do with it.

Dear God, I am angry right now. Help me slow down. Help me keep my hands from hurting anyone and my mouth from saying hurtful things. Help me choose what is right even while I am angry. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Jesus, I'm angry. Please help me use gentle hands and kind words. Amen.

When I Am Afraid

This prayer connects directly with one of the most useful verses in the Meadow:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

Dear God, I am afraid. Thank You that I can tell You when I am scared. Help me remember Your Word and trust You. Help me tell someone who cares for me when I need help. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, I'm scared. Help me trust You. Amen.

During a Storm

Thunder can be especially frightening to little children.

Dear God, the thunder is loud and I am afraid. Thank You that I can talk to You when I am scared. Help me stay close to the people caring for me and trust You. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, I'm scared. Please help me. Amen.

After a Bad Dream

Dear God, that dream frightened me. Thank You that I am awake now and someone who loves me is here. Help my heart become quiet again and help me go back to sleep. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, I had a scary dream. Help me rest again. Amen.

When Someone Is Sick

Children often want to pray for someone they love.

Let them.

But avoid teaching that if they pray correctly, the person is guaranteed to become well.

Dear God, please help _____. They are sick and we love them. Please give them the care they need. Help us love them, help them, and trust You. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, please help _____. We love them. Amen.

When Someone Is Sad

Dear God, _____ is sad today. Please comfort them. Show me if there is something kind I can do to help. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, please help _____. They are sad. Amen.

When I Miss Someone

A child may miss a parent, grandparent, friend, or someone else they love.

Dear God, I miss _____. Thank You for the people I love. Please take care of them and help me while we are apart. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, I miss _____. Please help me. Amen.

When I Need to Forgive

Forgiveness deserves careful teaching as children grow. For little ones, we can begin by teaching them not to seek revenge.

Dear God, I am hurt by what happened. Help me not to try to hurt them back. Help me forgive and help the grown-ups caring for me know what happened. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Jesus, help me not to hurt back. Amen.

Forgiveness should never be used to teach a child to hide abuse, remain in danger, or keep harmful secrets.

When I See Someone Who Needs Help

Dear God, thank You for what You have given us. Help us notice people who do not have what they need. Show us how we can help and share. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

God, help us help someone today. Amen.

When Something Good Happens

Prayer is not only for problems.

Teach children to talk to God in happy moments too.

Dear God, thank You! I am happy about what happened today. Thank You for this good gift and help me remember that good things are reasons to give You thanks. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God! Amen.

When I Don't Know What to Say

Sometimes a child may want to pray but have no idea what to say.

That is okay.

Try:

Dear God, I don't know what to say right now, but I know I can talk to You. Thank You for hearing me. Amen.

There is no requirement that every prayer be long.

Sometimes:

“Please help me, God.”

is enough.

A Prayer for Mommy and Daddy

Dear God, thank You for Mommy and Daddy. Help them, guide them, and give them wisdom as they take care of our family. Help me listen and obey when they teach me what is right. Amen.

A Prayer for Grandma and Grandpa

Dear God, thank You for Grandma and Grandpa. Thank You for the time I have with them. Please care for them and help me show them love. Amen.

A Prayer for Brothers and Sisters

Dear God, thank You for my family. Help me be kind to my brothers and sisters. Help us share, forgive, help one another, and use good words. Amen.

A Prayer for a Friend

Dear God, thank You for my friend _____. Help me be a good friend. Help me be kind, truthful, helpful, and willing to share. Amen.

A Prayer for My Teacher

Dear God, thank You for my teacher. Help me listen, learn, be respectful, and treat the other children kindly. Amen.

Thank You for the Animals

The Shepherd's Meadow would hardly be the Meadow without its animals.

Children naturally notice and love them.

Dear God, thank You for the animals You created. Thank You for the animals we enjoy and the ones we care for. Help us treat Your creation responsibly. Amen.

And yes, Scout can certainly be included by name.

Thank You, God, for Scout. Amen.

And if your little one loves the Meadow's otter, they may want to thank God for otters too.

At the End of the Day

Dear God, thank You for today. Thank You for the good things that happened and for helping us through the difficult things. Thank You for our family, our food, our home, and the people who care for us. Help us learn from today and make good choices tomorrow. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for today. Amen.

My Little Prayer Before I Sleep

Dear God, thank You for loving and caring for me. Thank You for hearing me when I pray. Please help the people I love. Forgive me for the things I have done wrong. Help me trust You when I am afraid. Give me peaceful rest tonight. Amen.

