

Talk to God Anytime, Anywhere, With Anyone

Being a stay at home dad offers me little opportunity to evangelize. At least this is what I thought before my 5-year-old son, Colin, asked me a question.

The question came after a discussion between Colin and I where he began with this declarative question, "Daddy, did you know there are only one million, billion, and trillion ... days?"

I could not resist investigating where his thoughts were coming from or going to so I retorted. "What happens after all of these days are done?" To this, he had no reply, but several minutes later, after some contemplation, his question came.

I had so many other things I wanted to do that day; it was Wednesday at about 3 p.m., I was thinking about starting a load of laundry, preparing for dinner, among other things before heading for Bible study. I had just walked into the kitchen to start prepping dinner when Colin followed and asked his question with a light-hearted attitude.

"Daddy, when was the first day?" So many responses flashed through my mind, most of them would have sent him on his way to play with his toys, or harass his brother. However, the Holy Spirit stirred my soul. Seizing the opportunity, I turned around to face Colin, matching the same light-hearted attitude he had, and told him "get your Bible."

We ran to the couch together. I told him the answer to his question was right there in his bible, on the first page. Colin began to sound out the first word, "copyright..." I had to chuckle. For a moment, I forgot I was talking with a 5-year old.

We opened to Genesis 1 and I had Colin read the first verse,

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
"Stop." I said, "Who created the earth?" As I looked deep enough into his eyes, I swear I could see the gears begin to turn as he dissected the sentence. His exuberance was undeniable as he shouted, "God did!"

I continued my line of thought and explained to Colin that "In the beginning," meant before the earth was made, God was there. He was always there. With Colin's intrigue peaked and the Holy Spirit working in me, we turned to the Gospel of John. I asked him to read John 1:1, "In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God." After letting Colin know "the Word" was referring to Jesus we started to investigate the verse.

"Since Jesus is the Word," I said, "where was He when God created the earth?" With the same exuberance as before, Colin replied "He was with God." I showed Colin his reply was correct by having him read the second part of John 1:1, "... the Word was with God." Colin was excited to find out that he had answered correctly. We decided to read John 1:1 again, but this time we replaced the word "Word" with Jesus. This helped Colin understand Jesus was not only God's son, but He was also God.

Being led by the Spirit, we looked at John 3:16, "God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life." To help Colin connect all three of these verses together I asked him "who created the world," to which he replied with his continued exuberance "God did!" We established that God created the world; Jesus was with God before He created the world; and that God loved the world, which He created.

His belief in all of this was a good foundation for a discussion about the second part of John 3:16 about death and eternal life. I pointed out to Colin that whoever believes in Jesus will have eternal life, and they will not die. With a

maturity not typical of a 5-year old and recalling that a couple weeks prior to this we had a death in our family, Colin asked, "But Tommy died didn't he?"

I saw the conversation take a different turn, a shift in focus, from the glory and majesty of God in creation and salvation, to the glory and majesty of God in death. At this point, it was very important for me to remember this was my five-year old son I was talking to, sensitivity to his innocence was important.

Colin has been involved in church for three years through Sunday school, Rainbows, and kids church and has learned that by Jesus' sacrifice our sins have been removed. I reminded Colin of this and connected it for him with all of the other things we talked about and asked him what he thinks this all means. His reply shocked me; he said, "Jesus gave us new life." His attention span was spent. It was at this point I realized this would have to be developed over years of conversations.

This experience with my son has helped me understand evangelism opportunities do not just arise with strangers or co-workers. These opportunities are not all going to be a one-time event. Some will be with our sons and daughters and continue for years, giving information over time as their maturity level changes and grows. Some information will remain with them always, some they will need to be reminded of, but the most important thing I have learned with this experience was my job as father and spiritual head of the household includes being an evangelist to my children.