

# Growing Families

## Russell Rhythms

*"...his father read the Scriptures daily to the children, seeking to show them the glory of Christ above all else...He also prayed with them, and for them."*

(Elizabeth Eliot describing her father-in-Law)

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### 1. Our Bedtime Routine

1. Bath kids (unless it's too late)
2. PJs
3. I (Andy) reads or performs the bible story → Sophie reads a simple doctrine book → we all sing a song or two related to what we've read.
4. Kids get into bed.
5. I stay to pray with each kid in their bed. They share prayer points using a sorry/thanks/please pattern.

Notes:

*3. Ideally, all in together, but we divide and conquer if the kids are feral. Joanna and Luke get board books in the lounge room and come back for singing. We strongly encourage singing and dancing as opposed to sitting and listening. Try to get into it*

*5. They struggle to think of Sorry Prayer Points because they have too high a view of themselves. Every night I tell them they're sinful and that God's grace is enough to cover their sin. I always pray for change and forgiveness, for unbelieving friends to follow Jesus, and for a good night's sleep though.*

## **2. Prayer**

Short prayers before meals, when mediating fights/calming kids down, in the car before a drive. Long prayers before bed as above.

## **3. Jesus Game**

I say: Who's the most [insert good quality here] in the bible?

Answer: *Jesus!*

*Examples: loving, kind, trustworthy, patient, gentle, brave, powerful, fair, wise, truthful, obedient, who loves kids the most? Who loves God the most? joyful, generous etc.*

The game is to catch them out with things that are not Jesus.

Examples: stinkiest (Jonah), fattest (Eglon), beautiful (Esther), saddest (Jeremiah), tallest (Goliath), Oldest (Methusaleh)

Can be played anytime, anywhere, the kids love it and it teaches them that Jesus is the best!

## **4. Books**

We read lots of books. Feel try to use the Borrowing Library at church at your own convenience.

## **5. Podcasts/YOTO**

Tiny Theologians - Long drive? No worries! Join Tory and TJ on their suspiciously serendipitous tours around their theologically informed town!

The Biggest Story – Kevin DeYoung

Faith in Kids

Little Pilgrims Progress (Sophie and Nathan loved this when other kids are in their midday rest)

## 6. Songs and singing

- a. Singing is a wonderful thing to give your children and we sing a lot. We are intentional about ear worming the gospel into their minds and hearts through music. We love to sing hymns with the kids, listen to colin and so on. If you are musically gifted, pull out a guitar or sit at the piano and sing together (and invite us around to join you!)
- b. I made up a lullaby I've been singing each night since Sophie, it's yours if you like it:

*"Go to sleep, Go to sleep,*

*Go to sleep, little [kids name],*

*I love you, yes I do, what the bible says is true.*

*Jesus died, Jesus rose, He is coming back again.*

*Jesus died, Jesus rose, and he makes us God's friends"*

- c. We listen to 'Songs for Saplings' to and from swimming lessons on Wednesday. I quiz them throughout the week. We don't make a big thing of it. I'm just buckling them in the car and say: Will God ever die? Answer: No! God lives forever etc. If you want to be more formal about it there are flash cards available [here](#).

Note: The New City Catechism is another good option but we find the songs annoying.

## 7. Long form memorisation

I'm teaching the kids: The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles Creed, The Ten Commandments, Two Ways to Live, and some purple passages. Sophie and Nathan have the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed and the 10 Commandments (with some prompts). Luke has the Lord's Prayer (with prompts) and Joanna can...say "Amen".

Note: The kids enjoy it when we get a good routine and they are mastering it but they hate it when we haven't done it in a while and they are rusty. Phoebe, holidays etc. have thrown me off the horse, and once you're off it's hard to get back on!