



Mealtime Conversations

TOPIC 2: Building Faith

Discussion 1: God Keeps His Promises	1
Discussion 2: God's Promise to Noah	4
Discussion 3: God's Promise to Sarah	7
Discussion 4: God Knows What We Need	10
Discussion 5: God Helps Us	13

HOW TO USE MEALTIME CONVERSATIONS

“Deep conversations with the right people are priceless.” - Anonymous

As parents, we desire a close relationship with our children. We care about their spiritual lives and want them to grow in their faith. It can be challenging to make time in our busy lives for intentional and meaningful conversations about God. We at Living on the Edge want to help! We've created *Mealtime Conversations* as a fun way for your family to come together and talk about God.

As you begin . . .

- Be ready to lean in and listen to your kids.
- Don't feel that you have to know all the answers, answer every question, or do all the activities.
- Keep in mind that the goal is to grow together as a family and deepen your understanding of God.
- Pray and ask God for His help and wisdom.
- Remember that learning about God as a family is a lifelong process!

Plan on spending about 30 minutes for each discussion. Some discussions may move quickly, and others may take longer as your family engages in conversation and in the activities. This discussion guide contains three main sections:

- **GET TOGETHER:** This section brings the family together for a fun game or activity to get the conversation going.
- **GET TALKING:** This section contains the Big Idea about God, discussion questions, and a key verse.
- **GET GOING:** This section contains an activity to help your family better understand the Big Idea and apply it in your lives.

Use *Mealtime Conversations* in a way that works the best for your family!





GET TOGETHER

Gather around the table and have some fun!

- What three things are most important to you?
- If you could go to Starbucks with anyone from the Bible, who would it be and why?



GET TALKING

Read today's Big Idea, and then use the questions to get everyone talking.

***Note to Parents:** Encourage everyone to share because everyone's story is important, but depending on the ages and personalities of your family members, you may not get much of a response. Give your family time to let the question soak in and the space to respond when they are ready. You can guide the conversation and be the first one to share.

BIG IDEA God is faithful, which means He always keeps His promises.

We can trust God and His Word. David tells us in Psalm 145:13,

"The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does."

And 2 Timothy 2:13 tells us, *"If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself."*

Use these questions to talk about God's faithfulness in your life.

- How did it make you feel when someone broke a promise to you?
- What is one way a person can build trust with a friend?
- How has God shown His faithfulness to you or your family?

Work on memorizing the key verse together.

KEY VERSE FOR THIS DISCUSSION

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Here is an idea for having fun as you read the key verse out loud.

- **Key Verse Hunt:** Write each word of the verse on a separate piece of paper. Then hide the words around the room. Everyone at the table hunts for the words, then works together to put the verse in order and say it aloud.

GET GOING

Read the following quotes out loud.

“Be faithful in the small things because it is in them that your strength lies.”

- Mother Teresa

“A faithful friend is a strong defense; and he that hath found him hath found a treasure.” - Louisa May Alcott

- What do you think Mother Teresa means about being faithful in the “small things”? How is that strength?
- Do you agree with Louisa May Alcott? How can a faithful friend be a “strong defense” and a “treasure”?

Play “Go Fish”

In the game of Go Fish, players must keep their word and trust each other.

Deal the cards. For two to three players, each player gets seven cards. If there are more than three players, deal five cards to each. Place the rest of the cards facedown in a stack in the middle of all the players.

Each player gets a turn moving clockwise. During a player’s turn, they may ask one other player for a rank of cards (example: nines). If that player has

any cards that rank, they must give all the cards to the player who asked. If the player doesn't have any cards in that rank, they say, "Go Fish," and the person who asked takes a card from the stack in the middle. Once a player has all four suits of the same rank, they place the cards faceup in front of them.

Go Fish is over when one player runs out of cards or there are no more cards in the stack. The winner is the player with the most cards or suits of cards faceup in front of them.



GET TOGETHER

Gather around the table and have some fun!

What's Your Favorite?

- Grab a piece of paper and something to write with for each person at the table. Ask each person to write down their favorite ice cream flavor, movie, color, sport, animal, hobby, and breakfast food. When everyone is done, place your papers facedown on the table. Take turns picking someone at the table and guessing their favorites.



