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Teachable Moments Ahead – Don't Miss Them!

You may not have a degree in education. You may never have taught a Sunday school class in your life. Maybe you don't even like the thought of school or teachers at all.

But if you are a parent, God has given you the role of full-time teacher – ready or not! Several verses in the Bible command parents to instruct their children in the ways of the Lord (e.g., Deuteronomy 6:5-7; Ephesians 6:4; Psalm 78:5-6).

Before you start feeling intimidated, remember that children learn best through everyday, informal situations. Your

example, your conversations with them and your responses to real-life experiences continually teach them.

In fact, teachable moments occur so often that parents often miss them. This week, keep your eyes open for some of these "prime times" for teaching.

- **Teach when you discipline.** View discipline as a chance to train your child in godliness. When your child expresses a wrong attitude or behavior, talk about why it's wrong and what God wants us to do instead. Then demonstrate Christ's forgiveness to your child.

And don't forget to praise your child when she does something good! One mother, Karen, has an "offering box" in her home. Whenever her son does something kind, she puts money into the box as a reward. Eventually, they use the money to do something kind for someone else – like buy items for the food pantry at church.

- **Teach when you travel.** Many parents enjoy "car talks" with their child. They turn off the radio and chat about what they see outside, their feelings that day, a Bible memory verse or whatever else pops into mind. Parents Steve and Elissa were driving

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past a graveyard when their 3-year-old daughter pointed out the crosses on the tombstones. Although their daughter expressed fears about death, they used this moment to start a conversation about Jesus and life forever in Him.

- **Teach when you encounter new experiences and places.** Sometimes, parents must intentionally direct their child to new experiences or places. For example, Amy brings her son along when she works in the garden. They talk about how God makes the seeds to grow into plants, providing us with food to eat. On visits to the beach, she muses with her children about the ocean and its creatures and the loving God who made them for us to enjoy.

Other teaching experiences surprise us. At the grocery store, Todd and his family regularly see an elderly woman begging with some children (most likely her grandchildren). One day, Todd's 3-year-old son, Isaiah, asked why they couldn't give her any money. When Todd explained his reservations about giving money, Isaiah responded, "Well, Dad, can't we give her some food instead?" The next time they go to town, they plan to bring a meal to the needy family.

- **Teach when your child asks questions.** Preschoolers are full of questions about God: Where does God live? How did He make us? Why can't I see Him? Can Jesus play with me? Take time to answer these questions lovingly and thoughtfully. If you don't have an answer, or Scripture is silent on the issue, it's better to say "I don't know" than to give a wrong answer. Remind your child that God is different from us, and only He knows everything.

Teachable moments are like doors. They open for a short time and then they close again. Seize these everyday teaching opportunities, and before you know it, you and your child will BOTH be learning more than you ever imagined!

Teachable Truths

What can preschoolers understand about God? Here are some of the truths you can begin impressing upon your child's heart today and everyday:

- God created the world.
- God is good.
- God (Jesus) loves you.
- Jesus is your friend.
- God knows everything.
- God is with us. He is everywhere.
- God is strong.
- God is holy (i.e., perfect, set apart).
- God is different from us.

Family Time Ideas

Why not make a New Year's resolution with your family? Commit to gathering weekly or monthly for a focused time of spiritual learning and fun. During this time, your family can read the Bible together, work on Awana® club handbooks, and experience other creative, meaningful activities.

This month, start off with a game everyone can enjoy. On small slips of paper write practical ways family members can serve the Lord. Include activities done at church along with other activities, such as "cleaning my room," "cooking dinner" or "working at the office." Keep in mind that anything we do can be work for the Lord – as long as we keep an attitude of serving Him (Colossians 3:23). Put the slips into a container, and play a game of charades. Each person will pull out a slip and pantomime the activity listed on the slip while others try to guess it. Help your preschooler with reading and acting.

Then read the story of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1-4; 6) from a children's Bible. Nehemiah served God by rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem.



Parents: Read this letter from Cubbie Bear to your child. Encourage your child to invite friends to club.

Hey _____!
(insert your child's name)

I am having such a great time in Cubbies® this year! And today I was thinking. Some of my friends don't come to Cubbies. They miss all the fun.

So I told Ern E. and Luv E., and we talked and talked. Finally, we decided to make a list of all our friends. We will make invitations and invite them to come to Cubbies with us.

You could do that too. Which of your friends would enjoy coming to Cubbies with you? You could make a list. Your mom or dad will help you. Then you can invite them and maybe they will come. Then you can all have fun at Cubbies!

Your friend,

Cubbie Bear

CUBBIE BEAR'S CORNER

Awana® Parent

P A U S E

January 2010

Inspiration and ideas for parents of preschoolers

Our Club News



Every Wednesday Night @ 6 PM. Come Join Us For Lots Of Fun!

FREEDOM FEST 2010

Featuring Live In Concert:



**JJ
WEEKS
BAND**

Along With:
**Infinite
Reason**

(Formerly: Against The Grain)



**Saturday, January 30, 2010
6:00 PM**

Swainsboro Auditorium

~ FREE ADMISSION ~

**Family & Friend Day
Sunday, January 31st*
(Notice New Date)**

**Invite Your Family & Friends
To Join You To Help Pack
Your Pew As We Join Together
For A Special Worship Service.**



The third Puggles® precept is **God is love**

(1 John 4:8).

Most 2-year-olds can grasp that God loves them, but they need help understanding that God loves others too. Developmentally, toddlers are egocentric – the world revolves around them and their needs. They assume everyone thinks, feels and acts just like they do. They often boss other children around or play alongside them rather than with them.

Around age 3, children are more able to see others as people. They begin to play interactively, usually with one other person. They start to take turns, but need lots of reinforcement.

Learning at Home: To help your child develop sensitivity and respect for others, try one of these activities at home.

Picture Prayers – Locate pictures of people in your family, people at church, people at school and other people you know. Each night at bedtime, point to a picture and talk about the person in the picture. What is he like? What does she do? How could we pray for him or her? Remind your child that God loves each person. Spend time praying for the people in the pictures.

Puggles Play Dates – Invite a few other Puggles parents and their children to your house or to the playground, and assign each child a buddy. Encourage buddies to work on a simple project together, like building a block tower. Also, find picture books about children sharing and playing together and read them to your child.

