



GOSPEL CENTERED VALENTINES DAY FOR KIDS

Valentine's Day is often full of candy hearts and sweet cards—but what if it could also be a chance to talk with our kids about the greatest love of all? This guide offers simple, gospel-centered ways to make Valentine's Day meaningful for your family. From thoughtful conversations to hands-on activities, you'll find ideas to help kids understand God's love and how to share it with others. Whether your child is curious about romance or simply wants to feel seen and loved, this resource is here to help you point them gently and truthfully to the love of Christ.





Hello there!

When it comes to holidays like Easter and Christmas there is an easy connection to Christ and the gospel. It's easy to find manger scenes and crosses in our stores and cards that reflect the same. However, it can be challenging for holidays like Valentine's day. While there is nothing wrong with celebrating and participating in Valentine's day, it's a good idea to help our kids understand the true love of Christ, and maybe shy away from romantic love at early ages.

My prayer is that this guide can be a resource to you and your family as you strive to be a home that abides in Christ. For more resources follow along on Instagram or Facebook!

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But what do I say when my kid asks about the romantic part?

I believe it is important to talk about romantic love with kids. I think it is important for kids to see parents show romantic gestures of love toward one another. That is a very healthy aspect of marriage and we as parents are the example for our kids. Far too often the Church and Christians shy away from talking about lust, physical attraction and romance when we really need to be having those open conversations.

As a child gets older, the conversation will slowly go into more depth. This is where you have to lean into your personal gut and discernment about the extent of the conversation. You can always ask your child, "What do you think?" as a response to their question to get a better idea of your child's understanding. This can give you a better idea of whether to affirm what they know, or what may need to be corrected. When it comes to physical intimacy and sex, I believe as Christian parents, we are to be having these conversations with our kids much sooner than middle/high school. A resource I recommend for this subject is following @birds_bees on Instagram.

They promote a drip drip method where there isn't one "talk," rather it's a slow conversation overtime. I definitely recommend mentally preparing yourself for those conversations around Valentine's day. It is much better for your kid to learn about these things from you than others. A reminder, it is always ok to tell your kid, "I don't know" or "I don't know how best to explain that at this moment, let me think or talk to ___ and get back to you." And then do get back to them.

Account to follow:

@birds_bees

birds-bees.com

Book:

How & When to Tell Your Kids about Sex by Stan & Brenna Jones

***This is not my area of expertise, please look into other resources for specific help on this subject.**

Connecting with the Love of Christ

So, the lovey-dovey aside, can Valentine's day be about Jesus? YES! Valentine's day actually has some connections to the early church and christian martyr, Saint Valentine. The historical details are fuzzy and today it is primarily a commercialized holiday. [The History Channel](#) has some interesting info on the holiday's development for your reading. No matter what it has to offer it can still be a time of remembering Jesus' love for us. We can use Valentine's day as a tool to meet people where they are.

One of my favorite passages to teach about God's love is Luke 15, a compilation of parables from Jesus. It is the parable of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Lost Son. Often we separate these stories when they really tell one big story of God's love and pursuit of us and the risk/value of finding the lost thing.



Notes from Luke 15

These notes are for you, the parent/kid-influencer to deepen your understanding of the story before talking about it with your child. For elementary age, you can read straight from the Bible. For younger, the Jesus Story Book Bible has the Lost Son story "Running away."

THE LOST SHEEP

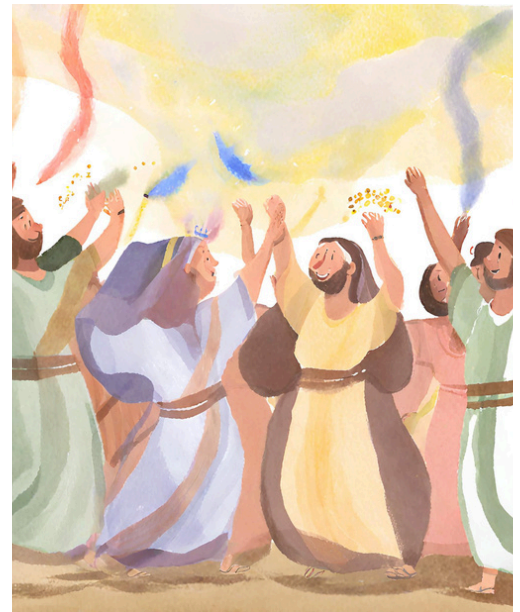
Leaves 99 to find 1 & carries the lost sheep back. Economically this was a very poor decision leaving the other 99 vulnerable, but it was worth it for the one. There was a celebration when the lost sheep was found.

THE LOST COIN

1/10 were lost, there is bigger value in the lost item. One coin at that time was a whole day's wage, that was a lot of money for that time. The house was turned upside down to find the one coin. There was a celebration when the lost coin was found.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE LOST SHEEP & THE LOST COIN

The shepherd and woman are representative of our heavenly father. He goes in search of us to find us where we are - when we are beaten, bruised and can't even move. When we are in the darkest places of our lives, He finds us.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Do you know how much Jesus loves you? If so, how much?

What would it feel like to be lost and stuck hoping someone will find you?

How would you feel knowing someone was looking for you?

What would it feel like to be found?

Does Jesus actually look for where we are physically? Or does he look for our relationship with Him?

How does it feel knowing that Jesus wants a relationship with you?

THE LOST SONS

The younger son was selfish, he chose to leave and the father let him - just like our heavenly father lets us choose to have a relationship with him. The older son who appeared to be less selfish chose to stay and do all the right things expected of a son. Unlike the other two stories, the father doesn't go looking for the younger son. He waits - patiently - just as our heavenly father waits patiently for us as well.

