

APPENDIX C



Families Growing Faith Additional Feedback Engagement Summary Report

25 Total Responses

20 Complete

June 1-20, 2025

Q1. Can you tell us about two or three personal goals/desires you have for your own spirituality and personal growth?

Core Spiritual Practices

The most frequently mentioned goals center around establishing and deepening fundamental spiritual disciplines:

- **Bible study and scripture engagement** - Many respondents want to read through the Bible, understand it better historically and contextually, memorize verses, and find practical ways to apply biblical teachings
- **Prayer and quiet time with God** - A strong desire for more consistent prayer life, including intercession for others and simply listening to God rather than just asking for things
- **Spiritual stillness and reflection** - Multiple people mentioned wanting to incorporate quiet time, meditation, and being present with God into their busy lives

Relational and Community Aspects

- **Family spiritual life** - Several responses focused on leading family worship, finding meaningful prayers and blessings for daily family activities, and modeling faith for children
- **Community connection** - Desires to connect with other like-minded families, join spiritual book clubs, attend Sunday school, and engage more deeply with their congregations
- **Parenting guidance** - Seeking wisdom for navigating different stages of parenting, especially with older teens and young adults

Personal Growth and Character Development

- **Balance and peace** - Goals around finding life balance, cultivating inner calmness, experiencing more joy, and learning to rest
- **Peacemaking skills** - Interest in developing conflict resolution abilities, healthy dialogue skills, and practical peacemaking
- **Authentic faith expression** - Wanting to live faith boldly, find words to express beliefs, and integrate spiritual practices meaningfully into daily routines

Social Justice and Service

- **Justice work** - Understanding how faith motivates working for justice, addressing community injustices, and breaking cycles of addiction, hate, and poverty
- **Ministry calling** - Responding to daily calls to ministry and service

Common Challenges

Many respondents expressed guilt or frustration about inconsistent spiritual practices, with busy family life and daily responsibilities often crowding out time for God. There's a recurring theme of knowing the benefits of spiritual engagement but struggling to prioritize it consistently.

The responses reveal a common thread of seeking deeper, more integrated spiritual lives that encompass personal growth, family relationships, community engagement, and social justice work.

Q2. What are two or three goals/desires that you have for your children's faith and spirituality?

Core Spiritual Foundation

These parents want their children to **know and experience God's love** as a lived reality, not just an abstract concept. They emphasize developing an authentic, personal relationship with Jesus that provides security and strength throughout life. Many specifically want their children to understand that God's love extends to the whole world, fostering a global perspective.

Faith as Personal Journey

A strong theme emerges around children **developing their own faith** rather than simply inheriting their parents' beliefs. Parents want their children to be curious, ask hard questions, and feel safe exploring doubts without shame. They emphasize the importance of children finding their own peace and authentic spiritual path.

Practical Faith Expression

These parents desire their children to **live out their faith actively** through love and service to others. Many specifically mention Anabaptist values of peace, service, and simplicity. They want faith to connect to daily life and guide practical decisions, not remain compartmentalized.

Biblical and Spiritual Literacy

Among the respondent group, there's widespread interest in children **knowing Scripture and biblical stories** in age-appropriate ways. Parents want to return to regular Bible story time, incorporate meaningful prayers and liturgy into daily routines, and help children understand their faith heritage and "where we come from as people of faith."

Community and Belonging

The parents emphasize the importance of **church community** as a welcoming, safe space for faith exploration. They want their children to prioritize gathering with other believers and experience the support of a faith community.

Spiritual Practices and Resilience

Many of the parents want their children to develop **spiritual habits and practices** that will help them through life's challenges. This includes prayer, connecting with God's presence, and having tools for times of distress.

Values-Based Living

These parents want their children to **define and live by guiding values** rooted in their faith, with the courage to be different from the world when necessary while remaining engaged with it. They emphasize compassion, love for others, and the strength to resist negative influences.

The overarching desire is for children to have a vibrant, questioning, lived faith that shapes how they see themselves, treat others, and navigate the world.

Q3. Describe the result(s) or outcome you expect from the purchase/use of a faith-related resource (e.g. a Shine product or similar) for your family?