GET TALKING

Read today's Big Idea and the story of the life of Noah, and then use the questions to get everyone talking.

***Note to Parents:** Encourage everyone to share because everyone's story is important, but depending on the ages and personalities of your family members, you may not get much of a response. Give your family time to let the question soak in and the space to respond when they are ready. You can guide the conversation and be the first one to share.

BIG IDEA God is faithful, which means He always keeps His promises.
We can trust God and His Word.

Read aloud Noah's story (below or from Genesis chapters 6-9 in your Bible).

NOAH

Noah was a man who chose to do what was right, even when no one else did. He followed after God and had a close friendship with Him. The rest of the world, however, was full of violence, hatred, and corruption. It broke God's heart. So God told Noah that He was going to cover the earth with

(Continued on page 5)

NOAH

(Continued from page 4)

water, destroying all the people on the earth except Noah and his family.

God instructed Noah to build a BIG boat (ark) to keep his family and the pairs of animals He would send safe inside. Noah was to construct the boat out of cypress wood and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. He needed to build three decks (one lower, one middle, and one upper) and include animal stalls throughout. There was only one door on the boat, and an 18-inch window opening all the way around the roofline. The boat was to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. (That's about one and a half football fields long!)

God also told Noah to make sure to take enough food for his family and all the animals. And Noah did everything God had commanded him to do.

When everything was ready, God told Noah it was time to lead his family and the animals into the boat. Two by two, pairs of every kind of animal came to the boat, and Noah did everything that God commanded. When everyone was inside, God closed the door of the boat.

For forty days it rained, and the floodwaters grew deeper and deeper. Noah, his family, and all the animals remained safe on the boat until the time was right for them to leave. When they were finally able to step onto dry land, Noah praised and thanked God! God said to Noah,

"Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life" (Genesis 9:14-15).

Use these questions to talk about the truth that God keeps His promises.

- What is one thing that stood out to you about Noah's story?
- Why do you think Noah didn't give up on building the big boat (ark)?
- Did God keep His promise to Noah and to all people since? What did God give as evidence of His promise?

KEY VERSE FOR THIS DISCUSSION

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Work on memorizing the key verse together.

Here is an idea for having fun as you read the key verse out loud.

- Write out the entire verse on a whiteboard or chalkboard.
- Say the verse together out loud.
- Erase one word from the verse.
- Say the verse again and see if everyone can remember it even with the missing word.
- Play a few rounds or keep going until all the words are erased.

GET GOING

- Give everyone five minutes to get a favorite item and bring it back.
- When everyone returns, have each person share why their item is so special.
- Now for the challenge:
 - Give your treasured item to another person to care for over the next twenty-four hours.
 - Take a few minutes to think of ways you can build trust by protecting, watching over, and valuing the item you're responsible for.
 - At the end of twenty-four hours, give the favorite item back.



GET TOGETHER

Gather around the table and have some fun!

- If you could make one meal* for everyone at the table, what would it be and why?

*This is a great way to get ideas for future meals and for opportunities to cook together. Preparing a meal together gives families a time to connect, laugh, share, and work together. It is also a chance for kids to learn practical cooking skills that can last a lifetime.



GET TALKING

Read today's Big Idea and the story of Sarah, and then use the questions to get everyone talking.

***Note to Parents:** Encourage everyone to share because everyone's story is important, but depending on the ages and personalities of your family members, you may not get much of a response. Give your family time to let the question soak in and the space to respond when they are ready. You can guide the conversation and be the first one to share.

BIG IDEA God is faithful, which means He always keeps His promises. We can trust God and His Word, even when we don't understand how everything will work out.

Read aloud Sarah's story (below or from Genesis 18:1-15 in your Bible).

SARAH

More than anything else, Sarah and her husband, Abraham, wanted a child. Interestingly, the meaning of Abraham's name is "father of many." But they didn't have any children, and by this time both Abraham and Sarah were very old, so children seemed unthinkable.

One hot day, Abraham was sitting outside his tent, and the Lord appeared to him.

(Continued on page 8)

SARAH

(Continued from page 7)

Abraham saw three unfamiliar men standing nearby and knew they were sent by God. So he ran over to them, bowed low to honor them, and invited them to come rest at his home. They accepted his invitation and went with Abraham to his home.

