

“Friendship with Jesus”

“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends...” (John 15:15). Jesus calls us “friend”. Do we consider Jesus to be our friend? And, how do we teach our children to be best friends with Him?

Ways to Introduce Your Child to Friend Jesus

- Modeling
- Daily Family Worship
- Sabbath School, Church Attendance, and Sabbath Afternoons
- Daily Interactions
- Prayer time

Benefits Having a Forever Friendship with Jesus

What are the benefits of making Jesus your child’s forever friend? Studies show the beneficial consequences of religious belief and practice on physical and mental health and on relationships. A growing body of empirical research demonstrates that a family’s religious involvement directly benefits the entire family in very significant ways.



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Benefits to the Entire Family Unit: (David Dollahite & Thatcher, 2005)

- Divorce rates are lower and marital satisfaction and quality scores are the highest among religiously involved couples.
- Religious practices are linked with family satisfaction, closer father-child relationships, and closer parent-child relationships.
- There is less domestic violence among more religious couples, and religious parents are less likely to abuse or yell at their children.
- An active religious life promotes involved and responsible fathering and is associated with more involved mothering.
- Greater religiosity in parents and youth is inversely related with many high-risk behaviors, all of which have potential to greatly influence current and future family relationships.

Benefits to Your Child:

1. It promotes their eternal happiness.

When your child has Jesus as their friend, they will discover joy in Jesus Christ. They will understand that true lasting happiness is not in all the "stuff" the world has to offer but in knowing Jesus.

2. It helps them make sense out of life.

Your child will come to understand God as the Creator, how sin entered the world, God's gift of salvation, and look forward to their heavenly home that waits.



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3. It's their best chance to accept Christ.

Research has proven that children tend to be more receptive to the gospel than any other age group. Take advantage of those young years to introduce your little ones to Jesus.

4. It can help counter-balance worldly influences.

Children need positive influences to tip the scale in this secularized world. A friendship with Jesus helps them focus on the spiritual rather than the secular.

5. It can help them learn to love others.

The second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor. We must teach this as a way of life, because it doesn't come naturally. A love for Jesus flows out to others.

6. It is something fun to do.

Do you know who invented fun? God did. Do you know why? For His own glory. While entertainment and fun seeking can become an idol, we should not think God is against fun. Being friends with Jesus is fun and it is your responsibility as a parent to focus on the joy of service, the beauty in nature, and the happiness that comes from knowing Jesus.



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7. It helps them with their relationships/friendships.

Exposing your child to those who share your family faith values will assist them in their choice of friends. This is a key benefit to your child as you have the opportunity to guide them in establishing positive relationships.

8. It gives children special memories.

Think back to when you were a child. Can you remember a special Sabbath School teacher or other church related event? Things like crafts made in Vacation Bible School and songs learned in Sabbath School can become a lasting memory. Or, perhaps it is a favorite family worship activity or the way that you said family prayers. When Jesus is your child’s best friend you expose them to many memory making opportunities.

9. It allows them to make friends with adult volunteers in a safe environment.

In our culture child safety is a constant concern, and rightly so. But there is still great value in kids finding trusted adults. Your practices as a family will expose them to significant adults such as a pastor, Sabbath School teacher, or other family friend.



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A forever friendship with Jesus for your child begins with you. Take some time for self-reflection. Would your child say that Jesus is your best friend?

Daily family worship may seem like another thing to add to an already over scheduled day. Consider ways that you can enhance the experience for your family and make it something the children eagerly anticipate all during the day.

Attendance at Sabbath School and church on a regular basis is important to the spiritual health of the entire family. Sabbath afternoons are a special time to enjoy each others’ company and to connect with Jesus.

Common daily activities provide numerous opportunities to teach your child about Jesus. As a parent you need to be open and look for those moments and not allow them to pass. Ultimately, by having a forever relationship with Jesus Christ, your child will experience benefits that will last a lifetime and carry them through eternity.

References

Dollahite, D. and Thatcher, J. (2005) “How Family Religious Involvement Benefits Adults, Youth, and Children and Strengthens Families.” The Sutherland Institute. Retrieved from: www.sutherlandinstitute.org



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My Time Alone with God



Today's Date: _____

Verse I choose today is: _____

Stuck and need help finding a verse? Look up this one: Psalms 62:8 "Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah"



Who is this verse talking about?
And **when** was this verse taking place?