The younger son finally realized his mistake and repents. He got things right with God and came back to be a slave. The father has overwhelming grace and welcomes him back into the family. Again, we see a celebration - the grandest of them all.

The older son was mad. He refused to join the party, refused to acknowledge him as his brother. The father went looking for him - maybe the older son is actually the lost one?

The younger son is a representation of the sinners & tax collectors mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. The older son is a representation of the Pharisees who appear to have done everything "right." The father opened the invitation to the older son to join the kingdom as well, but we don't know how he responds.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

God Allows us to make our own choices. He searches for us when we're lost - even in ways we don't realize we're lost like the older brother. He will welcome us home, His grace is greater than anything we can imagine. He celebrates your restoration - when even one sinner enters the kingdom, there is a grand celebration. It is our individual choice to choose.



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*For God so LOVED the world
that He gave his one and only
son, so that whoever believes
in Him shall not perish but
have eternal life.*

JOHN 3:16



After the Story

God will risk everything for the lost, His love for us is so deep as seen in these parables. We also see the depth of this love described in John 3:16 “For God so LOVED the word he sent His one and only son that whoever believes in him WILL NOT PERISH but have eternal life.”

SHARE WITH OTHERS

Because God’s love for us is so deep, we should share it with everyone! It is exciting to tell others how loved they are by God. When we talk about Valentine’s day, it should be done in the light of God’s love for us. We share God’s love with others because we want them to also know God’s love for them. We can share valentines and goodies with others as an expression of God’s love.

Explain to your child there will likely come a day when they have “more-than-friends” feelings for someone else. That’s very normal, and when that happens, encourage your child to tell you about it. Even when that happens, and until then, Valentine’s day can be a time for us to tell others about Jesus’ love. We can do this through our Valentine’s day cards telling our friends that God loves them or thinks they’re special. We can do something nice for someone as an example of God’s love for them. What are other ways we can show God’s love?



ACTIVITIES

Make Valentine’s day cards for people!

Find a way to help someone to show them that you and God love them.

Play hide and seek! If you have a sheep, coin or doll, hide it for your child to find.

Make salt dough conversation hearts that say “God loves you.” If you don’t have letter stamps you can write on the heart after painting with a thin sharpie.

Dancing Hearts Science Experiment reminds us of the celebration of finding the lost person/item and the celebration in heaven.

Navigating the challenges of Valentine's day

What do I do when someone harmlessly asks my young child if they have a special valentine/girlfriend/boyfriend?

Respond along the lines of, "for my child, and our family, Valentine's day is about telling people that God loves us. We do this by doing X,Y,Z and when he/she is of an appropriate age for special relationships we will talk about those special valentines and showing them God's love through our love."

This is also something you can prep your child with a response for. After having talked about God's love, explain, "for some people, even other christians, Valentine's day is all about special romantic love. Someone may ask you if you have a girlfriend/boyfriend. If they do, you can tell them not right now. I am telling my friends that God loves them, you can even tell them the story about the lost sheep, coin and son."

What if my child does have a girlfriend/boyfriend?

This is a very personal choice for each family. I believe the right time for this is very different for each family and child. Often there are very innocent young "love" relationships. Each parent has to decide when they believe it is appropriate for their child. However, keep this an open conversation with your child so that they will talk to you about it. If not, there is a good chance they will hide it from you if you have a strict no-dating policy and the subject is off limits. This should be a regular open dialogue with your child.

I think it is important to talk with your child that there is a difference in special friendships, dating, and marriage. All are good things at certain times in our lives. God made marriage, he designed males and females to be partners. He made our bodies to desire each other. But, God also teaches us to respect our and other peoples bodies and emotions. We can have a special friend, and do things for them to feel special on Valentine's day AND tell them about the love of Jesus. Explain to your child their feelings for someone may change, and vice-versa, but God's love remains the same. They can share that with their special person.

Navigating the challenges of Valentine's day

My child is very upset and hurt that they don't have/didn't get a special valentine/aren't in a relationship, how do I help them?

This is a very real struggle for kids starting around the latter elementary years as puberty hits, relationships become a social thing. It just gets stronger as they get older. Your child's frontal cortex isn't fully developed until around age 25. The frontal cortex is responsible for things like judgment, abstract thinking, and social appropriateness. So, while yes, you tell your child that God loves them, and you love them, it is very hard to understand how that is different from or better than a romantic love. Hold space for their emotions, sit and let them talk, do mostly listening and little talking. Plan a special family Valentine's day dinner with flowers, candlelight and heart shaped goodies. Remind them that God knows the deepest desires of their hearts, and while it is hard to wait, when the time is right God will fulfill those desires.

My child asked a question about love/sex/relationships and I don't know what to say!

This isn't the first, and won't be the last time your child asks a question you don't know the answer to - and that's OK! It is ok to not know the answer, and ok for your child to know you don't know. We are not all-knowing God, and our kids need to know we are not God. So, take a deep breath. Depending on the question you can respond with, "what do you think?" Use that question to understand where they are. Often we as parents over analyze a question and the response our child is needing. This response helps you assess that, and may allow you to answer a much simpler question than you're thinking.

Second, you can always say, "I don't know, let me talk to ____ or think about how to best answer question and then I'll get back to you." Then, do what you said. It's ok to go to resources to help you answer those questions. Lastly, I encourage you to prep yourself in this subject matter prior to Valentine's day, it will help you feel confident in navigating those tough questions. I recommend checking out @birds-bees on socials.