For the littlest ones:

Thank You, God, for today. Help me trust You while I sleep. Amen.

Teach Them to Pray, Then Let Them Pray

These prayers are here to help children begin.

They are not intended to become a script that children must follow forever.

Eventually, instead of saying:

“Repeat after me...”

try asking:

“Would you like to pray?”

You may hear a beautifully organized little prayer.

You may also hear about breakfast, a lost crayon, Grandma, an otter, someone's scraped knee, Scout, tomorrow's pancakes, and three completely unrelated subjects before reaching “Amen.”

Let little children sound like little children.

We are not teaching them to impress adults.

We are teaching them to talk to God.

As they grow, keep opening the Bible and teaching them what Scripture says about prayer.

Keep correcting misunderstandings.

Keep showing them that prayer is not a way to control God.

Keep reminding them that God already knows what they need.

And keep praying with them.

One day, you may no longer be beside their bed to lead the prayer.

But perhaps the habit will remain.

A child who once prayed:

“God, I’m scared. Help me trust You.”

may someday become an adult who still remembers:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

And that is one of the reasons we begin while the lambs are little.

About The Shepherd's Meadow

The Shepherd's Meadow was created for little children, but its purpose reaches beyond children's music.

It is a place where songs, stories, Scripture, family, and the ordinary moments of childhood come together.

A place where little lambs can learn big truths in little ways.

The Meadow is filled with children, sheep, birds, friendly animals, Scout the Goldendoodle, and even the occasional otter. It is meant to feel warm, joyful, safe, and familiar.

But the Meadow is not the message.

Jesus is.

Why The Shepherd's Meadow?

Children learn through repetition.

They remember songs.

They remember characters.

They remember pictures.

They remember phrases that adults may have forgotten five minutes after hearing them.

That gives parents and grandparents a wonderful opportunity.

A catchy song can carry a truth into places where a formal lesson sometimes cannot.

A child may sing while playing.

While riding in the car.

While getting dressed.

While helping clean up.

While lying in bed.

And somewhere in the middle of an ordinary day, the words come back.

Be kind.

Little hands can help.

Thank You, God.

I can pray.

God made me.

I can trust Him.

That is what *The Shepherd's Meadow* is designed to do.

Why a Meadow?

The imagery comes naturally from Scripture.

The Bible repeatedly uses the relationship between a shepherd and sheep to teach us about God's care, guidance, and ultimately about Jesus Christ Himself.

Perhaps the best-known words are:

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

Psalms 23:1, KJV

For a little child, a meadow filled with sheep provides a picture they can understand.

The sheep need their shepherd.

They need guidance.

They need care.

They can wander.

They are dependent upon someone greater than themselves.

But as children grow, we want them to understand that the Shepherd is more than an illustration.

Jesus said:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

That is where the Meadow points.

The Meadow Is Not a Substitute for the Bible

This is important.

The Shepherd's Meadow is a teaching tool.

The songs are teaching tools.

This guidebook is a teaching tool.

None of them should replace opening the Bible with a child.

Whenever possible, let children see where the words come from.

Open the Bible.

Point to the verse.

Read it aloud.

As children become older, help them find passages themselves.

We want them eventually to understand:

This isn't true because *The Shepherd's Meadow* says it.

It is true because God's Word says it.

Why Music?

Because children sing what they remember.

Think about songs you learned when you were little.

Some may still be stored somewhere in your memory decades later.

Music combines words, melody, rhythm, and repetition in a way that can make language remarkably memorable.

That is why each song in *The Shepherd's Meadow* is built around a clear central idea.

Not merely a pleasant melody.

Not simply something to keep children entertained.

A truth.

A phrase.

A hook a little child can remember.

The hope is that long after the music stops, something remains.

More Than Sunday Morning

Faith should not exist only at church.

Deuteronomy describes God's truth being discussed throughout ordinary family life:

“And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

Deuteronomy 6:7, KJV

That picture fits *A Day in The Shepherd’s Meadow* particularly well.

When we rise.

When we eat.

When we work.

When we play.

When we speak.

When we help.

When we lie down.

The album follows an ordinary day because those ordinary moments are where children actually live.

For Parents

You are your child's primary teacher in ways that extend far beyond formal education.

Your child is watching how you live.

How you speak.

How you respond when frustrated.

How you treat people.

Whether you pray.

Whether you forgive.

Whether the Bible is something you actually open.

These songs are not meant to add another impossible burden to parenting.

Use them as tools.

Play a song.

Ask one question.

