



Grow Together

G R O W I N G I N F A I T H A N D L I F E

May Grow Together encourage and inspire the faith you share in your home and family. May the conversations and practices, the learning and quiet actions bring abundant joy, peace, and growing grace throughout this year.



SPACE for WORSHIP

Families are so important to God. When he created the world, he created a family first. He knew it was good for us to live in community with others, to have a mum and a dad and hopefully siblings too. And even in those early days of being in a family together, God knew it was good for us to worship him together – growing and learning in faith. We hear this in Deuteronomy 6. Jesus also tells us that when we draw close to him, he draws close to us (James 4:8). He is always calling us closer and deeper in relationship with him. Our response is simply 'yes.'

Simple worship can be just that – from saying yes to God, to reading his word, praying, praising, and sharing our lives of faith with each other. There are many times throughout the day when we are worshipping and then there are other times where we plan intentional times where God gathers us closer together as a family. Simple worship probably happens a lot throughout our day already. And then there are those intentional, planned times, when we gather as a family and ask God to bring us closer together. In this edition you'll continue to find many resources to support your worship, whether individually, at home and in your church community.

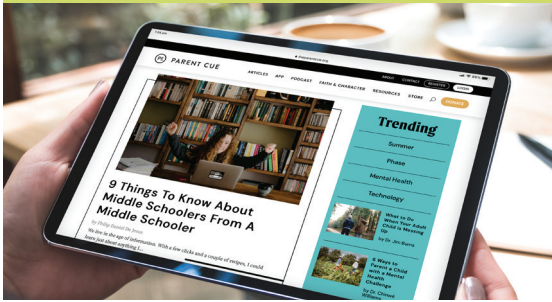
Because your love is
better than life,
my lips will glorify you.
I will praise you as
long as I live,
and in your name I
will lift up my hands.

PSALM 63:3-4



To all our valued subscribers – this will be the second last edition of Grow Together. For continued support, resources, and inspiration we encourage you to sign up for our free eNews at www.growministries.org.au

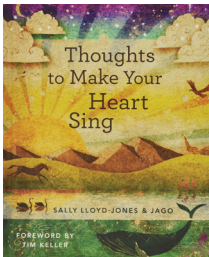
Supporting your faith resource



www.theparentcue.org

Parent Cue is a website filled with encouragement and support. Its goal is simply to cue you with what you need when you need it, so you can be the parent you want to be.

Read together with your family



Thoughts to make your heart sing
by Sally Lloyd-Jones

101 simple yet profound thoughts to remind you of things that are true. Use them to spark discussion and ideas, or simply to begin a time of reflection together. Read them as a reminder that God makes your heart sing!

Parent resource

Let's talk about sex! Pre-teen

Growing Up By The Book by Patricia Weerakoon— is more than just facts; it's about becoming the best person you can be. Answers are provided to the most common questions kids aged 10-14 have about puberty, sex, and relationships. How do you see your body? What do you feed your brain? And what do you base your identity on?



Grow Ministries resource

Growing Faith at Home

Weekly support for faith in your home. Stay tuned for our new look – coming soon!



Growing
FAITH
at home



Order yours at www.growministries.org.au

Putting faith into Practice – one family's story



TO CREATE
TIME FOR
WORSHIP

“We began a family discussion one night sharing what worship means to each of us. This helped us understand that our worship happens in many places and in many ways. We looked at some verses that talked about worship and decided we wanted to re-prioritise worshipping together with our church community. So, we all made a commitment to be up on time, to help each other and to talk about what worship was like after the Sunday service.”

The Wider Family



UNCLES,
AUNTS, SPECIAL
FRIENDS
AND MENTORS

Widening the circle of faith requires communicating with friends, uncles, aunties, and mentors, about what is happening in the lives of our children. Giving them a little 'inside glimpse' of where life is up to for your child can help them to have starting points of discussion and to pray intentionally for your child. These people in our wider circles are often honoured to share in the lives of younger people and family members, and love to pray for you as you parent them too!

Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

PSALM 150

Stages of faith development – children

Children grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. So, too, they develop spiritually in recognisable ways. Here, we look at ...

The relational world of adolescents

Cara complains every morning about having to wear a school uniform. She spends hours on the phone to find out what her friends are wearing, so that she will be dressed like them at the party on Saturday night. Although her parents see a contradiction there, for Cara it is perfectly logical behaviour.

Young teenagers are involved in forming a personal identity, including a spiritual identity. They may even experiment with a range of different identities - trying them on for size and then discarding the ones that don't work for them. It can be a kaleidoscope of change that keeps parents and young people unbalanced and worn out.

Adolescents often rely on peers to help them in this struggle. They may be very tuned in to the expectations and judgments of the group and happy to adopt the group ideology rather than have a belief of their own. They may go along with the pack, even when it goes against a previously held position.

Parents fear that their young person will become overly dependent on a pack with far different values from their own. Parents fear that they are just one of the many voices -peer group, media, school, work, popular culture - influencing their children.

But despite appearances, our teenagers do take note of our opinions, particularly the opinions we demonstrate by our actions as well as our words. Our beliefs and values are important to them. However, it's best to express these in open and respectful ways, and to listen to the young person's perspective as well.



Adolescents also begin to reflect on their own life stories and what their stories might mean. Ongoing conversations about your family and your teenager's place in it, as well as the story of God, will help them in forming their identity.

Young people tend to accept the faith system of the community around them, and are not particularly interested in analysing these beliefs. What faith system, if any, surrounds your teenager?

Talk with your adolescent child about God's loving presence in our lives, in difficult times and times of important decision making as well as in the good times. Encourage them to make informed judgements. Speak about God as someone who loves and accepts them, someone who is understanding and loyal and who cares for them at times of crisis. God may be a close friend and 'knowable.'

"I think the true religious hunger of adolescence is to have a God who knows me and values me deeply and can be a kind of guarantor of my identity and worth in a world where I'm struggling to find who I can be." James Fowler



SAND

READ: Psalm 139:17-18

COLLECT: A bit of dirt or sand

DISCUSS: What do you think God thinks about when looks at us?

PRAY: Thank God for the way he loves and takes care of your family.



SKY

READ: Psalm 19:1-4

COLLECT: Take a picture of the sky

DISCUSS: According to this verse, what are the skies doing right now, even as we're looking at them?

PRAY: Say a prayer declaring three great things God has done.



LEAF

READ: Proverbs 11:28 NIRV

COLLECT: A leaf

DISCUSS: What kind of 'riches' does our family enjoy? What does God ask us to trust him for?

PRAY: Ask God to help you put him first in your life, above money and things.



ANIMALS

READ: Job 12:7-10

COLLECT: Draw a picture of an animal

DISCUSS: What do these verses tell us about God?

PRAY: Thank God for your three favourite animals.



GRASS

READ: Psalm 104:14

COLLECT: 5 blades of different grasses

DISCUSS: What foods do you enjoy most?

PRAY: Thank God for good foods to eat and pray for those who don't have enough to eat.



WATER

READ: Isaiah 58:10-11

COLLECT: Some water in an empty jar or bottle

DISCUSS: What does God ask us to do in these verses?

PRAY: Ask God to give you give your family an idea for how you could help those in need.



FRUIT

READ: John 15:4

COLLECT: A piece of a vine or some fruit/berries

DISCUSS: What kind of 'fruit' show that we follow Jesus? (eg: patience, honesty, kind words, courage)

PRAY: Ask God to help you grow in one of these 'fruits'.



ROCK

READ: Psalm 62: 1-2

COLLECT: A pebble or a rock

DISCUSS: In what ways is God like a rock?

PRAY: List three things that never change about God. Thank God for them.



YOUR TURN

READ: Jeremiah 32: 17

DISCUSS: What is something in nature today that reminds you of God? Collect or draw that object.

PRAY: Thank God for His beautiful creation, and the way it reminds us of Him!