

Your First/Second Grader's Growth

First and second graders are imaginative, industrious, curious, and enthusiastic. They can think for themselves, are interested in how things work, and thrive on encouragement! To foster your child's spiritual growth, practice several of the suggested activities every day.

Mental (Know)

First/Second Grader's Abilities

- thinks literally (concretely); has trouble with abstract concepts
- differentiates between needs and wants
- learns best by connecting new information to known facts
- likes to play "pretend"; may tell "tall tales" and have difficulty separating fact from fiction
- understands basic reading and writing skills; is gaining confidence
- asks questions about nearly everything; reasoning ability greatly improves
- needs hands-on opportunities to explore and discover new things
- expresses his/her thoughts and feelings; likes to explain things
- recognizes similarities and differences between people of other cultures
- discriminates between what is good and bad, right and wrong, etc.
- recognizes that: God established the family; the Bible is God's Book for all people; God's plan is best; God answers prayer; Jesus died to forgive sins and to give new life; Bible stories are actual events that took place long ago; giving and serving at church pleases God

Spiritual Growth Activities

- Continue *Daily Blessing Time* as a family: read a Bible story together, sing a praise song, pray for family and friends.
- When explaining a new Bible concept, start with a familiar topic and form a bridge to the new truth. Reinforce with concrete examples.
- Respond to your child's questions by asking questions—leading him/her to discover truths without being told the answer.
- Heighten his/her learning experiences by using all five senses.
- Maintain your own spiritual disciplines as a parent so you will be filled with God's wisdom and power.
- As you go about daily routines together, call attention to God's greatness. Talk about who God is, what He is like, and what He does.
- Reinforce your child's understanding that God is real, Bible stories are true, and that faith is reasonable and practical.
- Find creative ways to encourage his/her desire to please and honor God.
- Take a field trip where he/she can observe people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Pray for your child's spiritual receptivity, mental development, and enjoyment of learning.



Emotional (Feel)

First/Second Grader's Abilities

- follows rules; is increasingly conscious of fairness
- likes to please others; values positive adult attention; thrives on recognition of success
- works and plays in small group settings; wants to be with friends
- is self-centered, but can usually see other points of view
- gets discouraged when he/she fails to meet expectations
- "catches" the enthusiasm of an energized leader or group
- displays high self-esteem but also is self-conscious
- shows impatience with self and others
- is motivated by receiving immediate rewards
- experiences emotional ups and downs; his/her feelings vacillate

Spiritual Growth Activities

- Help your child identify his/her own emotions so he/she will recognize feelings in others.
- Gradually transfer his/her dependence on you to dependence upon the Lord.
- Talk about God's purpose for the family and how important each member is.
- During challenging moments with your child, maintain a calm spirit. Embrace God's strength and peace as you deal with the situation.
- Motivate him/her to build healthy relationships with people of all ages.
- Use role-play to teach social skills. To see other viewpoints, invite him/her to "walk in someone else's shoes."
- Encourage your son/daughter often. Make sure he/she knows that God is in control, that His plan is good, and He is working things out for the best.
- When your child's actions or attitudes do not please the Lord, guide him/her to repentance and to a fresh start. Always combine affection with correction.
- Build his/her self-worth and emotional stability by using positive words, an encouraging tone of voice, and affirming body language.
- Pray for your child's emotional development, childhood friendships, and family relationships.