Core Spiritual Goals

These families primarily seek resources that will help them **feel closer to God** and **deepen their understanding of faith**. They want materials that ground children in biblical truths while making faith more accessible and less intimidating to discuss.

Family Connection & Dialogue

A major theme is fostering **meaningful family conversations about faith**. Parents want creative prompts and tools that facilitate open dialogue, help articulate beliefs, and provide vocabulary for discussing spiritual matters together.

Practical Integration

These families desire resources that **integrate seamlessly into daily life** - whether through children's books, bedtime devotions, or easy activities requiring minimal preparation. They want structured yet flexible materials for regular family use.

Child Development & Understanding

Parents expect these resources to help their children:

- Better understand denominational values and sound theology
- Connect biblical stories to their contemporary experiences
- Learn how to apply faith principles to everyday decisions at school and play
- Develop a foundation grounded in God's love

Engagement & Accessibility

There's a strong emphasis on resources being **fun, interactive, and engaging** - something children look forward to rather than resist. Parents want materials that leave room for wonder and questions while creating "holy space" for families to share together.

Comprehensive Faith Practices

Several responses mentioned wanting resources that incorporate multiple faith practices: praying together, worshipping together, serving together, and celebrating together as a family unit.

The overarching theme is that the families want accessible, engaging tools that strengthen both individual faith and family bonds while making spiritual education a natural, joyful part of daily life.

Q4. What kind of endorsements recommendations or reviews do you find most helpful when considering faith-related learning materials for your children or home?

Most Valued Sources of Recommendations

Personal Networks: The strongest preference is for recommendations from trusted personal connections - friends, other parents in their church, and people they know personally. Many respondents emphasized wanting reviews from "people like me" with similar circumstances (other parents with young children, similar age ranges).

Theological Alignment: Respondents want recommendations from people who share their theological perspectives and denominational backgrounds. Specific mentions included Mennonite/Anabaptist traditions, Church of the Brethren (COB), and progressive theological viewpoints.

Educational Expertise: Reviews from teachers, curriculum writers, and those with educational backgrounds are valued for their professional insight into what works well for different age groups.

Other considerations

Inclusivity and Diversity: Several respondents specifically seek materials that support theological inclusivity, diversity of abilities and appearances, and different stages of faith development while leaving room for questions and wonder.

Preview Access: Multiple respondents prefer seeing actual samples or previews of materials rather than relying solely on recommendations, wanting to assess format, engagement level, and family fit.

Practical Details: Information about recommended ages, group sizes, and ease of teacher preparation is important for practical implementation.

Respondents value testimonials that demonstrate how materials have:

- Enlivened faith and sparked meaningful conversations
- Helped children understand and imagine faith
- Generated thoughtful questions and profound insights from children
- Addressed immediate spiritual needs and improved prayer lives

The overall pattern shows a preference for trusted, personal recommendations combined with the ability to preview materials and understand their practical application and theological orientation.

Q5. What kind of information or samples would be most helpful to you when considering faith-related learning materials for your children or home?

Sample Content - Nearly every respondent emphasized wanting to see actual examples from the materials, including sample pages, lessons, devotionals, activities, or discussion questions. Parents want to preview the content before purchasing to assess quality and appropriateness.

Age Appropriateness - Multiple families stressed the importance of clear age range indicators and materials that match their children's developmental stage and existing Bible knowledge level.

Scope and Sequence - Parents want to understand the broader curriculum structure, including topic progression, table of contents, lesson formats, and how content builds over time.

Format and Implementation Details - Families need practical information about what's expected of parents, time commitments, required materials, and whether content works for mixed-age groups or family study.

Additional Helpful Elements:

- Visual components (pictures, illustrations)
- Diversity representation in materials
- Music and picture book recommendations
- Discussion questions for extended conversation
- Cost information
- Writing style that matches family preferences
- Strong Jesus-centered content

Key Insight: Parents want enough preview material to make informed decisions about whether resources align with their family's needs, theological perspective, and practical constraints. The ability to see actual content samples appears to be the most universally requested feature across all responses.