Read one verse.

Practice one truth.

Then live your day.

Tomorrow, do it again.

For Grandparents

Grandparents hold a special place in *The Shepherd's Meadow*.

You may have more time to listen.

More stories to tell.

More years behind you from which to say:

“Let me tell you something God taught me.”

Your grandchildren may remember things you say long after you have forgotten saying them.

Use those opportunities carefully.

Read with them.

Sing with them.

Pray for them.

Pray **with** them.

Tell them what God has done in your life.

Open the Bible with them.

And support their parents as they carry the primary responsibility of raising and teaching them.

Why Scout Is in the Meadow

Scout reminds us that childhood teaching does not always need to look like a lesson.

Sometimes it looks like a child, a dog, and a walk outside.

Children love animals, and animals naturally become part of their memories and stories.

Scout, a Goldendoodle inspired by a real family dog, became a natural companion for the children in the Meadow.

He can be there while little hands help.

While children share.

While everyone explores.

While the day winds down.

He is not the teacher.

He is not the message.

He's Scout.

And sometimes that is enough.

And Yes, There Is an Otter

There is also a reason an otter found its way into the Meadow.

Sometimes the things children love deserve a place in the memories we make with them.

A granddaughter's love for otters was enough reason to make room for one.

That little detail represents something larger about this project.

Children are not simply an audience.

They are the reason for it.

Listen to them.

Learn what makes them smile.

Know what they love.

Know what frightens them.

Know the questions they are asking.

Then meet them there with truth.

Feed My Lambs

One passage has become especially meaningful in the heart behind this children's ministry.

After His resurrection, Jesus said to Peter:

“Feed my lambs.”

John 21:15, KJV

In its context, Jesus was speaking directly to Peter. We should not remove the words from that setting and pretend they were originally spoken as a command to every grandparent or children's songwriter.

But the words provide a beautiful picture of something that matters deeply to me.

Little lambs need to be fed.

Children are being taught every day.

The question is not whether they are learning.

The question is **what they are learning and from whom.**

So if God has placed little ones within our influence, we have an opportunity to give them something worth carrying.

Truth.

Scripture.

The gospel.

And songs that help them remember.

Where the Meadow Is Going

The Shepherd's Meadow was never intended to be only one collection of children's songs.

There are many truths little children need to begin learning.

Who God is.

Who Jesus is.

What the Bible is.

Prayer.

Obedience.

Truthfulness.

Forgiveness.

Kindness.

Gratitude.

Family.

Creation.

The gospel.

And many more.

Different albums can explore those truths in ways appropriate for little children while maintaining the familiar world of the Meadow.

The children grow in understanding.

The songs change.

New lessons come.

But the direction remains the same.

Keep pointing the lambs toward the Shepherd.

The Most Important Thing About The Shepherd's Meadow

It would be possible to make beautiful children's music, create lovable characters, produce colorful pictures, and build an entire world around the Meadow while missing the reason for doing any of it.

The purpose is not simply to create Christian entertainment.

The purpose is to help families put biblical truth into everyday life.

And ultimately, the most important truth we can give a child is not:

Be nice.

Share your toys.

Say please.

Those things matter.

But Christianity is not a collection of lessons about becoming a well-behaved child.

Children, like adults, need a Saviour.

The Good Shepherd said:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

As the children of *The Shepherd's Meadow* grow, that truth should become clearer and clearer.

Who is the Shepherd?

Jesus Christ.

Why did He come?

Why did He give His life?

Why do I need Him?

Those are bigger questions for growing little hearts.

And Lord willing, *The Shepherd's Meadow* will help parents and grandparents begin answering them.

Welcome to The Shepherd's Meadow

Bring the children.

Bring the grandparents.

Bring the Bible.

Scout is probably already there.

The sheep are somewhere nearby.

There is plenty of room.

But always remember why we came.

To feed the lambs.

To teach them God's Word.

And to point them toward the Good Shepherd.

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

John 10:11, KJV

More Music and Free Resources

The songs may be the easiest way to begin, but they do not have to be where the learning ends.

The Shepherd's Meadow was created so that music and simple family resources can work together.

A song may introduce the truth.

A Bible verse gives that truth its foundation.

A conversation helps a child understand it.

And everyday life gives the child opportunities to practice it.

That is why companion resources like this guidebook are made available to families.

Your Free Companion Guidebooks

Whenever a *Shepherd's Meadow* album has a companion guidebook available, you can find it free at:

joesoaresmusic.com

These guides are designed for parents, grandparents, caregivers, and others who want to do more than simply play the songs.

