



February 2018

# parenting CHRISTIAN kids



## Explore the Power of a Name

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To make his name known to your children.
2. To reveal himself to your family in meaningful ways.
3. To help your kids recognize the significance of God calling them his beloved children.

For parents, naming a child is a major responsibility. Many factors go into the decision: *How does this name sound with our last name? Who else has the name? Is there any teasing potential? What is the name's origin or meaning?*

In the Bible, names often have special significance. That's true of Jesus, whose name reveals that he will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

Other names for Jesus reveal his power and personality: Lamb of God, Light of the World, Bread of Life, True Vine, Living Water, Good Shepherd, the Word, the Truth, Cornerstone, Prince of Peace, Immanuel ("God with us"), Rabboni ("Teacher"), and more.

As children grow in their relationship with Jesus, they begin to understand the meaning of his names. They'll also discover that Jesus names *them*, providing an identity that's more significant than any label the world can offer. Jesus calls us his children (John 1:12), his friends (John 15:15), his heirs (Romans 8:17), saints (1 Corinthians 1:2), his temple (1 Corinthians 6:19), new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17), and more.

When children claim their "new names" in Jesus, they're blessed with an identity the world can never take away. Knowing that they are precious lambs of the Shepherd and beloved children of God—who *is* love (1 John 4:8)—provides a foundation for lifelong faith and growth. Read on to discover more about the power of a name.

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## What's in a Name?

The names we use for God affect children's perception of him. To some kids, God is a magical being or an old man with a long white beard. Kids' questions at each age level offer insights into who they perceive God to be. Preschoolers may ask if God loves them and if he's like Daddy or another father figure. Talk about God in terms of your child's immediate experiences and activities. By age 4 or 5, children wonder where God is and how he made things. Share short essential truths, admitting that we can't know everything about God because he's so great. By ages 6 to 8, children are curious about things beyond their environment, and by the preteen years, they want to know why bad things happen. Be prepared for skepticism, ask follow-up questions, and assure kids it's good to keep learning about Jesus.

**Name Meanings** Get a baby-name book or find a website that explains name meanings. Help family members find out what their names mean. Ask: "Why are names important? What's it like to be called the wrong name? Can you imagine having another name?" Read aloud John 10:1-5 as a reminder that God knows each of us by name.

**Naming Game** Read a child-friendly version of the Creation account (Genesis 1 & 2) and talk about the important naming job God gave Adam. Ask: "If you were told to name all the animals, what names would you choose? Why?"

**Seeing Stars** Go outside at night and look at the stars together. Afterward, read aloud Psalm 147:4. Say: "The Bible says God knows how many stars there are *and* that he knows the name of each one. That's because God made all the stars. God knows our names, too—because he made us all. And he knows everything about us." Say a prayer, thanking God for naming and knowing us.

**Good Name Game** Stand in a circle to play this memory game. Say: "Let's take turns saying our names and something we like to

do, while acting it out. Before saying your name and doing your action, you must repeat the names and actions of the people before you." Keep adding actions until recall becomes too difficult. Then read aloud Proverbs 22:1. Ask: "What does it mean to have a good name? How can you make sure your choices and actions give you a good name?"

**Who's Who?** Write the names of Bible people on index cards—one per card. Tape a card on each person's forehead and display a master list of names. Then ask yes-or-no questions to discover your identity. Start out broad, such as "Am I a boy? Am I a girl?" Then get more specific, such as "Am I in Jesus' family?" "Did I build something?" To provide fodder for formulating questions, include factoids about each person on the list.

**Name Freeze** Put a beanbag on each family member's head. Say: "Walk around. If your beanbag falls off, you must freeze in place—until someone says your name and puts the beanbag back on your head." After playing, talk about why it's important to know others' names and to use them in kind ways.

"A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold."  
—Proverbs 22:1, NIV



## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

### Named With a Purpose

Beforehand, gather a variety of rocks and set out painting supplies.

Read from a children's Bible about people who received new names, like: Abram became Abraham, Simon became Peter, and Saul became Paul). Ask: **Why do you think God gave these people new names? If God changed your name, what do you think it might be, and why?**

Read aloud Matthew 16:17-18. Say: **Jesus gave Simon a new name with a special meaning. "Peter" means rock, and Jesus planned to use Peter to help build his church. Jesus has special plans for each of us, too.**

Let family members each choose a rock. Say: **Your rock is unique, just like you. Paint your name on your rock as a reminder that Jesus knows your name and has a purpose for you.** Close in prayer, thanking Jesus for naming us as his friends and helpers. Then enjoy rock candy or rocky road ice cream.

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# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIE

**Title:** *Early Man*

**Genre:** Animation, Adventure, Comedy

**Rating:** Not yet rated

**Cast:** Tom Hiddleston, Maisie Williams, Eddie Redmayne

**Synopsis:** Caveman Dug must unite his prehistoric tribe to save its home from a fierce enemy in this Bronze-Age comedy. *Early Man* is from the creators of *Wallace and Gromit* and *Shaun the Sheep*, and it's filmed in the same style and voiced by an all-British cast.

**Our Take:** Dug is a big-hearted optimist who has great ambitions for his tribe, despite its shortcomings. They must overcome challenges together to achieve more than they dream is possible. Discuss with kids the importance of having self-confidence and encouraging others.



## BOOK

**Title:** *Checked*

**Author:** Cynthia Kadohata

**Synopsis:** Young Conor is consumed with hockey—and so is his father. When the family's beloved dog is diagnosed with cancer, Conor puts hockey on hold so they can afford treatment for their pet. Kadohata, a self-described hockey mom, won the Newbery Medal for her first children's novel (*Kira-Kira*) and the National Book Award for *The Thing About Luck*.

**Our Take:** When Conor must take a break from hockey, he has several realizations about family and friends—and himself. Without his favorite sport, Conor wonders what defines him. Written for ages 10 and up, this book will spark discussions about priorities, talents, and relationships.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

**Young Messengers** Facebook sparked controversy by releasing a Messenger Kids app, targeted to children ages 6 to 12. Parents must approve what messages and photos kids send—and to whom. But some people say the social media giant is trying to hook new users before they're old enough to have a Facebook account. (*nytimes.com*)

**Low-Tech, High Demand** According to Pinterest, many of 2018's top toy trends are refreshingly screen-free and battery-free. Top-ranked "saves" on the site include wooden toys, permanent forts, and pom-pom crafts and décor. (*pinterest.com*)

## QUICK STATS

**Failing Grades** Although 90% of parents believe their grade-school children are at or above grade level in math and science, tests reveal that only about one-third meet that criteria. (*bealearninghero.org*)

**Speech Stats** Between 5% and 8% of children have difficulties with speech or language, and numbers have been on the rise. Some experts say screen-based gadgets are negatively impacting children's ability to develop communication skills. (*various websites*)

## Games, Sites & Apps

### Moss

This new virtual reality game for PlayStation 4 features Quill, a mouse who finds a magical stone and goes on an epic journey to find her family. Players work with Quill to explore new areas and solve puzzles. Rated E for Everyone, this game makes players feel as if they're in a storybook.

### MarsPatel.com

*The Unexplainable Disappearance of Mars Patel* is a podcast mystery series performed by actual kids. It's a mix of *Goonies*, *Spy Kids*, and *Stranger Things*. Although the fast-paced storytelling is geared toward ages 8 to 12, entire families enjoy listening to this podcast together.

### Mussila

This "musical monster adventure" helps kids learn music basics as they search for lost instruments and costumes. Players build skills as they progress through the fun curriculum-based game. Children can even record their own music. The app is geared toward ages 6 to 8.

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