Abraham hurried to Sarah and asked her to make bread for their guests with the very best flour they had. He also had a yummy meal made and he served it to them. The men asked Abraham where his wife, Sarah, was. He told them that she was inside the tent. One of the visitors told Abraham that when they came back to visit in a year, Sarah will have a son!

Sarah was listening to the conversation from inside the tent, and when she heard that she would have a son, she laughed to herself. She thought about her old age, Abraham's old age, and the idea of a son. Impossible!

Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son" (Genesis 18:13-14).

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- God kept His promise to Sarah and Abraham. Everything happened just as God said it would. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son in her old age, and he was named Isaac.

Use these questions to talk about the truth that God keeps His promises.

- Why do you think Sarah laughed at the promise she was given?
- What did God say in response to Sarah's doubt?
- Share a time when God kept his promise to you although it seemed that the circumstances were impossible.

Work on memorizing the key verse together.

KEY VERSE FOR THIS DISCUSSION

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Here is an idea for having fun as you read the key verse out loud.

- Grab a box of crayons and paper. Illustrate the verse as it is read aloud.

GET GOING

- Divide the group into two teams and gather the items you need to make a peanut butter* and jelly sandwich.
**Use a peanut butter alternative for those who are allergic.*
- Each team will work together and write out directions that clearly explain how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich to someone who has never made one before.
- After each team has completed the directions, decide which team will read their directions first.
- Select one team member to read the directions aloud and step by step.
- The other team will pick one person to make the sandwich according to the directions given.
- Follow the directions step by step.
- Now it's the other team's turn.
- The team with the best PB&J wins.
- Split the sandwich between the teams and enjoy!

 **GET TOGETHER**

Have fun discussing these “Would You Rather” questions.

Would you rather . . .

- be able to shrink down to the size of an ant or be able to grow to the size of a giraffe whenever you wanted?
- be able to change color and camouflage yourself or be invisible?
- go back in time or go forward to the future?
- live on a sailboat on a lake or in a cabin in the woods?
- have the ability to talk to animals or control the weather?

 **GET TALKING**

Read today’s Big Idea and the story of George Müller’s life, and then use the questions to get everyone talking.

***Note to Parents:** Encourage everyone to share because everyone’s story is important, but depending on the ages and personalities of your family members, you may not get much of a response. Give your family time to let the question soak in and the space to respond when they are ready. You can guide the conversation and be the first one to share.

BIG IDEA God is faithful, which means He always keeps His promises. We can trust God and His Word. Because God is faithful, sovereign, and good, we can trust Him with our needs.

Read George Müller’s story aloud. You can learn more about him from *George Müller: The Guardian of Bristol’s Orphans*, by Janet and Geoff Benge.

GEORGE MÜLLER

(1805-1898)

George Müller was a Christian missionary and coordinator of orphanages in Bristol, England. Throughout his life, he shared the love of God by caring for more than 120,000 orphan children. George believed that God

(Continued on page 11)

GEORGE MÜLLER

(Continued from page 10)

wanted him to trust Him for everything the orphanages needed. So he never asked for money; instead, he would pray and trust God to provide. In his journal, George wrote down miracle after miracle of how God met their needs. This is one of his stories . . .

One morning, all the plates and cups and bowls on the table were empty. Three hundred hungry children waited patiently in rows behind their chairs. There was no food for the children to eat and no money to go buy food. George knew the children must be on time for school, so he led the children in prayer. He thanked God for what He would give them to eat.

There was a knock at the door. The baker stood there and told George that he couldn't sleep the night before because he had a feeling that the children needed bread for breakfast. The baker said that God wanted him to bake bread and bring it over to them for breakfast. So he had gotten up at two in the morning, made bread, and brought it over.

George thanked the baker, and just as he left there was a second knock at the door. It was the milkman. He announced that his milk cart broke right in front of the orphanage and he would like to give the children all his cans of fresh milk so he could fix his wagon.

All the children made it to school on time with full bellies.

"Faith does not operate in the realm of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where man's power ends." - George Müller

Use these questions to talk about the truth that God keeps His promises.

- What stood out to you about this story from the life of George Müller?
- When has God answered your prayer and provided something you needed?
- Does God always provide for your needs how you think He will? Why or why not?
- Pray together. God loves you and knows what you need! Thank Him for keeping His promises! Thank Him specifically for the ways He has provided. Share with each other personal needs and the needs of your friends, your community, and the world.