Physical (Do)

First/Second Grader's Abilities

- likes an environment where limits are clearly established and observed; tests boundaries to see if rules will be enforced
- stays with a task until finished (may need encouragement along the way)
- thrives when following a structured and predictable schedule
- tends to make messes while working on projects
- has well-developed large muscle coordination and balance
- fine muscle movement improves rapidly
- enjoys moving around and being actively involved
- is competitive and enthusiastic; plays lots of games
- loves to win and be first, but may have trouble facing defeat
- increasingly cares about the quality of his/her work
- enjoys outside activities and playing in an open space with plenty of room

Spiritual Growth Activities

- Provide structure and consistency in your child's daily routine.
- Make church attendance and participation a weekly priority. Get involved in the life and ministry there.
- Vary your child's experience so he/she is exposed to different ways of thinking, feeling, and living. Discuss how each perspective relates to God's world-view.
- Show him/her how to please God with money: giving to God, spending wisely, and saving for the future.
- Train your child to obey you and other adults "quickly, completely, and cheerfully" so he/she will learn to obey God with the same attitude.
- Create a weekly "chore chart" so he/she can learn skills and be a responsible family member.
- Anticipate messes—and expect your child to clean up afterwards.
- Strive to maintain a Christlike role model in your words, actions, and habits. Identify weak areas and invite a trusted friend to keep you accountable.
- Encourage him/her to begin practicing spiritual disciplines (prayer, Bible reading, etc.) without your direct help.
- Pray for your child's safety, health, and for his/her continued physical development.



The next panel explains more!

You probably realize that those three elements are essential for your spiritual progress, too. Your own growth is pivotal to doing what's very best for your child! Every Christian parent who genuinely endeavors to grow in these three ways is on God's path toward raising godly children.

Your Parenting

How can you raise your first or second grader to follow in Jesus' footsteps? Effective parenting intertwaves three components: knowledge + character + conduct.

Twenty-First Century Parenting

Parenting is about daily, ongoing faithfulness—to your God, spouse, and children. There are no shortcuts. Joshua studied and meditated on the Scriptures day and night seeking courage, strength, and wisdom. This is still God's success formula. Regardless of your circumstances, the Lord seeks to be your Companion. He promises to provide strength and courage throughout your parenting journey.

Old Testament Parenting

Joshua took God's words to heart—both as servant-leader of God's people and as servant-leader of his own family. He diligently carried out his duties. In his farewell address, Joshua admonished all Israel to continually fear and serve God. Then he pledged, "...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (24:14-15). From the time he spied out the Promised Land until his death at the age of 110, Joshua faithfully served God.

Your Diligence—God's Companionship

Do you want your child to grow into a fully-devoted follower of Jesus Christ?



This parenting series, **Raising Godly Children**, will assist parents and teachers in the disciple-making process. Each brochure is packed with proven activities that will assist you, along with your local church, in nurturing your child's faith.

Also available:



DiscipleLand Core Bible Curriculum

Challenge children in grades 1-6 to become victorious disciples. Kids are equipped for Christian service through 24 quarters of sequential Bible curriculum. Each lesson is packed with rock-solid Bible content and engaging graphics.



DiscipleLand
Disciples for Life

DiscipleLand.com
800.284.0158

Serving God means serving others. Be sure to model servant-hood to your child—inside and outside your home. Your first/second grader was born to serve. Encourage him or her to look for ways to assist others each day—with a joyful heart!

(Joshua 1:6-9, NLT)

For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Do not be afraid or discouraged.

"This is my command—be strong and courageous!

Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do, so you will be sure to obey everything written in it.

Meditate on it day and night

"Study this Book of Instruction continually.

Then you will be successful in everything you do.

Turning either to the right or to the left.

Do not deviate from them,

Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you.

"Be strong and very courageous.

I would give them.

To possess all the land I swore to their ancestors

for you are the one who will lead these people

"Be strong and courageous,

Lord challenged Joshua, the new leader, with these words: first and foremost as "God's servant." After Moses died, the

Though Moses led God's people for 40 years, he was known God honors everyone who displays the heart of a servant.

Your First/Second Grader—God's Servant!

Your P-O-W-E-R Walk

Parents who embrace the responsibility to raise godly children must assess their own spiritual condition. First and foremost, Jesus Christ calls every believer to follow Him. Walking in Jesus' steps and being His disciple is the Christian's highest privilege and priority!

