

TELL OTHERS ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

"Live in such a way that those who know you, but don't know God,
will come to know God because they know you."

— Unknown

The big, yellow school bus finally reached our stop, and I was the first one to the front. Would the driver ever get the door open? Leaping down the big steps and running toward our house, our driveway never seemed so long to my short, little, 10-year-old legs! The screen door slammed shut behind me, and I was shouting, "Mom? Mom! Guess what?" as I held out the achievement award.

Maybe you can remember a time when you just couldn't wait another minute **to tell someone your good news**. It might have been so wonderful that you are still recounting the story as part of your personal history.

So it can be as we share the good news of God's love with others. Experiencing his love and expressing the joy of the encounter to others is **as natural as breathing in and then breathing out**. Sharing your faith story (witnessing) doesn't require a designated night of the week or a memorized presentation or pressuring strangers with intrusive questions. "Witnessing" is simply recounting to others the love and kindness that we have benefited from.

Sharing the good news with others reminds us that we have received a wondrous gift through no effort of our own. As we tell others about him, we see once again that God is a loving, sacrificial rescuer, and that we are beloved, redeemed, adopted children. Our own faith is strengthened as we reminisce about **the circumstances that God used to invite us into relationship with him**.

Scripture welcomes us to participate in God's eternal redemption plan as we carry the good news to others. It's explained in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20: "And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. **So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us**. We speak for Christ when we plead, 'Come back to God!'"

Inviting children into the spiritual practice of talking about Jesus, telling others about their personal encounters with God, opens a door of purpose for them. This practice fortifies their identity as someone precious to God, someone with eternal purpose and belonging. Children with this lifelong habit are not easily swayed when life gets difficult. **Their own witnessing voice echoes in their memories and verifies the truth of who God is.**



TELL OTHERS ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

INVITATIONS TO ENGAGE

Start the conversation with your child!

EARLY CHILDHOOD (2-6 years old)

I've made some little paper hearts, and each one has some good news written on one side. We will read the good news on each heart. **Then, while you decorate the back of it, ask God to help you think of who you should give this good news to.**

(The good news can be: God made the stars to show us his power. God made the sun rise today and takes care of us all day long. God watches over us while we sleep. I know God loves me because ... [have the child complete this sentence.] God loves you, and so do I.)

ELEMENTARY AGE (5-10 years old)

You can write "Good News" in special letters at the top of this paper to make a Good News letter. Right in the middle of the page we will write "God Loves Me" inside of a heart.

For about 10 minutes, we will play pretty music, and you can draw pictures or write words to remind you of all the ways that God has shown his love to you. **Every time you think of something to add to the letter, you can talk to God about it and tell him "thank you."**

Then we will ask God to help us think of who to send the letter to. Who needs to hear about God's love?

PRETEEN/EARLY ADOLESCENT (10-14 years old)

Ask God to help you think of people in older generations who can be a witness (tell a story) of encountering God's love. Ask them if you can interview and record them as they tell how they came to know Jesus personally. Or ask them to write down their story so that you can have it in your journal in their handwriting.

These records of God's love are part of your spiritual inheritance, to be treasured for many years.

After you hear those stories, share your own story of encountering God's love.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

Love Where You Live, by Shauna Pilgreen