ROOTED IN CHRIST · SEVEN-DAY DEVOTIONAL

# Let faith grow in everyday family life.

Build small rhythms of Scripture, listening, prayer and care at home.

Full Bible passages · Guided prayer · A practical step each day

**A little encouragement before you begin.** Start with what is manageable for your household. A little warmth, attention and consistency can make room for growth.

Family and Parenting · Rooted in Christ · 7-day journey

For parents, single parents, carers, grandparents and other adults nurturing children, including households where faith is not shared by everyone. Build a simple rhythm of Scripture, listening, prayer and repair that helps children experience love rather than religious pressure.

Begin the study · Begin Day 1 · Explore ANCC Kids

# Raising children in faith without pressure or fear

A household does not need to resemble a formal church service to explore faith. A short conversation, an honest apology and a practical act of love can make Christian teaching understandable. This guide welcomes single-parent, blended, extended and other caring households, including families whose members hold different beliefs or have different learning and communication needs.

Go directly to the seven-day Bible readings and prayers

## 1. Choose one existing moment

Attach a small practice to something that already happens: a meal, a journey or a bedtime conversation. Ask what would be manageable rather than announcing a demanding programme. A few thoughtful minutes can be enough. Do not treat illness, shift work, disability or caring demands as evidence that a family is spiritually behind.

## 2. Read a short passage together

Use a full reading already printed below and explain unfamiliar words. Ask children what they notice before supplying your preferred answer. Younger children may respond through a drawing or a simple question; older children may want to discuss evidence or disagreement. Adapt the length and format to the person, not an idealised family routine.

## 3. Make questions and refusal safe

Say: ‘You can tell me if you do not understand or are not sure you agree.’ Offer a prayer without requiring everyone to repeat it. Do not connect a child’s belonging, affection or

ordinary privileges to making a profession of faith. Genuine trust is not created by pressure, fear or public embarrassment.

## 4. Let adults practise repair

When you are unkind, name what you did and apologise without blaming the child for your response. Explain a reasonable change you will make. This gives forgiveness and integrity a practical shape. Adult authority does not remove the need for accountability, and a religious explanation must never be used to excuse harm.

## 5. Choose an act of care and review the rhythm

Invite the household to suggest a useful, safe act of kindness. Keep it proportionate and respect the recipient's privacy. After a week, ask what helped and what felt forced. Continue one practice, change another or pause. The aim is growing understanding and love, not maintaining a perfect devotional record.

## Your private next-step worksheet

Our manageable moment; the passage we will read; a question anyone may ask; an optional prayer; one safe act of care; what each person would change next week. Do not ask children to record confessions or private worries on a shared public document.

## Questions you may be asking

## What if my child does not want to join in?

Keep the invitation respectful and do not force words of belief. Ask whether the timing, length or format is difficult. Continue modelling your faith through your own conduct and make room for future conversations without turning every disagreement into a crisis.

## What if adults in the household disagree about religion?

Discuss boundaries between adults and avoid asking children to choose sides. Seek an arrangement that respects each person's beliefs and responsibilities. This guide does not authorise one adult to make secret or coercive decisions about another person's child.

## What should we check before visiting with children?

Read ANCC's current family visitor information and ask about children's arrangements, access and safeguarding. Do not assume a particular activity or support provision will be available on every date. Tell the team what practical information would help, without sending unnecessary private details.

## Continue with relevant ANCC resources

- Family Church in Leeds

- When your teenager is struggling: a step-by-step guide for parents
- Every Child Belongs: Faith and Neurodiversity

You are welcome to explore ANCC at your own pace. Ask about current opportunities; no attendance, disclosure or donation is required to read this guide.

## Go deeper: the Bible study and group discussion

## Teach through ordinary life

Read Deuteronomy 6:4–9 and Psalm 78:1–7 under Days 1 and 5. Faith is shared through repeated conversation and remembered stories, not only a formal lesson. Choose a short Bible story, ask what a child notices and connect it with everyday love. Keep the practice appropriate to age, attention and additional needs. A five-minute conversation received with warmth can be more fruitful than an ambitious routine that leaves everyone tense or ashamed.