Does your Bible have an introduction page at the beginning of each books? What about at the beginning of each chapter?



What is this verse saying?

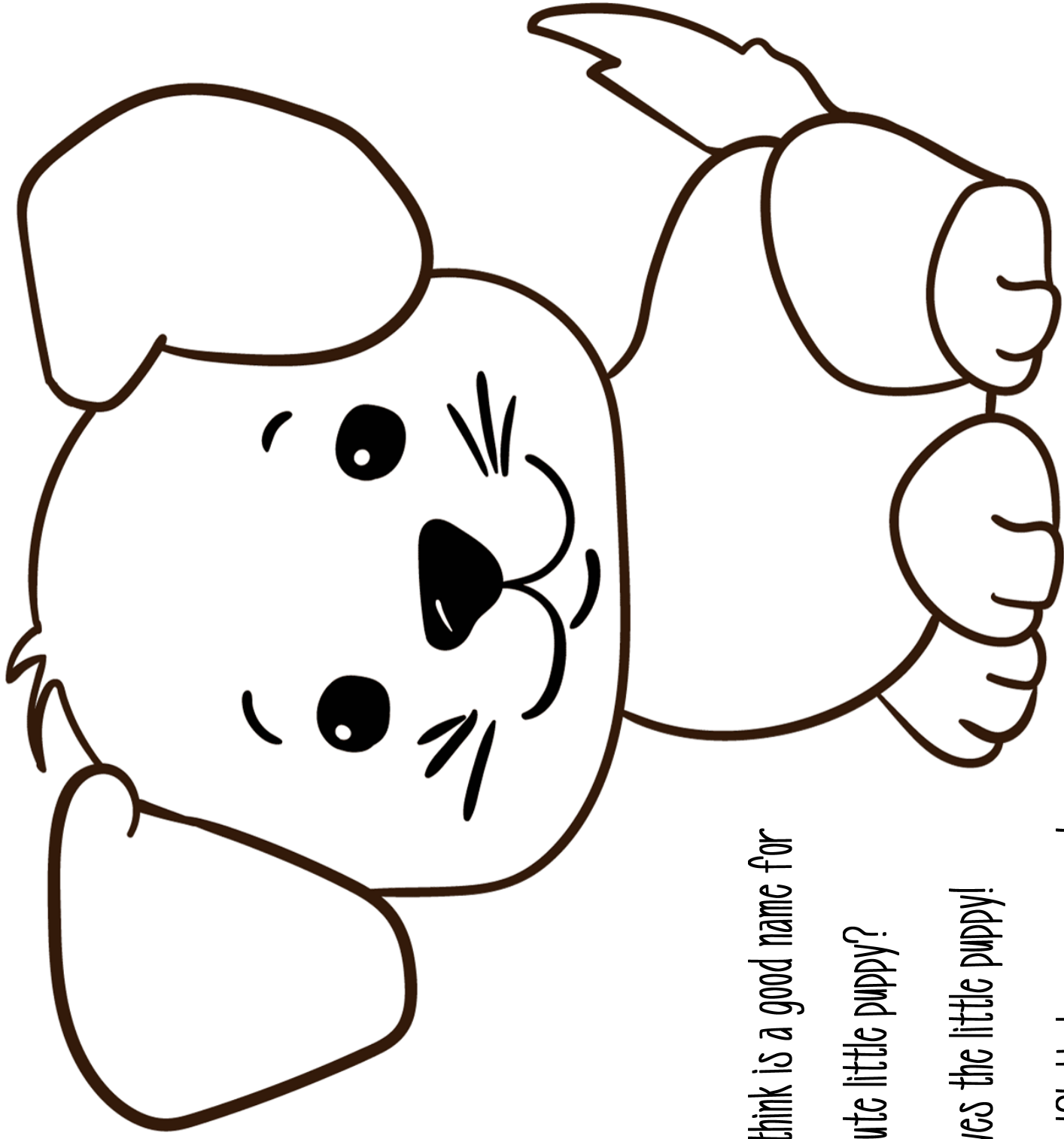
Think about this verse...Think some more. Ready? Write down what you think the verse is saying to you. Now ask your mom and dad, or your gramma or grampa what they think the verse means. Does it match what you think? Discuss what you wrote.



How are you going to apply this verse to your life today?

I'm going to _____





What do you think is a good name for
this cute little puppy?

Jesus loves the little puppy!
But guess what?! He loves you more!

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