God invites you to walk with Him every moment of every day. As you practice these five disciplines, the Lord will live His life in and through you! God gladly supplies His incredible P-O-W-E-R as He directs your steps as a parent. (See Isaiah 40:31; Acts 1:8; and Galatians 2:20.)



Pray from Your Heart

Prayer is talking openly with God. He eagerly responds to your requests! (2 Chronicles 7:14; John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15)

Obey Your Loving Shepherd

God is your Shepherd and your Lord. Things always go better when He's in charge. (John 10:27-28; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:23-24)

Worship with Your Church

The Church is your Christian family. Unwrap your spiritual gifts to help you worship God and serve the Church. (John 4:23-24; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 4:10)

Explain Your Faith to Others

Everyone needs to hear about God's love and forgiveness. Share your faith with those around you. (John 3:16, John 14:6; Acts 1:8)

Read Your Bible Daily

The Bible came from God. He speaks to you on every page. (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

You can trust God's wonderful plan. God chose you and your first/second grader for His special purposes. The Holy Spirit wants to guide every step of your journey together (Jeremiah 29:11; John 16:13; Romans 8:28).

Raising Godly Children

What Your First/Second Grader Really Needs



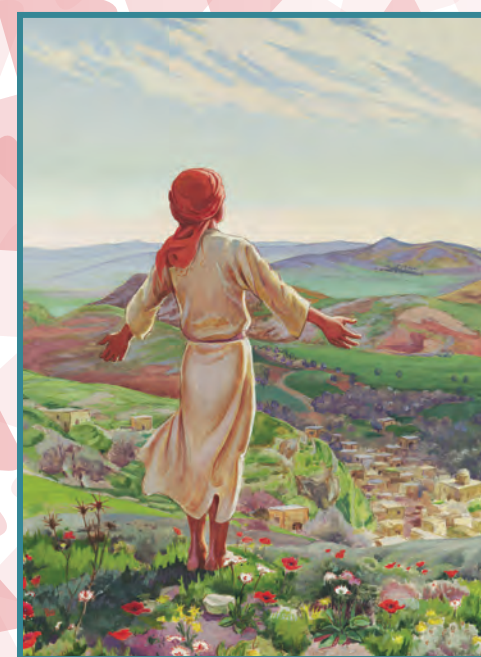
First/Second Graders Need the Lord

A child's basic outlook and attitude toward life is shaped by the way he or she pictures God. Children ask, "What is God really like?" Much of what kids hear about "god" in school, from friends, television, and other sources does not remotely resemble the God who reveals Himself in the Bible.

God delights to unveil His greatness to all who truly seek Him. Knowing the Lord personally and enjoying His presence is the highest privilege of every Christian. The Bible is the one inspired place to find out about God—His personality, attributes, names, abilities, and character.

What You Can Do: Introduce your child to God's majesty and supremacy. The more they know about God's holiness, goodness, glory, and wisdom, the more they will revere and

love Him. Each week, explain and discuss one of God's attributes, names, or traits. Encourage your child to know God truly and intimately. Just as a jeweler delights in each facet of a beautiful diamond, love for God grows as you examine each aspect of His captivating character.



First/Second Graders Need the Bible

Children ask, "What's so special about the Bible?" Billions of beautiful and interesting books are printed every year. How is the Bible different? Some children treat God's Word like any other book, missing out on its guidance and power.

The Bible stands alone, God's only Book—His inspired, relevant, and life-changing message. God has preserved His Word through the centuries so that it might continue to speak to us today and transform us tomorrow.

What You Can Do: Cultivate a deep appreciation for the richness and power of Scripture so the Bible will become your child's trusted companion. A healthy diet for kids includes both milk (basic Bible stories, beliefs, and values) as well as meat (more challenging concepts). Make it your goal to read and apply God's Word more than you ever have before. As you fall in love with the Scriptures, you'll model the behavior that your child needs to see and help to "bring the Bible to life!"



This poster tells how to boost your child's spiritual growth!