Work on memorizing the key verse together.

KEY VERSE FOR THIS DISCUSSION

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Here are a few ideas for having fun as you read the key verse out loud.

- Write or type out the verse onto a sheet of paper. Cut out the individual words and tape each one to a domino. Put the words in order and stand each domino up. Say the verse together and then knock the dominoes over.
- Write or type out the verse onto a sheet of paper. Cut out the individual words and tape each one to a building block or Lego. Build a structure as you put the words of the verse in order. Say the verse aloud together.

▶ GET GOING

- Create an indoor obstacle course in your home using whatever cushions, chairs, and other items you would like. Have everyone choose a partner. One person will be the leader; the other will be blindfolded. Have the leader build trust by carefully guiding the blindfolded partner through the course. Then switch roles!



GET TOGETHER

Gather around the table and have some fun!

High and Low

- Take turns sharing something good (high) and something tough (low) from your day.



GET TALKING

Read today's Big Idea and the story of the paralyzed man, and then use the questions to get everyone talking.

***Note to Parents:** Encourage everyone to share because everyone's story is important, but depending on the ages and personalities of your family members, you may not get much of a response. Give your family time to let the question soak in and the space to respond when they are ready. You can guide the conversation and be the first one to share.

BIG IDEA God is faithful, which means He always keeps His promises. We can trust God and His Word. When we keep our promises, we treat others the way God treats us.

Read aloud the paralyzed man's story (below or from Luke 5:17-26 in your Bible).

JESUS FORGIVES AND HEALS THE PARALYZED MAN

One day Jesus was teaching from inside someone's home, and people from all over crowded in to listen. Some men brought a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to get him into the house to see Jesus, but there were too many people. Yet they were not going to give up. There had to be another way to get their friend to Jesus! They knew that Jesus had the power to heal their paralyzed friend.

(Continued on page 14)

JESUS FORGIVES AND HEALS THE PARALYZED MAN

(Continued from page 13)

They had an idea! They climbed up on the roof, moved some of the tiles, and lowered their friend on his mat right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven" (Luke 5:20).

When the Pharisees and teachers heard what Jesus said, they were upset. *Only God can forgive sins*, they thought to themselves. *Who does this Jesus think He is?* Jesus knew what the Pharisees and teachers were thinking and asked them why they were having such thoughts. Then Jesus asked them if it would be easier to forgive the paralyzed man's sin or to heal him.

To show them that He had authority to forgive sin, Jesus told the paralyzed man to get up, take his mat, and go home. Immediately the man stood up in front of everyone, gathered his mat, and went home praising God. Everyone who saw what Jesus did was amazed and in awe and praised God!

Use these questions to talk about building trust and keeping our promises.

- Why did the men take their paralyzed friend to see Jesus?
- Do you think the paralyzed man trusted his friends? Why or why not?
- Luke 5:20 says that Jesus saw their faith. What do you think that means?
- How can your faith in God be seen by those around you?
- Be the kind of friend you would like to have. Build trust with your friends by being faithful to your commitments. When we do this, we treat others the way God treats us.

- Ask God for His help. What is one way you can keep your promises and build trust with your family and friends?
- Pray together. Praise God for His faithfulness and ask Him for His help in keeping your promises.

Work on memorizing the key verse together.

KEY VERSE FOR THIS DISCUSSION

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Here are a few ideas for having fun as you read the key verse out loud.

- Pair up into partners or divide into groups.
- Each pair or group prepares and sings the verse in a genre of their choice (pop, country, rap, opera, musical theater, spoken word).
- Have fun and record the performances.

▶ GET GOING

Go find a lawn, sidewalk, or long hallway and run a three-legged race. This game requires teamwork, trust, and communication.

- Use a bandanna, long sock, or other piece of fabric to tie the legs together at the ankle.
- Have the two partners stand shoulder to shoulder, and gently tie their inside legs together. Make sure the wrap is tied tightly enough to keep the partners close together but not so tight to restrict movement or hurt their ankles.
- Choose a starting line and a finish line, and then see how quickly the partners can go from start to finish.
- You can even try variations: pass a ball back and forth, walk backward, balance a balloon between the two partners, and so on.