

RAISING FAITH-FILLED KIDS

a parent page

Focus on Faith

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

In Jesus' time a shepherd had a hard, lonely life filled with danger. Jacob speaks about the long, cold nights he endured. David describes killing a lion and a bear that came to raid his flock. The threat of predatory animals, of drought in the summer, and of freezing rains in the winter was constant. The image of the Good Shepherd is that of someone who pays constant attention to the needs of the flock in spite of the danger. It is also the image of someone who is willing to risk everything to bring the one stray home. Jesus cares for each of us with that same constancy.

Dinnertime Conversation Starter

Ask your child to recall with you some times when you were aware of Jesus' loving care for your family.



Spirituality in Action

Letting go of hurt feelings is a practiced art. Try using this analogy with your child the next time you notice that he or she is angry with someone:

"Being angry with someone is just like carrying a big rock. When you hold on to the bad feeling, it makes you heavy in your heart. It weighs you down. But what would happen if you just opened up your hand and let the angry feeling go, like dropping the big rock?" Mention that Jesus is always ready to take us by the hand. As we hold on to him, he will help us forgive.

Focus on Prayer

Your child is learning the story about Jesus, the Good Shepherd, which illustrates his caring for us. Invite your child to share the story with you, while encouraging discussion about how it relates to his or her own life. Pause silently for a few moments, and think about how Jesus always rescues us if we stray.

www.findinggod.com



Hints for at Home

Make apologizing and forgiveness important in your family. Parents, especially, should find opportunities



to model good behavior. Talk with your child about what it means to apologize, and explain that in apologizing we are asking for forgiveness. Together list what we say when we apologize:

- I am sorry.*
- I apologize.*
- I am sorry I hurt you.*
- Will you forgive me?*
- It is my fault.*