

THE GOSPELS
Jesus tells 12 men to follow Him, and they become His disciples.

SAY THIS:
Who can you follow?
YOU CAN FOLLOW JESUS.

 **DO THIS:**



MORNING TIME

When you go into your child's room, say, "Good morning, sweet boy/girl! Who's ready to follow Jesus and love our friends? (Pause.) I am! I'm going to start by loving YOU!" (Tickle your child when you say, "YOU.")



DRIVE TIME

Ask your child to pick a toy friend to bring along on the car ride. Tell your child to tell the toy, "Follow me, [toy's name]." Encourage your child to continue telling the toy friend to, "Follow me to the [place where you are going]." Do this everywhere you go. Talk about how we can follow Jesus everywhere we go, too, by loving people the way Jesus loves us.



CUDDLE TIME

Cuddle with your child this month and pray, "Dear God, I want the world to know that I follow Jesus. Help me to love people the way Jesus loves me so they will know. More than anything, I want [child's name] to know I follow Jesus so he/she will follow Him one day, too. I love You, God. In Jesus' name, amen."



BATH TIME

Give your child two bath toys. Tell him/her to pick one of them to be the leader. Show him/her how to pull one across the bath water or "walk" along the side of the tub, while making the other follow. Talk about how we can follow Jesus, and the best way is by loving people the way He loves us.

BASIC TRUTH:

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.

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CATCH THEM DOING IT RIGHT

By Reggie Joiner

As parents, sometimes we are so busy focusing on correcting negative behavior that we forget to acknowledge the things our kids are doing right. But reinforcing the positive behavior we see in our kids is usually a much more effective way to steer them the right direction. And it goes a long way in fighting for their hearts. Here are a few tips:

Be Specific

It's easy to say something general to a kid like, "you have a great attitude." But when a compliment is too general, it doesn't mean as much. Kids want to know you care enough about them to notice specific things they do. So take the time to point out something that is definitive, especially if you hope they will repeat it.

Acknowledge Effort

Look for ways to praise kids for improving in an area or because they worked hard at something. When you encourage effort or determination, you are helping them build a strong work ethic. When you compliment your kids for things they really didn't do, you run the risk of creating an inflated ego.

Establish a Pattern

I know a mom who used dinnertime once a week to tell her kids something positive she had noticed in them that week. Her son secretly told me it was his favorite time of the week. That's because

most of us crave affirmation at some level. Sometimes it helps to establish routine times when you know you will have a consistent opportunity to affirm your kids.

Stretch Your Vocabulary

Words are more powerful than most people imagine. So what we say to our kids over time really does matter. Here are a few phrases to get you started.

You have really improved . . .

(encourage them to keep growing.)

I love the way you . . . *(it will encourage them to celebrate their uniqueness.)*

I noticed how you . . . *(It will encourage them to demonstrate character.)*

Thank you for . . . *(It will encourage them to express gratitude.)*

I can tell how hard you worked . . .

(It will encourage them to develop responsibility)

I bet one day you will . . . *(It will encourage them to find hope.)*

I like hanging out with you because . . . *(It will encourage them to value relationship.)*

You have helped me learn . . . *(It will encourage them to show respect.)*



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