



Raising Children Who Love Jesus Devotion

[Please provide: 5, 11-inch by 14-inch sheets of white poster board, black marker]

(Prior to presenting this devotion, please print the letters of the word “TRUST,” on separate sheets of poster board, one letter per sheet.)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths (Proverbs 3:5–6).

Becoming a parent is a wonderful blessing and the start of a crazy journey filled with lots of twists and turns along the way. On every step along this path, God is with us. On this journey, because there are situations where both parents and children are faced with the unknown, parents are led by the Holy Spirit to trust in God and not on their own understanding. I know on my own journey, my biggest prayer is that my three children would love Jesus and follow Him. I’ve had to trust in God to help me show my children what it means to love and follow Him.

The word “TRUST” can serve as an acronym to remind us what the Bible says concerning raising kids who love Jesus.

(Hold up the poster board with the letter “T.”)

T – **Teach** your children who Jesus is. Jesus tells us, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6)*. From the time your child is baptized, the Holy Spirit promises to grow and nurture the faith relationship with the Triune God that He has established in your child. The Holy Spirit is your partner as you teach your children His Word. Read the Bible with them. Show them Jesus’ redeeming love and grace in every Bible account you read together. Pray with them. Give your children opportunities for other Christians to teach them, too. Having other Christian adults in their lives has been a huge blessing to me and to my children. I love that they have someone besides their parents whom they can go to and trust to tell them the truth and to guide them in God’s Word.

(Hold up the poster board with the letter “R.”)

R – **Remind** them that God forgives their sins for Jesus’ sake. As Peter preached, *To him, all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name (Acts 10:43)*. Our children are not perfect. Many times they will mess up and make poor decisions. They need to know there are consequences when they do. However, they also need to know they are forgiven. They need to know they have a forgiving Father in heaven who loves them very much. They also need to know that you forgive them and that you are there for them, no matter what.

(Hold up the poster board with the letter “U.”)

U – **Understand** that it's hard to raise Christian children. God's Word reminds us, *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord* (Ephesians 6:4). Children need guidance and rules to follow. Parents are called by God to discipline their children when an action calls for it. For their own safety, sometimes we have to tell our children "no." None of this is easy. God our Father disciplines us when we need it. Proverbs 3:11–12 says, *My son, do not despise the LORD'S discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.* When you sometimes feel like the "bad guy," remember that Christian discipline is an important way that we show our children we love them. Remember also that we get to reward our children. We get to celebrate with them in great moments in their lives. We get to teach them about Jesus. We get to love them unconditionally.

(Hold up the poster board with the letter "S.")

S - **Show** them Jesus. *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God* (Ephesians 5:1–2). Children model what they see. If they see us reading the Bible, they will. If they see us being kind to the crabby lady at the checkout, they will be kind to their crabby classmate. If they see us volunteering in the community or at church, they may volunteer at school or help teach Sunday school. As our children learn to recognize and embrace the talents and gifts with which God has blessed them, we pray they will be led by the Holy Spirit to use them to serve Him and other people.

(Hold up the poster board with the second letter "T.")

T – **Tell** them Jesus loves them. *In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins* (1 John 4:9–10). Assure your children that Jesus hears them when they pray. Tell them about the ways God has blessed you and continues to bless you. Encourage your children to recognize the ways God is blessing them and to thank Him for all His work in their lives. Regularly tell your children that you love them and that you are blessed that God chose you to be their parent.

Prayer: Dear God, raising children who love and trust in You is a challenge. We want our children to love You and to know that the only way to heaven is through faith in You. Please help us trust in You to guide all of our decisions, including those concerning parenting. Lead us to look to You and to Your strength as we carry out our vocation as parents. Thank You for the blessing of all the children in our lives. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we faithfully teach them of Your saving love found in Jesus alone. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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Written by Anne Hartman, Eau Claire, Wisconsin
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