

How to Get Your Kids to Talk About God During Dinner

Dinnertime conversations about God are normal for Tricia Goyer and her five children. An accomplished author of 30 books, Goyer shared with SpiritLed Woman about the importance of talking about God at mealtimes. Goyer is hosting a Facebook chat on May 1 and a giveaway for her new family devotional, *Whit's End Mealtime Devotions*. The devotional, published by Tyndale House, is being released by Focus on the Family's popular radio show *Adventures in Odyssey*. The show has over 2 million listeners in the U.S. and is broadcast in over 40 countries.

Q: Do you have mealtime devotionals with your kids?

TG: For John and I, dinnertime is more than just feeding our bodies. We also see it as a time to feed our kids' souls. We use mealtime to talk about God, to share Scripture, and to use books like *Whit's End Mealtime Devotions*. We don't have a set schedule, and each night is different. I think being prepared to do *something* is key.

Q: How do you manage to have mealtime devotionals with 6 kids?

TG: Our six children range in age from 2 to 23. Our oldest son is married with a baby. Our second and third oldest are university students who live at home, and our three youngest joined our family through adoption. They are ages 5, 3 and 2! When everyone is there, we have a busy table, but even at a young age our children join us in prayer and talking about God's Word. This type of family worship is as regular to them as asking for "More peas, please!"

Q: How do you have a mealtime devotional in a busy household?

TG: The hardest part of mealtime is getting the meal on the

table. Right before dinnertime is a busy time for our large family. Our kids are coming and going, and the little ones like playing outside and are in and out, in and out. Yet we make it a priority to sit together. We always wait for Dad to get home from work. We make sure the television is off, and we all gather around. Once we are settled, you can almost see everyone releasing a big breath—finally, peace and quiet and time to connect with each other and God!

Q: How often do you have a mealtime devotional with your kids?

TG: We talk about God every night. We have a more “formal” devotional time a few times a week. We tailor our devotional books or Scripture verses we’re reading at the younger kids’ level. Just talking about where all the food on the table comes from and how God made it all is an example of a great mealtime conversation.

Q: What results have you seen with mealtime devotionals?

TG: Our family members have a close relationship. We talk to each other about our lives, experiences, joys and struggles. Because of our openness, our kids know they can talk to us about anything or ask any question.

Just last week, our 20-year-old asked her dad how he shares his personal testimony since he’s walked with God since he was a young child. That one question became the topic of the night, and we talked about how each of us sin and need God’s grace. Sometimes the older ones will be talking about their classes at the secular university and how they relate to God, and sometimes the younger ones are talking about the worms they found and how God takes care of them.

Conversations like that are typical, and even the younger kids jump in with their simple thoughts about doing bad and asking forgiveness when they hear us adults talking about it.

Tricia Goyer is hosting a 12-day “Diverting Dinnertime”

giveaway that ends April 30th. Visit her Facebook page for a new giveaway every day. On May 1, she is hosting a Facebook party, where you can ask your own questions about having a mealtime devotion. Your question will qualify you to win some prizes, including copies of Whit's End Mealtime Devotions.

Leilani Haywood is a Kansas City, award-winning writer and columnist. Her work has been published in the Kansas City Star, Metro Voice and other publications. When she's not updating her status on Facebook or Twitter, she's working on her book. Follow her on Twitter @leilanihaywood.