






ENGAGE YOUR FAMILY WITH growthRings™

 <p>LOVE 1 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take part in a baptism or dedication service at your church; remember to have someone take photos to post in your Growfamily Journal. Choose Bible scripture (a “life verse”) that reflects the love & hope you have for your child; display it somewhere in his/her room. Tuck a short letter (from you, your spouse, a grandparent, etc.) to your child in the Growfamily Journal, to be opened as a young adult. Establish a consistent bedtime prayer to share with your child, as part of your bedtime routine; record this prayer in your Growfamily Journal.
 <p>BLESSING 2 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the practice of speaking scripture over your child, utilizing routine moments like morning & bedtime, brushing teeth or while buckling up in the car. (suggested scripture at www.growfamily.com/resources) Create a keepsake tag for your diaper bag with a blessing written on it, to be read at each diaper change; then, save it for your Growfamily Journal. Say “God bless you” (rather than simply “bless you”) after a sneeze! State blessings out loud as you stack blocks together. Record your favorite family blessings in your Growfamily Journal.
 <p>FAITH 3 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin traditional devotions at mealtime, spending 5 minutes as a family reading scripture or utilizing a child-friendly devotional. Spend a few moments coloring or together, as you talk to & listen to God. Mold play-dough into creations that show how God has blessed your family or things you’re thankful that He created. Take advantage of teachable moments, during which you can illustrate your faith. (For example: if you see a rainbow share Noah’s experience; after playing “Follow-the-Leader”, point out how you try to follow Jesus; when replacing a light bulb, explain what it means to be a “light” to others)
 <p>WONDER 4 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record your child’s innocent (& comical) observations about God, about the world & about life to record & cherish in your Growfamily Journal. Get outside! Explore creative ways to enjoy all the seasons together as a family. (Catch butterflies or frogs, pick wildflowers, watch the moon rise, build sandcastles, chase fireflies, watch rain drops...) Investigate God’s creation on every level: invest in both a magnifying glass & binoculars. Cook together, using all 5 senses, thanking God for His provision & creativity. Discover God’s amazing design through simple science experiments & observations.
 <p>PRAYER 5 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate a space for a family “prayer board”. Update it once a week with family, friends & situations needing prayer, along with answered prayers. Turn prayer into a dance! Give your child a “prayer buddy” (stuffed puppy, kitty or bear) as a comfort & reminder to talk to Jesus anytime; post a photo in your Growfamily Journal of your child with his or her prayer buddy. Practice speaking to & hearing from God while doodling, playing in the sand or blowing bubbles together. Bless passers-by by writing or drawing a prayer with sidewalk chalk. Create a prayer jar & place prayer requests or answers on little slips of paper; take turns pulling a request to share & pray over. Teach the “Five-Finger-Prayer” (thumb: family; pointer: teachers/pastors; index: leaders; ring: those who are sick/in pain/ needing God); pinkie: self)

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 <p>TRUTH 6 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest is an engaging children's Bible. (consider The Jesus Storybook Bible) Utilize a scripture calendar (available at www.growfamily.com/Store) to help make the Bible a routine part of everyday life. Look for examples of God's truth & Jesus' teachings in nature--take adventures & explore. Pray that God daily reveals His truth to your child. Find time to relax & read scripture silently, side-by-side. Post a simple monthly focus verse for your family to memorize together; record meaningful family scripture in your Growfamily Journal.
 <p>WORSHIP 7 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make regular worship at a local church a priority; take a family photo in front of your church to post in your Growfamily Journal. Explore the fun of worshipping at home together; get creative by playing some homemade instruments or having a "Karaoke for the King" night. If your child plays an instrument or sings, encourage him/her to use this gift to serve or lead in some way; record these experiences in your Growfamily Journal. Experience alternative ways to worship through movement, art or mindfulness activities. Weave worship into your routine with playlists in the car, inspirational podcasts during dinner or worship music while cleaning the house.
 <p>STORY 8 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present your child with a keepsake Bible; take a photo & post it in your Growfamily Journal. Take notes about your child's Biblical perceptions, reflections, observations to record in your journal. Read chapter books or watch movies together & uncover spiritual lessons within a variety of narratives. Based on your child's attributes, decide what person in the Bible he/she is most like & why. Or, talk about which character your child most admires & why. Make notes about this in your Growfamily Journal. Have your child illustrate or retell a favorite Bible story in your Growfamily Journal.
 <p>COVENANT 9 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore God's "promises" throughout the Bible. Together as a family, create & display a "family statement of faith", outlining the spiritual basis of your home. Post a photo in your Growfamily Journal. Have intentional discussion about covenants your child may want to explore with you relating to safety; relationships; his/her body; social media; etc. In your Growfamily Journal, record 5 "I promise to..." statements between you & your child.
 <p>WISDOM 10 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pray for God's guidance & peace as you enter a season of allowing your child to make more choices & experience more freedoms; record your feelings about this in your Growfamily Journal. Help your child identify 2 or 3 people that are perceived as "wise" & available to address spiritual questions & offer faith support; record these names in your Growfamily Journal. Explore a student-friendly Bible concordance, learning how to navigate & utilize scripture. Host an energetic Bible study in your home for your child & peers; post a group photo in your Growfamily Journal. In your Growfamily Journal, record Bible verses that have challenged, had an impact or elicited growth in your child.

