

## THREE ESSENTIAL TRUTHS WE NEED TO TEACH OUR KIDS NOW

- *God is sovereign (in control)*
- *God's ability to use bad for good*
- *God's love*



## You Can Teach Your Children!

Teaching our children about God's sovereignty, his ability to use bad things for good, and his love is very important—any time, but most especially during the time of national crisis. You are accomplishing great things when you teach your children about God. This prepares your children to serve him and makes your home a part of the solution rather than part of the problem! (The original post that led to the creation of this pdf is available at the end. If you have not read it yet, please read it first for context of what follows.)

Below are two very simple suggestions for teaching these vital truths to our families.

For “option one” I provided verses you can read where these truths are present.

For “option two” I provided a story from the Bible that demonstrates all three truths.

You can use option one, two, or both! Feel completely at ease to vary what I have suggested.

### OPTION ONE: Verses That Teach These Truths

Read the following verses to your family and comment as you see fit. Consider going to the Bible and reading these verses in their context to gain full effect! (All verses ESV)

*Verses that teach God's sovereignty.*

- **Job 42:2** - “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.”
- **Proverbs 16:33** – “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.”
- **Matthew 10:29-31** – “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.”
- **Colossians 1:16-17** – “And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

*Verses that teach God's use of bad to accomplish good.*

- **Genesis 50:20** – “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.”
- **Romans 8:28-29** – “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”
- **2 Corinthians 4:17** – “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,”
- **Hebrews 12:2** – “Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

*Verses that teach that God is love.*

- **Deuteronomy 7:9** – “Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.”
- **Psalms 136:1-26**. – Refrain: His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

- **John 3:16** – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”
- **1 John 4:8** – “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

## **OPTION TWO: Teaching All Three Truths Through The Story of Joseph**

*(The story of Joseph is found in Genesis 37-50. It is interesting that Moses (who wrote Genesis) spends more time on Joseph than he does on either Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. This is probably because Joseph’s story is almost a complete precursor to Jesus’. Like Jesus, Joseph is a son, loved by his father but hated by his Jewish brothers. He was betrayed and sold. But God worked miraculously through him to save his brothers and the rest of the world.)*

### **Days 1-11. Share the summary above with the family. Then read Genesis 37, 39-47, and 50.**

**Pray** for God to show the family who he is each time before reading the scripture.

**Say:** Over the next several nights we are going to read about the life of Joseph. Joseph was Jacob’s son. We read about Joseph in the book of Genesis in chapters 37-50.

*(Take as long as you feel you need to read those chapters out loud and feel free to answer questions or comment as you read each time. Since this is a story, aiming to read one chapter per night is good. That will take 11 nights. But if you want to read through faster, that is fine, too. Do what works best for your family. After reading the story, we will look specifically at how it helps us see these important truths.)*

### **Day 12. What Does it Mean that God is Sovereign?**

**Pray,** or have one of the children pray, for God’s blessing on the discussion.

**Say:** We have read about the story of Joseph. Now it is time to see how his story helps us understand three very important things about God: that he is sovereign, that he uses everything for our good, and that he is love.

**Q:** The story of Joseph helps us understand that God is sovereign. What does sovereign mean? *(Perhaps have child look it up).*

**A:** It means supreme power and authority. *(A King usually has supreme authority.)*

**Q:** In what specific ways do we see God’s sovereignty at work in Joseph’s story?

*(Certainly, every detail of the story whether good or bad is an example of God sovereignly working. If a child says that, give him or her a gold star. But it is helpful to ask this question like this: What are the twists and miraculous moments in Joseph’s story? These moments are where we see God clearly at work. In case children are having a hard time remembering, I have provided several of the main twists and moments below.)*

- Ch. 37:5-11 – Joseph’s dreams (which come true later).
- Ch. 37:18-24 – Reuben spared Joseph from being murdered by his brothers.
- Ch. 39:1-3; 23 – Joseph placed in charge of Potiphar’s house.
- Ch. 39:20-23 – Joseph placed in charge of prisoners.

