

ParentPause

Encouragement for Parents of Preschoolers

December



GOD IS WITH US!

When things get scary, your child might reach out to grab for your hand. Your presence makes a difference in how they can handle their fear. When we think about God being with us, this is a whole other thing. Unlike a parent who is limited in power and knowledge, God is God. His presence with us is as the Divine King—full of power, wisdom, goodness, and love. When we remember that He is with us, it makes all the difference. But sometimes we are like the child who doesn't reach out for a hand. Isn't that our struggle—to remember that God is with us? We forget that He is there in our greatest times of need, walking with us through brokenness, sin, and fear. It is for this reason God announced through Isaiah that Immanuel, God with us, would come. We read the words, ... *(She) will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel* (which means "God is with us") (*Isaiah 7:14, NIV*).

We read the profound words that describe when Jesus took on human form: *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us ...* (*John 1:14, NIV*) He became fully God and fully man and entered our dirty and needy world. The very words of Isaiah's prophecy are echoed in the explanation of Jesus' birth, in case there was any doubt about what was going on. We read, *The virgin will be with child and give birth to a Son, and will call Him Immanuel* (*Matthew 1:23, NIV*). Jesus became flesh and blood and joined our messy and sinful world to live with us. He laid aside the comfort and joys of heaven to embrace the chilly air, and the strong animal smells of a dusty bed of hay in a stable. He became the poor son of a carpenter with a questionable history. He was born into an insignificant family during a long journey far from home and family. He was welcomed into our world by dirty shepherds and restless sheep. He came as a helpless baby to an inexperienced young mother. He was born into a world of violence and captivity. All of this makes Jesus accessible to any of us. No matter who you are, or where you are from, this God is the One who is with you! His presence is what makes the difference when we face unspeakable hardship, because we know it isn't just anyone with us—it is God who is with us. Just like a child who knows they need to turn to someone bigger, we can reach for Him, and daily draw courage and comfort from His presence. It can make all the difference in our lives too!

ABOUT YOUR CHILD



EXPLAINING CHRISTMAS TO YOUR CHILD

Keep It Simple

When explaining the Christmas story to young children, remember you need to keep it simple, even as you make it deep.

Use Scripture

Though it might not be everyone's favorite Christmas verse, 1 John 4:10 is a fantastic summary of Christmas, and also happens to be a key verse used in our Cubbies program. It states, "... God ... loved us and sent His Son." (*1 John 4:10 ESV*)

Include the "Why"

The Christmas story is about how Jesus was sent to the world because of God's love for us. If you can communicate that to kids, and then give them some basic details about the circumstances of Jesus' birth, you have given kids plenty to work with!

Where to Find the Christmas Story in the Bible:

Matthew 1:18-25

Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20

COLOR YOUR CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

Challenge: Let your child color the Christmas ornament on this page as a reminder that Jesus came to save us from our sins! Add stickers or glitter glue for even more fun. Then cut out the ornament, glue it to a piece of colored construction paper, and cut around it to form a colored border for your ornament. Use a hole punch to make a hole at the top to insert a ribbon. Display the ornament on your Christmas tree or elsewhere in your home, and review the true meaning of Christmas with your child several times leading up to the holiday.

Bonus Challenge: Read 1 John 4:10 with your child and talk about how God loves us and sent His Son!



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