



WEEK FIVE

JOHN 3:16

God loved us so much  
He gave us His Son, Jesus.

SAY  
THIS

WHAT IS WITH YOU  
WHEREVER YOU GO?  
GOD'S WORD IS WITH ME  
WHEREVER I GO.



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DO  
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CUDDLE TIME

Cuddle up with your child this month and pray, "Dear God, thank You for loving us so much You gave us Your Son, Jesus, to be our friend forever. I pray [child's name] will never forget how much [he/she] is loved by You. In Jesus' name, amen."

REMEMBER THIS

"I have hidden your word in my heart."  
Psalm 119:11, NIV

BASIC  
TRUTH

GOD MADE ME. GOD LOVES ME.  
JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.

DO  
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## WHAT YOU SHOULD BE STRIVING FOR AS A PARENT

By Jeff Brodie

There are no perfect parents, and there are no perfect kids. So what is the ideal family? What should be our goal?

When I look at my family, there is a tension between what is real and what is ideal. While I should be a patient parent, I can find myself making mistakes and pulling my hair out every day. God sets out some great ideals for us as parents. The big question is:

Will I abandon ideals, or lower my standards, just to make me feel better about my parenting?

OR Will I accept that even if I won't be the ideal parent, I need to parent toward ideals?

Here are three ways I find myself lowering my standards as a parent:

1. Quietly judging the parents around me. Sometimes pointing out the mistakes in others is motivated by a need to make us feel better about ourselves. We can find ourselves judging, gossiping, or critiquing the parents around us (or their kids) as an escape from focusing on our own need to improve how we lead our own children.

2. Blaming my own parent.

At times, we can find ourselves blaming the past for our parenting mistakes today. We sometimes need to be reminded that the bad habits we inherit are meant to

be broken, not to be blamed. Our past shouldn't be an excuse to not parent towards an ideal, but a springboard towards something better.

3. Excusing ordinary situations by calling them extraordinary.

So often my parenting excuses start with claiming that my current situation is an exception to the ideal: "The reason I don't spend time with my kids is because I'm so much busier than everyone else." By claiming our situation is extraordinary gives us an excuse to lower our standards.

So, how do we handle the tension between what's real and what's ideal?

The answer: We take our cues from God who models this for us. One of the mysteries of God is His ability to hold up ideals for me to aim towards, but to hold out His arms with grace because He knows I won't always meet them—all with the goal of seeing me grow in my faith as a person and a parent.

You'll never be a perfect parent, but you can strive for what's best, while understanding that God is ready to forgive and walk alongside you every step of the way.

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and parenting resources, visit:  
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