

50 WAYS

to teach your children about joy

GINA SMITH



million praying moms

50 Ways to Teach Your Children About Biblical Joy

Gina Smith

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2022, 50 Ways to Teach Your Children About Biblical Joy

This is a bonus chapter to Everyday Prayers for Joy, a 30-day prayer journal for women, by Gina Smith. It's intended to give you 50 ideas for talking to or demonstrating to your children the idea of true biblical joy. It isn't an exhaustive list, but rather a place to start thinking and brainstorming as you learn about biblical joy yourself. Simply scroll and scan the ideas to find something that meets your current need.

To learn more about the living with true, biblical joy, purchase your copy of Everyday Prayers for Joy anywhere books are sold.

We all want our children to have a happy and joy filled life. sadly, we cannot guarantee this will be the case. We live in a chaotic world and life is very hard. So, what are we to do? As Christian parents, it is our responsibility to search the scriptures and find out what it means to have true, Biblical joy. We need to grow in our understanding of what joy is, from God's perspective, so we can teach our children that the only guarantee we have in life is what we find in Him. True joy can only come from knowing and trusting God.

Even though this will take a lifetime to learn, we have the privilege of knowing God for ourselves, finding our joy in Him, and then passing it on to our children. Isn't it amazing to imagine what it would be like if we could fill our lives and homes with all that our children need to learn? These are the very things that will help them to persevere in their walk with God for a lifetime.

I am offering you 50 things that you can do to help your children learn about Biblical joy. If you will study, live, talk, teach, and pray you and your children will learn TOGETHER how to find your joy in God and His promises!

Together,
Gina Smith

Study it!

1. Before we can teach something to others, we need to have some level of understanding of the subject ourselves. If you want your children to grow in their understanding of biblical joy, you must be growing in it yourself. Study the Word and find what truths you can to help understand what it means to have biblical joy. Or, use your copy of *Everyday Prayers for Joy*. So many of the verses or passages are already outlined for you there.
2. What are the sources of joy in your life? Ask God to show you anything you are using to bring you “joy” but that actually distracts you from the true source of joy. Next, study the Word and find out what will bring true joy. Again, use your copy of *Everyday Prayers for Joy*. It’s all there.
3. Be in the Word and ask God to show you what it means to find your joy in Him. Ask Him to help you to reflect His character in your life and back to our children.

Live it!

4. What attitudes are you carrying with you on a regular basis? Are you negative, critical of others, anxious about everything, and generally unhappy? If that is the case, you are not reflecting the characteristics of biblical joy and your children will not be able to learn about joy from you. Ask God to show you the attitudes that you are reflecting that are hindering you, and your family from growing in their understanding of biblical Joy.
5. How do you use the moments you’ve been given? Do you take time for being in the Word, prayer, fellowship with other believers, and reading God glorifying books? Feeding your soul with the truth will help you focus on the source of true joy. When you have times of relaxation or entertainment, how are you using this time? Are you focusing on things that cause confusion, anxiety, or distract you from growing in your relationship with God? How you spend your time shows what is most important to you. Ask God to show you ways in which you are not using your time wisely.
6. How are you spending your money? Are you a living example of finding your joy in God or in material things? Of course, it is okay to purchase things that you need, and even things we don’t need at times, but are you filling your home with material possessions and depending on these things to bring you joy? Are you finding that you quickly grow discontent with what you have? Ask God to show you if you need to make some adjustments in what you are purchasing to bring you joy.
7. Help and serve others. You can use what you have been given to meet the needs of those around you. Whether it be in small or big ways, you can be an example to your children of finding joy in serving others. Giving of yourself is a source of joy, not only for those you have

served but for you as well. When you do this and include your children, you are showing them that there is much joy in serving God. Ask God to show you how you can serve and give to others.

8. Do you have fun in your home? Look for ways in which you can have fun and laugh with your children. That means you need to learn to enter into their world and take part in activities or interests they love. When we connect with them in a fun way, laugh with them, and relate to them, not only are we enjoying each other as a family, but we are creating a platform for being able to have natural conversations with them.

9. Are you content? Are you at peace? Take some time to listen to yourself and how you are speaking in front of your children. They hear you, and the words you say affect them. If you are not practicing contentment, you will not have joy because you will be focusing on what you feel is lacking in your life rather than all that God has provided.

10. You can't fake joy, you either have it or you don't. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit will be evident in your life only when you are nurturing a relationship with God.

11. Joy is a Habit. Joy is a choice. When you can model this for your children you are showing them that biblical joy is a reality in your life and that it can be a reality in theirs.

12. What is your countenance like? Do you look stressed? Unhappy? Worried? What is going on in your heart will show on your face. How do you face each day? Do you complain about the "daily grind," or do you face the day with a grateful heart? Being intentional to smile and face each day with a joyful countenance is a way to show your children biblical joy.

13. Listen to music with lyrics that talk about biblical joy. Play worship music or uplifting children's music throughout the day. This will help to point you and your family to God.

14. Take time to notice the small things in your life and home that are gifts from God and evidence of His love and provision. Ask God to help you see all He has done. Share the things you see with your children. It's helpful for them to hear what you notice God doing and teaches them what to look for in their own lives.

