

# ZION'S FAITH AT HOME MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

## theParentLink<sup>SM</sup>



October 2011

## Protect Kids From False Beliefs

Many parents worry about shielding their children from dangerous non-Christian influences. This is especially true at Halloween, which has become a \$6 billion holiday. Because of the costumes and candy, most children adore Halloween. But parents face a dilemma: How much should children participate in a holiday that focuses on scary images often glamorizing death and the occult?

Avoiding Halloween entirely is one option. Another is providing Christian alternatives such as harvest events. Parents can also provide children with a faith-based understanding of Halloween. You can use the holiday to discover the differences between God's truth and false beliefs. Here are ways to start:

**Explore children's fears regarding death.** Kids often ask tough questions that make adults uncomfortable. When topics such as death and the devil arise, let your home be a safe place where children can express their fears. Then turn to the Bible for answers.

**Share with children the history of Halloween.** The holiday first marked the eve of All Hallows or All Saints' Day, when Christians remember saints who've died. Talk about special family members or friends who are now in heaven with Jesus. Also share that all who believe in Jesus are called to be saints, or holy people (see Romans 1:7).

**Put on the "armor of God" as protection against evil.** Read aloud Ephesians 6:10-20 and discuss how God keeps us safe. Let children dress up in this armor; for example, wear the belt of truth to recognize Satan's lies and resist his temptations.



### Trick or Truth?

- According to a recent Gallup Poll, one in 10 Americans objects to celebrating Halloween because of religious beliefs. In a poll at about.com, 40% of respondents said Halloween activities are harmless and fun.
- At edutopia.org, 52% of poll respondents said public schools should celebrate Halloween and that children whose parents object should be excused from the festivities. Another 41% said an alternative seasonal festival should include everyone.

## PowerSource



### Ask God:

1. To help you teach and remind children of God's truths.
2. To protect your children from evil forces and activities.
3. To help your children learn to resist Satan's temptations.

## Parenting Insights

Start now to safeguard children against being misled by the false teachings of cults.

1. **Love and accept children unconditionally.** Show them that church is the place to find God's love and acceptance.
2. **Teach children to think critically.** They must know what they believe and why.
3. **Expect and encourage kids to question their faith.** Doubts help spur faith growth.
4. **Teach kids to understand the Bible.** Always look at the context of verses.
5. **Talk to children about false religions.** Otherwise, they'll be unprepared to evaluate and respond to cults when they're out on their own.

**Pray and trust the Holy Spirit.** God promises to keep his children safe in his truth.



## For Girls Only!

Preschool – 5<sup>th</sup> grade come dressed up in your favorite princess, popstar or farmer costume and join us for an afternoon of fun!

Sunday October 24<sup>th</sup> from 12:00pm – 2:00pm in the fellowship hall.

We will eat lunch, play games and watch

Veggie Tales – Princess and the Popstar”.

It’s sure to be lots of fun!

Please sign up on the Faith at Home bulletin board and invite your friends!

The cost for this event is \$5.



The offering focus for October is Baby Supplies. These items can include

diaper cream, baby lotion, diapers or wipes. These items will be donated to the Pediatric Interim Care Center in Kent.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of these babies.



## Covington Aquatic Center

October 9<sup>th</sup> from 3:00pm to 4:00pm

Cost is \$3.00 per person

Sign up on the Bulletin board outside the Fellowship hall

*Children under 6 must have an adult with them in the water*

## Family Experience: **Nothing But the Truth**

Use these activities to discover where we can find real truth. The first works well with younger children, and the second works well with older children.

- Pumpkin Matchup**—Remove the seeds and pulp from two pumpkins. Carve them together, reserving large pieces from your designs. Place all the pieces on a tray in the center of the room. Place the carved pumpkins at opposite ends of the room. Then form two teams and have teams each stand by a pumpkin. Say: “Let’s complete our pumpkins. Race to match your team’s pieces to your pumpkin. If a piece doesn’t fit, return it to the pile. Afterward, say: “It isn’t always easy to find the right match for things.” Read 1 John 2:5. Say: “Jesus wants us to do things that match up with the Bible. Following Jesus makes us complete.”
- Searching for the Truth**—Fill a large tub with ice cubes and 20 or 30 clear marbles. Have family members try to pick up the marbles with their bare toes. Ask: “How easy or difficult was this task? How were the marbles different from or similar to the ice? How is distinguishing between marbles and ice cubes with your toes like or unlike deciding what’s true and what isn’t?” Say: “What’s false often looks or feels like truth. Just as our feet got cold and numb from the ice while we were looking for the marbles, sometimes false things can make us numb to the truth. The best way to know truth is to pick up and hold on to God’s Word.” Read aloud Psalm 119:105 and discuss ways that God’s Word lights our path and warms our hearts. Then enjoy a warm snack.