## Let your example make the teaching believable

Read Ephesians 6:1–4 and James 1:19–20 under Days 4 and 3. Adults carry responsibility for the atmosphere they create. Listening, truthful apologies and calm boundaries help children see that faith affects real conduct. Do not use God as a threat or treat a child's question as rebellion. This guide does not endorse physical punishment, humiliation or coercive spiritual practices. When you get it wrong, name your conduct and repair it without asking the child to manage your emotions.

## Make room for each person and for help

Read Mark 10:13–16 under Day 2. Jesus receives children rather than treating them as interruptions. Family discipleship should include children's voices, not demand polished answers. Single parents, blended families, carers and households under strain may need practical support more than another task. Respect a child's privacy when sharing stories online or requesting public prayer. You can seek help and simplify the routine without failing as a family.

## Discuss and apply

1. What do the readings suggest about learning through daily life?
2. What does your present household rhythm make possible?
3. When does adult behaviour contradict the message children hear?
4. How can children ask questions without fear?

5. What practical support would make your household less isolated?

**Your practical exercise:** Choose three moments this week for a brief family conversation. Read a short Gospel scene, ask What do you notice about Jesus?, invite one question, and offer a one-sentence prayer. A child may listen without speaking. End with one act of kindness you can try together. After the week, ask what felt helpful and adjust the routine rather than measuring the household against another family.

**For leaders:** This is an adult/carer guide, not a safeguarding substitute or a programme for interviewing children. Follow ANCC safeguarding procedures if a child discloses harm. Do not promise secrecy, shame a parent publicly or pressure children to disclose personal experiences. Seek appropriate practical or professional support when needed. In immediate danger, contact emergency services.

## Seven days of reading and prayer

The passages are printed in full for adults to read first and adapt the conversation to a child's age and needs. Prayers and declarations are invitations, not compulsory family performances. The decrees express Scripture-shaped hope and commitment; they do not guarantee a child's future choices or replace care and protection.

### Day 1: Faith in the ordinary

**Read Deuteronomy 6:4–9.**

> [4] Hear, Israel: The LORD is our God. The LORD is one. [5] You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. [6] These words, which I command you today, shall be on your heart; [7] and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. [8] You shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. [9] You shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates.

**Reflect:** The passage places love for God within the rhythm of home and daily life. You do not need to create a second classroom in the living room. A question on the way to school or a brief prayer at bedtime can open meaningful conversation. Start with a rhythm the household can actually sustain.

**Consider:** Which ordinary moment could hold a gentle faith conversation?

**Pray:** Father, help our household notice you in ordinary life. Give us a simple rhythm of Scripture, conversation and prayer shaped by love. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** With God's help our home can become a place where faith is shared with warmth and honesty.

**Practise:** Choose one five-minute moment for a Bible story this week.

## Day 2: Children are welcome

**Read Mark 10:13–16.**

> [13] They were bringing to him little children, that he should touch them, but the disciples rebuked those who were bringing them. [14] But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation and said to them, "Allow the little children to come to me! Don't forbid them, for God's Kingdom belongs to such as these. [15] Most certainly I tell you, whoever will not receive God's Kingdom like a little child, he will in no way enter into it." [16] He took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

**Reflect:** Jesus challenges those who would keep children at a distance. Their worth is not postponed until they behave like adults. Notice whose needs are overlooked in family or church routines. Attention, accessibility and patient explanation can communicate welcome more clearly than telling a child repeatedly to be quiet.

**Consider:** How does a child in your care experience being heard?

**Pray:** Jesus, teach us to welcome children as you do. Help us notice their questions, needs and gifts with patience and respect. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** Children are worthy of welcome, protection and attentive love.

**Practise:** Give a child an uninterrupted opportunity to share something important to them.

## Day 3: Be quick to listen

**Read James 1:19–20.**

> [19] So, then, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; [20] for the anger of man doesn't produce the righteousness of God.

**Reflect:** Listening comes before speaking. In a rushed household, adults may answer the question they assume was asked rather than the one a child meant. Pause and ask for clarification. Calm listening does not remove boundaries; it helps you understand what

response is needed and keeps correction from becoming an angry performance.

**Consider:** When do you most often interrupt or assume?

**Pray:** Lord, slow my reaction and deepen my attention. Help me hear before correcting and set boundaries without humiliation or anger. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** By God's grace I will listen before reacting and speak with care.