15. Worship! True joy is only found by worshipping and serving God in the hard times as well as good times.

16. Be aware of your tone of voice and don't lecture! There are times when we do need to instruct our children, but it's easy to cross the line and add to their burden. How we say things will make the difference between us coming alongside them or lecturing them, causing them to become overwhelmed.

17. Be a good listener and work to understand where they are and what they are learning. If you show them you are interested in their thoughts, and that what they say is valuable, they will be more likely to do the same for you.

18. Develop a love for God's Word. If you don't love God's Word, ask God to create that in your heart and to cause you to hunger and thirst for it. You can't teach your kids to love something you don't love yourself.

19. How do you respond in difficult or stressful circumstances? Do you melt down and become an emotional rollercoaster? Or do you respond with prayer and worship? Choosing to control your emotions and looking to Jesus for help is a way to teach your children to do the same.

Teach it!

20. After you have studied biblical joy, begin teaching this to your children on an age-appropriate level. When they are facing something hard, help them learn what it means to, "count it all joy," and guide them in conversations about what God might be doing through that hard circumstance.

21. Memorize verses that talk about joy. Memorize them as a family. Write them on index cards and tape them on your kids' bathroom mirror and on your bathroom mirror. Make it the theme of your home.

22. Look for examples in the Bible of people who chose joy in difficult circumstances. Read about these people and discuss what joy looks like in their example.

23. Read through Psalms and look for Prayers of Lament. Help your child see the steps to finding biblical joy in these prayers.

24. Help your child process their difficult times by applying the model of the Prayer of Lament, allowing them to express how they feel about their circumstances, and eventually turning their attention to how God has been faithful to His promises for the future. This is where true joy is found.

25. Talk with your children about the difference between joy and happiness. Help them define both and then talk about it. Help them apply the things you learn to their lives.

26. Read books about biblical joy. Find devotionals to go through regularly as a family.

27. Teach your children the danger of negativity and how it can affect your perspective.

28. Find verses that talk about choosing joy during trials. Teach them to your children and help them learn how to apply them.

29. Teach your children the difference between choosing joy and feeling joyful.

30. Talk to your children about how obedience to God and His Word brings joy even when obeying is hard.
31. Talk with your children about what it means to trust God and how that is a vital component to biblical Joy.
32. Talk with your children about what it means to find joy even when they experience trials.
33. Read the Word with your children on a daily basis so they will learn about God and His character.
34. Talk with your children about the importance of loving the scriptures, how to grow in their love of the Word, and how that will help them find biblical joy.
35. Regularly talk about God's unconditional love and grace. Share with them from the Word. This will help them see why our joy can be found in Him.
36. Share with your children what the Word promises to those who love Him, now and in eternity. Help them to learn how to see life from His perspective.
37. Talk about what God finds joy in, what He delights in, what pleases Him, and how we should find joy in those same things.
38. Talk about what it means to seek God and what affect that will have on our lives (blessing and joy!)
39. Teach your children what it means to treasure or value something and then apply that to their relationship with God.

Talk About It!

40. Take time (each day if possible) to ask your children what they are grateful for, whether it be something in their day, something God has done for them or your family, or how they were able to bring joy to someone else.
41. Memorize gratitude verses as a family and use these verses as a springboard for Bible time conversations. Learn, discuss, and apply the meaning of the verses together.
42. Point out examples of people you know who are characterized by biblical joy and how they are choosing to find their joy in God in spite of their circumstances. Have them over for dinner and invite them into your family discussions over a meal.

43. Point out things in your everyday life that bring joy and have your children do the same.
44. Ask your children if they can think of someone they would consider to be a joyful person. Talk about why this person seems joyful.
45. Be willing to share freely with your children the ways in which you are choosing joy. Share the difficulties you are facing and the things in God's Word you are finding that help you to see your difficulties from God's perspective.
46. Ask good questions and then take time to listen and hear your child's heart. Find out what they are thinking and what they love. Listening and talking WITH them will make it easier to have natural conversations and to help them come to biblical joy on their own.

PRAY!

47. Learning about and choosing biblical joy is a lifelong process. We can begin these conversations when our children are very young, but they will not fully grasp the concept until they have been given a chance to live life and choose it for themselves. This is why prayer is vital in this process. Ask God for wisdom to know what to say and how to say it in order to relate to your kids on their level.
48. God is the only One who can open the eyes of our children and help them to understand, little by little, how to find their joy in Him. Pray for the Holy Spirit to do that work in their heart.
49. Ask God to give you wisdom to know when to speak and when to listen, what verses to share and how to explain them to your children.
50. Pray WITH your children, asking God to help you both to understand what it means to have biblical joy. They are needy. You are needy. You both are so desperate for Him.

About the Author

Gina Smith is a writer, author, and has been married for 32 years to Brian, a college professor and athletic trainer. For 25+ years she and her husband served on a Christian college campus as the on-campus parents, where Brian was a professor and dean of students. They reside right outside of Washington DC and are the parents of two grown children, one daughter-in-law and one son-in-law. Now an empty-nester, Gina has transitioned her ministry from full-time mom and parttime writer, to being a mom who is available to her adult children as much as they need her and writing as much as she can [at her blog](#).