## Model healthy priorities and time management



With teens going back-to-school, back to sports and back to busy lives- they can start to feel the affect of stress. Stress often results from out-of-whack priorities and poor time management—two areas many adults struggle with also. To gauge the priorities of Christian teenagers, *Group Magazine* surveyed 20,000 kids who represent a cross-section of youth group members. Although kids listed “praying and developing a relationship with God” as their top priority, youth leaders say kids’ actions don’t seem to back that up. “They’re so busy with school, work, sports, and so on—and their parents encourage it—that it seems the first things to get dropped are the items listed as priorities,” said a Pennsylvania youth leader.

Kids’ crazy schedules get a lot of blame for their stress and upside-down priorities. But now some research says hyper-busyness isn’t necessarily a bad thing—as long as teenagers’ goals and activities are clear and harmonious. Psychology professor Robert Emmons found that health and quality of life suffer when young people have what he calls “conflicting strivings.” Teenagers whose activities revolve like spokes around a “hub” (such as faith in Christ) are likely to thrive. Emmons’ team discovered that kids who pursue many strivings that are all connected somehow to their spiritual commitments generally have less conflict among them. Because their day-to-day goals center around their faith in God, these young people experience more harmony in their life, less stress, and less illness. This issue of “The Parent Link” explores ways you can help kids—and yourself—keep priorities in line and wisely use God’s gift of time.

### *Great Questions* to Ask Your Kids

**Dive deeper into kids’ thoughts about priorities and schedules by asking:**

1. What are the three most important things in your life? Are they evident by how you spend your time? Explain.
2. How are your priorities similar to or different from those of your friends?
3. How well do you manage time? What would you do with more hours in each day?
4. What are our family’s priorities, and how might they need to be rearranged?

## Living Word

### Sixth-Eighth Graders

The focus of Living Word is to make Jesus the center of our youth’s life:

**inWord:** Digging deeper into God’s Word,  
**upWord:** Living life in daily worship and prayer,  
**outWord:** Serving others in Christ’s name and  
**forWord:** Sharing Jesus Christ with other people.

October 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>: Living Word Fall Retreat  
We still have space if you haven’t signed up yet!

October 2<sup>nd</sup>: Small Group  
October 9<sup>th</sup>: The Birth of Christ and The Magi  
Large Group

October 16<sup>th</sup>: Small Group  
October 23<sup>rd</sup>: Simeon and Anna and The  
Wilderness Temptations

October 30<sup>th</sup>: Reformation Event

## Going Deeper

At [SimplyYouthMinistry.com](http://SimplyYouthMinistry.com), youth ministry veteran Jim Burns offers tips for helping busy people reprioritize their lives:

Time is short, life is precious, and money can't buy happiness. All we have is *right now*, and how we use that time is a tithe, of sorts, to the Lord. Of the 24 hours—the 1,440 minutes—available to us each day, parents actually spend very little time with their kids. In fact, the average father spends only *3 minutes a day* with his kids! If your priorities are out of whack, try these things:

- 1. Ruthlessly eliminate stress.** No one can get their priorities straight if they're constantly living "under the gun." If you feel so overwhelmed that you can't keep your priorities in order, first lighten your load.
- 2. Make daily solitude a priority.** Don't feel guilty or like you're "avoiding your family" for making time for yourself each day. It's a must, even if it's 15 minutes in the morning for quiet time with the Lord. No one will miss you if you "take 5" for yourself every now and then.
- 3. Develop a "blank slate" approach.** Begin and end each day with no agenda. Come before the Lord with open hands, mind, and heart. Let him set your day in motion and then give everything back to him at night—all your worries, cares, successes, and failures (see Psalm 91:1).
- 4. Give your family your best, not your "emotional leftovers."** It's very noble to "give your all" at work. But your family deserves the best you have to offer. They need you healthy, rested, happy, or, more importantly, *content*. No "table scraps" from your heart for them. Give them the main course. Then watch how your priorities change by themselves.

**Don't wait for someone else to do this for you.** This is your life; these should be your priorities. Reprioritizing your life doesn't have to be difficult. But if you're like most of us, it does need to be done every now and then. And, with God's help, you can do it!

## Senior High Youth!

Faith Café:  
Building Faith  
Exploring Faith

We start the new year out with a bang! Do you know what other religions teach? Do you want to know more about other religions? Well, we have the curriculum.

September 25<sup>th</sup> we started out discussing Atheism!

October 2<sup>nd</sup> we learn about Judaism.

October 9<sup>th</sup> we learn about Islam,

October 16<sup>th</sup> we learn about Eastern Religions.

October 23<sup>rd</sup> we end this series with Mormonism.

Come Gather, Pray, and Scripture! G.P.S.



October 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>: Living Word Fall Retreat for 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade  
October 9<sup>th</sup>: Youth Swimming Party  
October 23<sup>rd</sup>: Princess and the Popstar for Girls Only!  
October 30<sup>th</sup>: Reformation Sunday