

"Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

God Snippets '...meditate on these things.' Philippians 4:8 'meditate' - reflect on, think much about. Proverbs 16:24, Psalm 119:9-16, Psalm 84:1, Psalm 1:1-3

Do you know what our son, Joshua wants for his 5th birthday? Wood. Planks of wood. Why? He wants to build a rocket - a real one! A while ago in the car coming back from holiday, Joshua's face suddenly lit up and he said he had an idea. The next day, he found an old bit of foam, a yoghurt pot, a balloon, some wool, and an egg box. All by himself he sellotaped it together and made a 'rocket'. His idea was to light the wool as a fuse, and that the balloon would explode when the fire reached it, making his rocket fly! I blew the balloon up for him but it burst! 'Never mind,' he said, 'I'll do it a bit different.' We didn't say it wouldn't work, we didn't say he couldn't use real fire. Instead, the whole family went outside with him. Josh put his rocket on the ground, and I lit the fuse for him with a match! We all watched expectantly! Even I was surprised at what happened - I thought nothing would happen! But the yoghurt pot caught fire, then the whole thing went up in flames, and burned impressively for about 5 minutes. Well - Josh got his 'explosion' - he was happy. But his conclusion was that fire by itself does not make a rocket fly! Now he wants to find out what does make a rocket fly.

What I want to say is that God has put a lot in our kids - giftings, talents, interests, dreams. Let's encourage our children in what they are good at, at what they are interested in. Let's build them up, and help them develop in these areas. One day our children could be using their gifts for God. Josh may never build a real rocket or fly one (though he could), but I know that in some way God will use his creativity, his inventive thinking, and enquiring mind. I also know that if I let him dream big now, one day he will be dreaming big for God!

(PS. Josh doesn't want wood for his birthday anymore - he wants metal. He found out that rockets are not made of wood! PPS. Josh loves school, but can't wait to be done with 'normal school' so that he can go on to 'rocket school'!)

Bits and Pieces

++ give your kids a collection of jam-jars, plastic containers etc and lids. They have to find the right lid for the right pot. They will probably enjoy it even more if they are allowed into the cupboard themselves! ++

** wrap up small toys (existing ones not new ones!) in newspaper and play 'presents!' The thrill of opening a present (even if they wrapped it themselves!) is wonderful for a 2 or 3 year old, and they want to do it again and again! **

++ punch holes around the edge of a piece of cardboard. Give child a shoelace to thread through the holes. Alternatively they can use wool with sellotape around the end to make it easier to thread. Punch holes into designs or use different coloured wool/card to make bookmarks, patterns etc. ++

Kiddie Pancakes

225g self-raising flour
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
1 egg
300 ml milk

Mix all the ingredients together. Beat well. Melt a little butter/oil in a frying pan. Drop spoonfuls into the pan to cook. Flip pancakes over when you see bubbles beginning to rise to the surface (a couple of minutes on each side). Alternatives: add a spoonful of cocoa powder and a little extra milk to the last bit of mixture to make a few chocolate pancakes too. Drop the pancake mix into squiggly shapes in the pan to make snake/worm pancakes! Serve with sugar/lemon/chocolate spread/syrup etc. Good for weekend breakfasts!

MUMS WITH JESUS Part 4

More ideas to help us remember Jesus, pray, worship & read the word through the day

- Put photos of family/friends where you will see & remember them. If you get stuck praying the same thing for someone, use the alphabet to help you pray different things each day.
- Hang up an item, that reminds you of someone, in a place where you will often see it. For example, a friend gave me a doll from her country, which I hung up to help me to remember to pray for her.
- Read Bible stories with your kids. A kiddies Bible is still God's word. Ask him to speak to you.
- Learn verses with your children. Have fun.
- Speak in tongues as you get on with your day's work. Takes conscious effort to begin with.
- Start singing/worshipping if you see naughtiness coming or your children are getting too much for you. It changes the atmosphere and calms things down. It reduces confrontation.
- Have Christian magazines/books lying around that can be read 5 mins at a time. (Don't attempt books where you have to go back to the beginning to make sense of things if you're interrupted. You'll get frustrated!)
- Say 'grace' at meal times (and mean it!)
- Soak in the Holy Spirit as you're going to sleep. Ask Him to come & wash through you, and refresh you. Soak as often as possible at other times too. Lie down (with your husband &/or kids!) and ask the Holy Spirit to come.
- Take conscious thought that God is with you through the day.
- Use 'God Snippets' in MKJ to meditate on something of God's word each day.

Postscript to 'Mums With Jesus': I actually wrote the original 'Mums With Jesus' article almost 3 years ago. I had two boys at the time, one just two years old, the other a few months. I was living in Malaysia where most Mums work, and don't stay home. I was lonely, finding it difficult to get along to church meetings, or at least if I did, not finding it easy to connect with God with my little ones around; I felt far away from God, and felt terrible about it. I went on a conference in Thailand, and met up with many friends, Mums like me living in other countries. I was amazed - nearly all of us were feeling the same way. God stirred something in me...He must have a way for all these Mums, and presumably others like us, to be able to stay close to him, even with everything that comes with being a Mum, and living in a foreign country. I began to get excited...God began giving me ideas, and a heart to help other Mums who were feeling like me. Thus, 'Mums With Jesus' was born - I wrote it over the next few months. The ideas were not just for other Mums - they were for me! As I began to put some of them into practice, something fresh happened inside of me - I began touching God's presence again. Now 3 years on and I still don't have long quiet times, I haven't kept up with all the 'Mums with Jesus' ideas, and I'm not much involved in church. I can struggle for months at a time to open my Bible and know what to read (even now I know I need to find a new Bible reading scheme to help me find life in God's word again - any suggestions?)...**BUT**, having said all that...something has changed inside of me - I am quietly conscious of God's presence always with me, and know that it is that relationship with Jesus that is the most important thing. The spiritual highs and buzzes are great when they come, and I look forward to those days again, but Jesus is the most important thing. And He is always there.

Mums.kids.Jesus by Joanna May Chee.

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