**Practise:** Repeat back what you heard before offering an answer.

## Day 4: Repair makes love visible

**Read Ephesians 6:1–4 and Colossians 3:21.**

> **Ephesians 6:** [1] Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2] "Honour your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise: [3] "that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth." [4] You fathers, don't provoke your children to wrath, but nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
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> **Colossians 3:21:** Fathers, don't provoke your children, so that they won't be discouraged.

**Reflect:** Instructions to children stand beside responsibilities for adults. Spiritual authority does not excuse harshness. When you have spoken or acted wrongly, apologise without adding a reason that blames the child. Repair teaches that truth matters more than protecting the adult's image. Follow the apology with a change the child can observe. These passages never require a child to accept abuse or keep harmful behaviour secret.

**Consider:** Is there an apology you need to make without excuses?

**Pray:** Father, give me humility to acknowledge my mistakes. Help me repair harm and build a home where correction is joined with patient love. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** I do not need to appear faultless to model honest repentance and dependable love.

**Practise:** Offer one specific apology where needed, without asking the child to reassure you.

## Day 5: Remember real goodness

**Read Psalm 78:1–7.**

> [1] Hear my teaching, my people. Turn your ears to the words of my mouth.
> [2] I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings of old,
> [3] which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.
> [4] We will not hide them from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, his strength, and his wondrous deeds that he has done.
> [5] For he established a covenant in Jacob, and appointed a teaching in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children;
> [6] that the generation to come might know, even the children who should be born; who should arise and tell their children,
> [7] that they might set their hope in God, and not forget God's deeds, but keep his commandments,

**Reflect:** The psalm calls one generation to tell the next about God's works. Tell honest stories, including the help you received and the questions that remain. A family testimony need not exaggerate a miracle or erase hardship. Children can learn gratitude without being asked to deny disappointment or imitate an adult's emotions.

**Consider:** What truthful story of help could you share?

**Pray:** God, help us remember your goodness honestly. Give our children freedom to ask questions and grow in understanding at their own pace. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** We can remember God's faithfulness without pretending that life has always been easy.

**Practise:** Share one true story of kindness or answered prayer and invite questions.

## Day 6: A household that serves

**Read Luke 10:25–37.**

> [25] Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" [26] He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"
> [27] He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." [28] He said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live." [29] But he, desiring to justify himself, asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?"

> [30] Jesus answered, “A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell amongst robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. [31] By chance a certain priest was going down that way. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. [32] In the same way a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. [33] But a certain Samaritan, as he travelled, came where he was. When he saw him, he was moved with compassion, [34] came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. He set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. [35] On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the host, and said to him, ‘Take care of him. Whatever you spend beyond that, I will repay you when I return.’ [36] Now which of these three do you think seemed to be a neighbour to him who fell amongst the robbers?”
>
> [37] He said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

**Reflect:** Mercy becomes visible through attention and action. Choose a small family act of kindness that fits your capacity and respects the recipient’s dignity. Do not turn service into content for public display or expect children to solve adult problems. A meal, message or shared practical task can make neighbour-love understandable.

**Consider:** Who could receive a modest act of care from your household?

**Pray:** Jesus, make us attentive neighbours. Help us serve together with humility, without seeking praise or overlooking our own family’s limits. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** With God’s help our faith will become practical kindness beyond our own home.

**Practise:** Plan one age-appropriate act of service without photographing the recipient.

## Day 7: Keep a gentle rhythm

**Read Galatians 6:9–10.**

> [9] Let’s not be weary in doing good, for we will reap in due season if we don’t give up. [10] So then, as we have opportunity, let’s do what is good towards all men, and especially towards those who are of the household of the faith.

**Reflect:** Perseverance is not the same as maintaining an exhausting schedule. Review what helped your family and what created unnecessary pressure. Keep the useful practice,

reduce the burden and seek support where needed. Spiritual growth is not a competition between households. A small rhythm repeated with love is worth continuing.

**Consider:** What should you keep, simplify or ask help with?

**Pray:** Father, give our household patient hope. Help us continue what is good, simplify what is too heavy and receive support without shame. Amen.

**Declare / decree:** Our family can grow through faithful small steps, not comparison or perfection.

**Practise:** Agree one manageable practice for the next week and one source of support.

## Continue as a family

Ask about current children's arrangements before visiting. Continue with Learning to Pray, Finding a Church Home, or the relationships hub. For practical or pastoral support, contact ANCC Care.

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