

# Giving Your Child a Gospel-Immersed Life

THE GOSPEL TOOLKIT

Awana®



If you've ever sat through a foreign language class, you know how hard it is to learn while sitting in a classroom and staring at a textbook. Even though the instructor speaks fluently and passionately teaches about the country and culture they love, it's challenging to learn a language without being completely immersed in it.

Once I sat on an airplane behind a bilingual couple and their young son. Every time the mother said something to her son, she spoke in English and Spanish. Even though I had four years of instruction in Spanish, this little guy knew far more than I did — and he never once had to look at a book! He had been completely immersed in two languages for his entire young life.

## WHAT IF THE CHILDREN IN OUR CHURCHES WERE IMMERSSED IN GOSPEL TRUTH THEIR ENTIRE LIVES?

What if we prayed the Gospel over them as we rocked them in our nurseries? What if the Gospel came alive in our children's ministries through the love and discipleship of volunteers and was enthusiastically taught every Sunday morning?

**BUT WHAT IF IT DIDN'T STOP THERE?**

## WHAT IF THE WALLS OF OUR HOMES ECHOED THE WORDS OF CHRIST?

What if a child's first memory was of falling in love with the Savior their parents read about every night? What if parents engaged their kids in Gospel conversations throughout the week and tackled tough topics with the truth of Scripture?

## WHAT IF WE COMPLETELY IMMERSSED OUR CHILDREN IN THE LIFE-GIVING LANGUAGE OF THE GOSPEL DURING THE MOST FORMATIVE YEARS OF THEIR LIVES?

Providing your child with a life that's infused with the Gospel in every aspect of their living may seem too difficult to attain. But it's not; and here are some great ways to start.

### 1 Talk about the Gospel regularly, even if a child has already trusted Christ as Savior.

We praise God for the faith of a child and know most children follow Christ between the ages of 4 and 14. Share the Gospel regularly, encourage confession of sin and repeatedly share the entire story of Scripture, "God's Big Story." Some children may doubt their salvation if they don't have a compelling and dramatic testimony to share, but this doesn't make their salvation experience any less genuine. When they question their salvation, listen to them and ask questions. *How are you forgiven from sin? What has Jesus done so you can be saved?*

### 2 Use God's Big Story to answer kids' challenging questions.

World events are causing our children to ask tough questions, and many times it's hard to know how to answer. Use God's Big Story to show children that everything points to the redemption and restoration of our sin-cursed world. Death, destruction, sickness and sadness break our hearts. Our children will experience mourning and sadness, but we can encourage them that restoration of all things is coming and to look forward to the day we dwell with Him forever.

### 3 Equip and encourage parents to have Gospel conversations at home.

As ministry leaders, you only have children in your care for a few hours a week. You may get discouraged at the amount of time parents spend talking with their kids about their faith. Many parents simply don't know where to start. Some feel ill-equipped or underqualified because of their lack of biblical knowledge. Others are struggling to balance work, school and family commitments. Parents need your encouragement and support.

One of the greatest ways we can help is by discipling the disciplinemaker. When parents love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul and strength, that love will overflow in their homes! Share with them biblically based, family-friendly resources. (Our family particularly enjoys *The Radical Book for Kids*, by Champ Thornton; *Biblical Worldview*, by Dr. Josh Mulvahill; and weekly conversation guides from [TalkAboutDiscipleship.com](http://TalkAboutDiscipleship.com)).

Remind parents of the beautiful picture of family discipleship shown in Deuteronomy 6 and Psalm 78, and encourage them to tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord. Listen to their questions and challenges, and seek ways to work together with the families in your church.

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In *Children's Ministry In A New Reality*, Dr. Denise Muir Kjesbo suggests that "churches and parents need to understand each other's 'sweet spot' in the spiritual formation of children and celebrate what each other can do." Then, she introduces the idea of "formal" discipleship (with a plan, curriculum and committed leaders) and "informal" discipleship (offering teachable moments in everyday moments throughout the week). **Let's immerse our children in Gospel truth at home and at church.** Let's saturate them with Scripture, bathe them in prayer and answer life's big questions with the best news ever.