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 <p>MERCY 11 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore how to support families offering foster care (provide occasional respite care or needed items) or, become a foster family yourself! Keep several bottles of water in your car to share with those in need. Get to know & offer friendship to families with children who are different than your own. Teach intentional eye contact and “hello” when encountering new faces. Donate unused or outgrown items to a charity. Take supplies to a local animal shelter, play with the kittens or walk a rescue dog. As a family, walk around the neighborhood & hand out popsicles, making new friends along the way; take a photo to post in your Growfamily Journal. Spend Thanksgiving serving the homeless at a shelter. Visit a retirement home with Valentine’s Day Cards or Christmas decorations. Check out & participate in “Merry Mercy Christmas” by Growfamily Ministry or Operation Christmas Child by Samaritan’s Purse.
 <p>JOY 12 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to “Thankful Thursdays”; together for one year, handwrite & mail a thank you note to someone who has blessed you or your family. Explore a financial class designed for teens. (suggestion: Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace for Teens) Share & explain your family budget; engage your child somewhat in your financial plan & process. Regularly assess your family belongings & share excess with those in need. Tithe generously to your local church & challenge your child to do the same; make note of the blessings your family receives in this process.
 <p>IDENTITY 13 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For one year (on the first of each month) record a note in your Growfamily Journal a trait or gift that makes your child exceptional; give concrete examples for each; share all 12 at the end of the year or on his or her birthday. Maintain open & honest dialogue with your teen; practice listening & wondering more than advice-giving. Establish monthly movie nights, focusing on films that generate dialogue about personal struggles/decisions, family dynamics, forgiveness & grace; save ticket stubs in your Growfamily Journal. Establish relationships with families of your child’s close friends; take adventures together & put a few photos in your Growfamily Journal. Encourage your child to write a personal letter to him or herself, sharing thoughts on life & faith & the future; seal it (unread) for your Growfamily Journal.
 <p>COMMUNITY 14 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist your child in developing & sharing a creative representation of his or her growing faith (an artistic display; letter to share in front of church family; a dance or reading; a song or poem; an faith-building adventure to share about; etc.); record notes or photos in your Growfamily Journal. Host a celebration dinner in honor of “who your child is in Christ”. Invite those who have spoken life or demonstrated Jesus to him or her. Explore opportunities to be missional together, sharing Jesus with those across the street & around the world.
 <p>AUTHORITY 15 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Together, explore & study leaders in the Bible who exhibited their own authority over God’s vs leaders who aligned under God’s authority. Have your child identify a favorite person who has held authority over them in some way (teacher, coach, parent, boss, leader, etc.); ask him or her to explain why this person earned that trust, appreciation, respect or honor. Ask someone who has held authority over your child (& supports his or her spiritual growth) to write a short note to add to your Growfamily Journal. Have an honest discussion about whether or not your child feels God is in authority over his or her life.

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 <p>FOLLOW 16 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find your child a trusted spiritual mentor; after significant time together, ask his/her mentor to write a note of observation & encouragement to add to your Growfamily Journal. Connect your child with a small group of Christian peers or Bible-based youth group to study the Bible & build spiritual confidence together. (Perhaps leading a group yourself.) Explore podcasts/blogs together that provide solid spiritual insight & understanding.
 <p>GRACE 17 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify your child's current top 3 strengths & weaknesses. List them in your Growfamily Journal, while pointing to 2 Corinthians 12:9. Study/discuss examples of grace throughout the Bible, recognizing that grace is the unifying theme from Genesis to Revelation; talk together about the role of grace in life so far, & the role it might play in the future. Write a short personal narrative to share with your child in your Growfamily Journal, exemplifying a moment of grace you received (or wish you had received) in your own life.
 <p>PURPOSE 18 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have your child illustrate, write about or build something that represents the biggest challenge or fear he or she has; share with your child about times when God has really challenged you. Connect your child with people who are experienced in fields & opportunities that interest your child. Take a risk together--experience something new & challenging that requires dependence on God. Spend time together in prayer over God's plans for your child. Explore & experience ways to serve God; plan a mission/service trip together, recording the experience in your Growfamily Journal.
 <p>LEAD 19 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help your child speak into the lives of kids 5-10 years younger by finding opportunities to serve as a helper, teacher, mentor, camp counselor or small group leader; document these experiences in your Growfamily Journal. Encourage your child to develop & utilize his/her gifts to serve the church, campus organization, local ministry or nonprofit organization. Share podcasts/blogs with your son or daughter that exemplify strong, Godly leadership practices.
 <p>PEACE 20 YR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a letter in your Growfamily Journal to your child, celebrating how God has prepared him or her to share Him with the world; thank your child for how God has been revealed to you in the process. Prepare a "rites of passage" dinner with loved ones to mark this important time of "release"; present a gift (devotional/photo frame/etc.), along with your completed Growfamily Journal. Set up time for intentional prayer & discernment about how to best support your child's continued spiritual growth, walk & fruit-bearing opportunities. Seek relationships with other couples/friends who are releasing children for mutual support & spiritual comradery. Come alongside (empower, equip & encourage) young couples who are just beginning this journey with their children; gift them with a Growfamily Journal of their own!