Use them however they work best for your family.

You might read an entire lesson.

You might use only the five-minute family devotion.

You might choose a memory verse.

You might use one of the activities.

Or you may simply play the song in the car and talk about it afterward.

There is no required program to complete.

The goal is to help you use the music naturally in everyday life.

Listen to the Songs Together

The Shepherd's Meadow music is designed especially for young children and their families.

Rather than always using children's music as background sound, occasionally listen together.

Ask:

“What was that song about?”

“What did you hear?”

“Do you remember the part we keep singing?”

Then connect the song with real life.

If *A Happy Helper* has been playing, find something to help with.

After *Be Kind*, look for an opportunity to show kindness.

After *Thank You for My Food*, pray together before eating.

After *My Little Prayer Before I Sleep*, let your child pray.

The music becomes much more useful when the truth leaves the speaker and enters the child's day.

The Shepherd's Meadow Music Collection

Families can continue exploring *The Shepherd's Meadow* through its growing collection of children's Christian music.

Each project is designed around simple biblical truths children can begin understanding and remembering.

Among the Meadow songs and collections are lessons about:

Following Jesus

God's Word

Prayer

Friendship with Jesus

Listening

Helping

Obedience

Truthfulness

Apologizing

Forgiveness

Gratitude

Kindness

Sharing

Trusting God

and more.

The music is intentionally written for little voices and little lives while giving parents and grandparents opportunities to take the teaching deeper.

Continue with *Walking With Jesus in The Shepherd's Meadow*

Families who enjoy *A Day in The Shepherd's Meadow* can also explore:

Walking With Jesus in The Shepherd's Meadow

That collection includes:

1. **I Want to Follow Jesus**
2. **The Bible Is God's Book**
3. **I Can Pray**
4. **Jesus Is My Friend**
5. **Little Ears Can Listen**
6. **Little Hands Can Help**
7. **Little Feet Can Follow**
8. **Obey Right Away**
9. **I Can Tell the Truth**
10. **I Can Say I'm Sorry**
11. **I Can Forgive**
12. **Jesus, Help My Heart**

These songs move beyond the routine of one day and begin exploring some of the choices and truths that shape a child's growing walk with Jesus.

A companion guidebook can help parents and grandparents take those songs further as well.

Music Is the Beginning of the Conversation

A three-minute song cannot explain everything a child eventually needs to know about prayer.

Or forgiveness.

Or obedience.

Or the Bible.

Or Jesus Christ.

It should not try.

The song gives us an opening.

The parent or grandparent can then say:

“Let's talk about that.”

And even better:

“Let's see what the Bible says.”

That is one of the main reasons these free resources exist.

Use the Website as Your Starting Place

Visit:

joesoaresmusic.com

There you can keep up with available music and resources from Joe Soares Music, including *The Shepherd's Meadow* projects and companion materials as they become available.

Because music platforms and links can change over time, using the website as the starting point also gives families one place to find current resources.

Share the Free Guidebooks

If another parent, grandparent, church worker, or family you know is using *The Shepherd's Meadow* music, send them to:

joesoaresmusic.com

They can obtain their own copy of the available companion guidebook there.

The purpose of offering these resources is simple:

We want families using the songs to have the tools to take the message further.

For Churches and Children's Ministries

The songs may also provide useful starting points for preschool and children's ministry settings.

A teacher might use a song to introduce a biblical principle and then open the Bible to teach the lesson.

A children's worker might use a song during an activity.

A grandparent ministry might share the music with families.

Whenever the music is used, the same principle should remain:

The song supports the teaching. It does not replace Scripture.

For permissions beyond ordinary personal or family use, please refer to the current information available through **joesoaresmusic.com**.

Stay With the Children as They Grow

Children will not remain in the preschool years forever.

That is a good thing.

Our goal is not to keep the lessons permanently simple.

The simple truths should become foundations upon which greater understanding can be built.

God made me can eventually lead into creation and what it means to be made in God's image.

The Bible is God's Book can lead into a lifelong habit of studying Scripture.

I can pray can grow into a deeper understanding of biblical prayer.

Jesus is my Friend must eventually grow into a fuller understanding of who Jesus Christ is as Lord, Saviour, and the Son of God.

Be kind can grow into biblical love.

I can forgive can eventually lead toward understanding the forgiveness offered through Christ.

And the image of the Shepherd can eventually bring a child to Jesus' words:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

Keep building.

Keep opening the Bible.

