

NURTURING YOUR CHILD'S FAITHFUL SPIRIT

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Verse: [Numbers 14:24](#) "But my servant Caleb isn't like the others. So because he has faith in me, I will allow him to cross into Canaan, and his descendants will settle there."

As parents, we understand that our children are growing up in an environment that increasingly asks them to "follow the crowd." Social media bombards them with ideas of what it looks like to fit in and follow. As parents who love the Lord, however, one of our greatest hopes for our children is that they will develop a courageous, different spirit.



In [Numbers 13](#), Caleb returns from a spy mission and must stand against the majority in his desire to follow God. Caleb shows that he "isn't like the others" because he wholly trusted God ([Numbers 14:24](#)). How can you help develop your child's desire to follow God fully? Here are some considerations:

1. **Share:** Following God fully can have difficult and even uncomfortable implications! This often makes us hesitate to show that we aren't "like the others." Storytelling is a fantastic way to illustrate and encourage your children. Share some times you have had to take a stand and go against the crowd to follow God fully. Tell about your emotions at the time and how nervous or afraid you might have been. Explain your thinking and what made you go against the crowd to do what was right. Above all, your children notice what you do! Model a different spirit in your daily life.
2. **Recognize:** Help your child recognize that having a different spirit includes more than making the right choices when things are difficult. It also includes not ignoring challenging opportunities to stand up for what's right. Looking the other way or staying silent isn't following God's will. When we commit an act of omission, we also fail to show that we aren't "like the others."
3. **Explore:** Explore God's Word with your children. Find examples of Bible characters who had to stand firm in their desire to follow God, even when it meant they had to stand apart from the crowd. Some favorite stories include [Daniel](#); [Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego](#); and [Esther](#). The parable of the good Samaritan teaches when we choose not to show love and kindness, we also fail to follow God's will ([Luke 10:25-37](#)). We also have many modern examples. Share stories about missionaries that you know or people who were imprisoned or have become refugees because of their faith.
4. **Practice:** Providing children with the words to say in tricky situations can prepare them for when such times occur. Role-play different scenarios they might encounter, and help them come up with the words to say. Continue the scene further to prepare them for peers who might keep pushing. Some ideas might include watching an inappropriate show, gossiping, stealing, vandalism, excluding others, or lying.

Following God fully requires us to be courageous and not “like the others.” This comes from the understanding that courage comes from trusting God and his faithfulness to his promises. Exposing your child to God’s teachings, preparing them with Scripture and the words to say, and surrounding your child in prayer can help you support your child in developing a courageous spirit.

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