

LET'S CELEBRATE

It's summer and if you have little ones you are probably looking for some fun things to do. So, have a party! People love parties! Celebrating is a BIG deal and it is a big deal to God. Just think about the times He commanded His people to take vacations and have big dinners together. In the Bible, they are called "feasts" or "festivals," and there were seven of them during one calendar year. Jesus's first miracle was at a wedding party. He made sure they had plenty of wine for celebrating. Celebrating is a good and healthy thing to do. It is especially effective in little lives. So don't wait until their birthdays or Christmas—find a reason *now* to CELEBRATE!

- Potty-training
 - A new baby in the family
 - School is out
 - Grew an inch
 - Learned to ride a bike
 - Learned to tie shoes
 - Caught a ball ten times
 - Learned a song
 - Memorized a Bible verse
 - Memorized the books of the Bible
- (They can do it! Use music.)
- Told someone about Jesus

Have you heard these words, **"Look, Mommy, I DID IT ALL BY MYSELF!"** YAHOO! Have a PARTY.

There is no end of creative ideas for celebrating. Here are some fun party/celebration ideas from my family life:

- Make cupcakes with a favorite color icing.
- Have a spur-of-the-moment parade.
- Dance and make up a silly song: “You tied your shoes, good for you! You tied your shoes, something new! YAY! Good for you!”
- Draw a picture of the event.
- Make a memory box and put in a token or scrap of something from the event/day/answered prayer so you will remember.
- Make a T-shirt.
- Plant a tree or a flower.
- Establish a tradition.
- Create a proclamation: “Hear ye, hear ye, may it be known by all that _____ rode his bicycle all by himself today.”
- When my daughter was five, she broke her arm so had a cast party! Friends and family came to our house to sign her cast.
- Show your children how you celebrated them before they were born. Show pictures of a baby shower, gifts, preparing their room, baptism, etc.

Make some FUN memories this summer – a picnic, playground at the park, sit outside and listen to birds. Let them dig and get hands dirty, go to the library, READ to them.

Don't forget to reward them for good things—obedience

and achievement. God rewards our obedience both here and in eternity (See Matthew 5:12; Hebrews 11:6).

LAUGH A LOT

(Record your giggles before you forget!)

Our daughter was sitting in my husband's lap as he read a Bible story to her. She was looking at his face intently. He paused and said, "Isn't that a wonderful story? And God loves you just like He loved Daniel and took care of him in the lions' den." Marilyn was gazing up and nodding. She said, "Daddy?"

"Yes, sweetheart."

"Why do you have hair in your nose?"

Come on – that's funny! Thankfully I took the time to write that one in my journal.

Our children are God's gifts; chose to have laugh, have fun, celebrate them, and CELEBRATE GOD with your little ones!

"They (the people) shall eagerly celebrate Your abundant goodness, and joyfully sing of Your righteousness." Psalm 145:7

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