Keep answering questions.

And keep pointing toward Christ.

One Website, One Place to Begin

For *The Shepherd's Meadow* music, companion guidebooks, and other resources:

joesoaresmusic.com

Listen together.

Sing together.

Read God's Word together.

Pray together.

And keep feeding the lambs.

About Joe Soares

Joe Soares is a husband, father, grandfather, Bible teacher, worship leader, author, and songwriter.

His music began with a simple desire to put biblical truth into songs people could carry with them long after the music stopped playing. That journey eventually led somewhere especially close to his heart: children.

Becoming a grandfather brought a new perspective to that calling.

Little voices were listening.

Little minds were learning.

Little hearts were beginning to form their understanding of God, Jesus, prayer, the Bible, right and wrong, and the world around them.

The words of Jesus to Peter took on a particularly meaningful place in Joe's heart:

“Feed my lambs.”

John 21:15, KJV

In its biblical context, Jesus spoke those words directly to Peter. But the picture of caring for and feeding little lambs became part of the inspiration behind Joe's children's music.

The Shepherd's Meadow

The Shepherd's Meadow grew from the desire to create Christian children's music that little ones would genuinely enjoy singing while giving parents and grandparents something worthwhile to build upon.

The songs are intentionally simple.

The hooks are memorable.

The music is joyful and gentle.

But behind the simplicity is a serious purpose:

Give children truth they can begin understanding now and grow into later.

That means the music does not try to turn every three-minute children's song into a sermon.

Instead, a song may plant one little truth:

God made me.

I can pray.

God's Word is true.

Be kind.

Tell the truth.

Help others.

Give thanks.

Trust God when you're afraid.

Then parents and grandparents can take that little truth, open the Bible, and help it grow.

That is also why companion guidebooks like this one are created.

Family Is Part of the Meadow

The Shepherd's Meadow has never been intended to feel like an imaginary world disconnected from real family life.

Its inspiration comes from real relationships.

Children.

Grandchildren.

Parents.

Grandparents.

Family pets.

Ordinary mornings.

Meals around a table.

Playtime.

Bedtime.

And all the little moments in between.

Even Scout, the Goldendoodle who appears throughout the Meadow, was inspired by a real family dog.

And the otter?

That one came from a granddaughter who loves otters.

Those personal touches matter because the heart behind the Meadow is personal too.

These songs are being written for real children.

More Than Children's Music

Joe's music extends beyond *The Shepherd's Meadow* and includes Christian worship, biblical teaching through song, songs about marriage and faith, Christmas music, Hawaiian-influenced Christian music, and other projects.

His books likewise focus heavily on Scripture, Christian living, marriage, and biblical teaching.

But children's music carries a particular responsibility.

Adults can examine what they hear.

Little children are still developing that ability.

That is why Joe believes Christian children's music should not merely borrow Christian vocabulary and attach it to a catchy tune.

The words matter.

The message matters.

And when Scripture is presented as Scripture, it should be handled carefully.

A Grandfather's Hope

There is no guarantee that a child who hears Christian music will eventually follow Christ.

Songs cannot save anyone.

A guidebook cannot save anyone.

Neither can a parent or grandparent.

But we can teach.

We can pray.

We can open God's Word.

We can answer questions.

We can correct misunderstandings.

We can live our faith where children can see it.

And we can place truth within their reach.

That is Joe's hope for *The Shepherd's Meadow*.

Perhaps years from now, a child who has long since forgotten the album artwork will still remember:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

Psalms 56:3, KJV

Perhaps another will remember singing:

Be kind.

Perhaps someone will remember Grandpa opening the Bible after a song and saying:

“Let's see what God says.”

And perhaps the little picture of a shepherd and his sheep will someday help them understand something infinitely greater:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

John 10:11, KJV

If the songs help families move in that direction, they have accomplished something worthwhile.

From Joe

To the parents and grandparents using these songs:

Thank you for allowing my music into your homes, cars, classrooms, playrooms, and bedtime routines.

I hope your children laugh.

I hope they sing.

I hope you occasionally find yourself singing the hooks when no children are anywhere nearby.

But more than anything, I pray the songs give you opportunities to talk about things that matter.

Open the Bible with them.

Answer their questions.

Pray with them.

Let them hear you pray for them.

And don't worry about making every moment into a lesson.

Sometimes just enjoy your children and grandchildren.

The years when they are this little do not last very long.

Love them.

Teach them.

Pray for them.

And while the lambs are little,

feed them.

Joe Soares

Joe Soares Music

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