

Helping Your Child Hear God's Voice in Prayer

For a parent, life moves at high speed. Time is of the essence. We must work, educate, clean, cook, plan get-togethers, stay fit, volunteer ... the list goes on. Modeling to our children how to be productive with time is important. But just as importantly, we must slow down and show them how to build relationships with people and, most of all, with God.

When my inquisitive daughter was 4 1/2 years old, she asked me, "Mommy, why won't God talk to me? I talk to Him, but I don't hear Him talk to me." As a parent, her words were a blow to my heart. It wasn't because I felt God was deliberately not speaking to my little girl, but because I knew her little heart couldn't comprehend why someone she loves wasn't speaking to her.

I explained that at times we can hear God speak when we read the Bible, sing songs, or when we pray. I mentioned that when she lies down at night, it's a perfect opportunity to be still and tell God that she's listening. God wants time with us, and we have to open our ears to hear His voice.

It was at this point that I wanted to plead with God to say something to her, but I knew this was a growth opportunity in her spiritual journey. She had to find Him for herself in order for authentic relationship to grow. My faith-journey could only take her so far.

A few weeks after that conversation, as my husband and I were tucking her into bed, she told me that God had spoken to her. My heart was overjoyed. She proudly said, "Mommy, I heard God and He said, 'Brooklyn, I love you so much.'"

She had taken the time to listen to God and to wait for Him to speak to her. She was not only learning to hear God, but she

was also learning how to demonstrate love by waiting.

We can teach our children, no matter their age, to worship God by listening for His voice.

Read John 10:27. Talk to your kids about the fact that God knows them and His Word states they can hear Him speaking. Here are some different ways for them to plug into what God is saying:

- As you read Scripture with your children, ask what stands out to them. God speaks to us through His Word.
- Play worship songs in the car. Ask your kids to listen to the words and think about what truths God might be impressing on them through the music.
- As they play outside, teach them to close their eyes and be still. He can speak when they stop and take in His creation.
- Encourage your children to pay attention to what trustworthy people around them speak over their lives. God often uses other Christians to speak His truth to us.
- During bedtime prayers, remind your children that prayer can be a two-way conversation. As they are quiet, they can listen for God to talk back. {eoa}

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