- Ch.40:8 – Joseph interprets dreams of the cupbearer and baker.
- Ch. 41:14-36 – Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams.

### **Day 13. Can God use bad things to accomplish good?**

**Pray**, or have one of the children pray, for God’s blessing on the discussion.

**Say:** Last time, we saw that God is sovereign. He has all power over everything in our lives. Today, we are going to see if God uses bad things for good.

**Q:** What are the bad things that happened to Joseph?

*(After listing those things: Read Genesis 50:20.)*

**Q:** What is surprising about Joseph’s response?

**Q:** What is different about Joseph’s attitude that helped him to respond that way?

*(Read Romans 8:28-30.)*

**Q:** What does it mean that God used “all” things?

**A:** All means good and bad

**Q:** What is the work that these verses say God is doing in our lives through the good and bad things that happen?

**A:** He is transforming us into the image of his Son, Jesus Christ.

**Q:** What would we think about God if he could not use bad things for good? Could we trust him?

**Q:** What is a time when something bad happened to you, a family member, or a friend but good actually came out of it. What happened? What was the good that came out of it?

**Q:** What are the bad things happening right now in our world due to the virus?

**Q:** What are the good things that can possibly come from what is happening?

**BONUS!** *Gather the family to listen to the testimony of a father whose 23-month old son tragically died. His testimony (37 mins.) is presented as a sermon on Romans 8:28-30. If you are going through a particularly significant trial, please listen to this testimony. It will encourage you! Simply go to: [https://uchlink.com/romans\\_8\\_28/](https://uchlink.com/romans_8_28/)*

### **Day 14. God is love!**

**Pray**, or have one of the children pray, for God’s blessing on the discussion.

**Say:** Last time, we saw that God is able to use even the bad things in our lives for good. Because he is sovereign, he can use everything, even bad things, to help us live more like Jesus. Today, we are going to see that God is love.

**Q:** What are the ways we see God’s love in the story?

*(For a few examples, read: Genesis 37:4 and Genesis 39:21)*

**Q:** How does knowing God loves us change how we deal with our sin?

- Q:** How does God’s love change how we see other people when they sin?
- Q:** What are ways we can show love to others who are having hard times?
- Q:** Of the three truths we have studied, which have you learned from the most? Why?

(Reprint of the article follows)

### **3 Essential Truths we Need to Teach our Kids Now!**

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. – Isaiah 41:10

As the virus causes great collateral damage and casts an ominous pal on the future, what should we be teaching our children? Try these three things (at least).

#### **First, God is Sovereign (in Control)**

Genesis begins with: “In the beginning, God.” God has always existed. He created the world by speaking it into existence. He sovereignly rules over his creation (Col. 1:16-17). He directs every detail of our lives. God knew 10,000 years ago we would be dealing with Coronavirus today and he is firmly in control of exactly how all of this is going to play out. All of this should bring us great comfort and peace.

#### **Second, God is Using This Crisis to do Good in Our Lives**

Because God is sovereign, he uses all things—including the things that we most dislike, suffering for example—for our good (Rom. 8:28-30; 2 Cor. 4:17). This includes everything from mild anxiety about food shortages to significant distress about losing a job or retirement savings. God can use it all for good.

#### **Third, God is Love**

Our children need to be reminded that God loves us especially at a time when there is so much fear. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39). God’s love is demonstrated in all that he has done to redeem us. This includes the new identity we receive in his son, Jesus Christ.

That God loves us so much that he sent his son to die for us and then sent his Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts and never leave us, provides assurance of his love. His love has not waned one iota even with current events.

#### **Hope For The Fearful**

These three truths about God are important for us and our children as Christians. But that’s not all. We are called to give an answer for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:15). How do we do that if we are as fearful as everyone else? By intentionally focusing on these three truths—now—we strengthen our children’s faith in God and equip them to share him with others who are caught in the tsunami of fear caused by the virus and its ripple effects.