

Week 1: The First Year



Circle one:

1. How common was it to talk about spiritual things in your family growing up? (Never, Once a month, all the time)
2. How much of your personal spiritual development was related to your family? (None, Half, All)
3. How comfortable are you at talking about spiritual things at home? (Uncomfortable/silent on the subject, Timid but vocal, I am a domesticated Billy Graham)
4. Where do you feel you are on your spiritual journey? (I am new (or returning) to the faith, I've been around a while but not clear, I am knowledgeable and experienced)
5. How much have you thought about what you will do to nurture your child's soul in the first five years? (Nothing, a little bit, I know everything I will do)

Understanding Baptism:

Babies are at the very beginning of a life of faith, and cannot decide to turn to God, or even understand the idea of sin. In the sacrament of Baptism, the parents and the church agree to be agents of God's grace in the life of the child recognizing that when they are old enough, the child will confirm that commitment by choosing to respond to God's Justifying grace.

Developmental Stage: Trust/Mistrust

At this point in the life of a child, everything is simple and totally centered around the child. There is no abstract thought, and not much concrete thought either. They experience their world almost totally in the immediate present. For a while, if things disappear from their sight, they cease to exist in their brain though by the third or fourth month they begin to have a sense of the permanence of objects with a clear sense by the end of the first year.

The overriding question about their world is can I trust the world? This is fundamentally related to whether or not their needs are being met. When they hurt are they soothed? When they are hungry are they fed? It is simple, but it has profound implications for the rest of their life and faith. This sense carries forward as their fundamental orientation towards the world: can the world, people, God, etc be trusted or not? If they go through this phase without gaining a sense of trust for the world, it is very difficult to develop further.

You've seen it or heard it in adults. The person who views everyone in their world as out to get them or who thinks that God is doing the same thing is struggling with this developmental issue of trust vs. mistrust.

Spiritual Songs:

Beautiful Things to notice in your world:

Questions to Ponder:

When have you had a hard time trusting God?

What made trusting God difficult?

What needs to happen for you to trust God more than you do right now?