

Week 2: 18 Months to 3 Years



Developmental Stage: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt

This is the first of many trying stages in the life of your child. As they grow through this stage they will begin to venture out on their own, and even start satisfying some of their own needs by trying to feed themselves, dress themselves, etc. The goal in this stage is to instill a sense of autonomy at the most basic level.

While they still need to be protected against things that are dangerous or harmful to them, we can overdo the protection (as weird as that may sound). Parents who are too restrictive at this stage refuse to allow them to perform tasks they are capable of doing, ridicule early attempts at those tasks, or demand too much too soon. However, if that self-sufficient behavior is encouraged, a sense of being able to handle problems on their own begins to take deep roots, and that will pay huge dividends in their future.

A World of Faith to Explore:

1. What were some of the tangible faith-related items you can remember from your early years?
2. What types of books do you have or have you seen that are faith-focused and durable enough for children at this age?
3. What non-book items have you seen that are safe for this age and faith-focused?

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The Words of Faith

1. Take a moment to read the story of Noah in Genesis 6-8. If you already know the story make sure you notice two things: Noah never speaks, and a repeating theme (seen clearest in 6:22 and 7:5) is that Noah obeyed God. Now decide on the main point you see in the scripture (there are several valid options).
2. As a group decide what elements of the story are most important.
3. Develop three to four simple sentences to convey they point and the elements you decided upon.
4. Share them with the rest of the class.

Prayer in the Second Year

1. What are some things you would like to pray for them in this stage?
2. What are some of the things they will be struggling with in this stage? How can you pray for those things?
3. How might you express the first and second set of issues in simple sentences when you are praying with them?

Questions to Ponder:

1. What are some of the things you have done in the past that you felt connected you with God? How have you autonomously sought him?
2. When can you carve out a couple moments to spend with God?
3. When will you start that?
4. Is there anything you need before you can start?

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