PARENT/PASTOR EDITION

BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY™
ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6!
DEAR PARENTS AND PASTORS,

At Focus on the Family, we’re excited to sponsor a nationwide event for students: **Bring Your Bible to School Day! This year’s event is scheduled for Thursday, October 6, 2016.**

We’ve launched this initiative as a timely, vital way to empower modern-day Esthers and Daniels to be courageous in standing for their faith.

Statistics have shown that fewer Americans than ever before are identifying as Christians or truly following biblical principles. That’s why we want to come alongside you as parents and church leaders to embolden the next generation—our kids—to take ownership of their personal faith in Christ.

The resources you’ll find in this guide will equip you to build students’ confidence in their ability to openly express their deeply held biblical faith in the public square.

Have you noticed the increase in news stories about students being told they can’t engage in simple faith-based activities, like reading their Bible during free time or praying during lunch? That’s why it’s so important to bolster our kids with the knowledge that they do still have religious freedoms protected under the U.S. Constitution—and they don’t have to be ashamed of or hide their deeply held religious beliefs.

The good news is, when spiritual darkness increases, the light only shines brighter—and, on Bring Your Bible to School Day, thousands of students across the country will shine that light and bring their Bibles to school to celebrate religious freedom and share God’s hope with friends.

We pray this initiative will remind students that the Bible is something that should be celebrated, not banned—and has a powerful message of hope and love for humanity.
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Fun sticker, T-shirt and poster designs—as well as invitation fliers, Conversation Cards and more.

Find more resources at bringyourbible.org
What: It’s an annual religious-freedom event for students sponsored by Focus on the Family in October.

When: Most students participate on Thursday, October 6, 2016. But if students have a conflict, they can organize the event on an alternative day close to the nationwide event date. (This guide includes a poster version that allows students to write in an alternative date.)

Who: Students from kindergarten all the way up to the college level can participate! (Elementary and teen versions of the guide are available to download at FocusOnTheFamily.com/BringYourBible.)

Where: Students nationwide lead the effort at their respective schools. It’s voluntary and student led—meaning it’s up to students, including those in Christian clubs and youth groups—to participate by leading Bring Your Bible activities at their own school.

Why: Equip and inspire Christian students to be a voice of hope, understand their religious freedoms and express their biblical beliefs in a loving, Christ-centered way.
STEPS TO EQUIP STUDENTS

STEP 1: SHARE THE GUIDES

DOWNLOAD THE ELEMENTARY AND TEEN STUDENT GUIDES

and share them with the students in your home and at church so they can have access to the kid-friendly resources and activities!

Available at: FocusOnTheFamily.com/BringYourBible

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

with other participants, parents and pastors on our Bring Your Bible Facebook®, Twitter® and Instagram® pages!

WATCH:

ONE FAMILY’S PERSPECTIVE—WHY WE NEED BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY

BRING YOUR BIBLE PARENT-PASTOR EDITION
HELP SUPPORT STUDENTS—
and let families in your church know about the event—
by making announcements during services and in youth
and children's groups. Liven up your announcements
with one of the videos found in this guide or at
BRINGYOURBIBLE.ORG.

On the following pages, you will
also find church inserts you can
copy, cut out and use to insert in
your church bulletin. CLICK HERE
to also access them online.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Wondering how you can support this initiative
as a parent? Or what to do if your school
allows parents to share announcements about
programs their children are participating in?
GET TIPS & SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT

Access a free banner
design to help you
promote the event
in the foyer or at
children's and youth
group meetings.
Did you know that students have the right to bring their Bibles to school? At Focus on the Family, we believe the Bible has a powerful message of hope and love for humanity—something that should be celebrated, not discouraged. We also believe in the cherished freedoms our Founding Fathers fought to give us. Do you share our desire to equip the next generation to boldly exercise their religious freedoms? Then you'll love this event for students on October 6—Bring Your Bible to School Day.

It's a day when students across the country can celebrate their religious freedom and share God's love through a simple act: bringing their Bibles to school.

LEARN MORE AT BRINGYOURBIBLE.ORG

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" Matthew 5:16
HELP SPREAD THE WORD
among church families—and across the nation!

5 FUN WAYS TO BUILD THE BUZZ:

TIP: Use the #BringYourBible hashtag to help spread the word nationwide!

USE THE “TELL A FRIEND” PAGE on BringYourBible.org to share Twitter®, Facebook® or Instagram® posts with friends. It’s easy—just pick your favorite image or message and click “share”!

POST YOUR FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE, using the #BringYourBible hashtag on Twitter®, Facebook® and Instagram®! CLICK HERE for scripture ideas!

ON FACEBOOK® TBTS (THROWBACK THURSDAYS), post a picture of you when you were little with your Bible—or post a pic of one of your first Bibles.

JOIN THE BRING YOUR BIBLE FACEBOOK® EVENT and invite your friends—and your Christian club and youth group members—to join the big day! (Click image.)

Your church youth group members can SHARE A “GROUPFIE” PIC of themselves with their Bibles. Students can also share pics of themselves doing Bring Your Bible activities, such as making T-shirts or cutting out Conversation Cards.

STEP 4: POST & TWEET!
Looking for fun ways to encourage and rally alongside kids participating in Bring Your Bible to School Day? Here are some ideas for parents and pastors:

**Step 5: Host Activities & Lessons**

Six Ways to Encourage Kids ... Before and After Bring Your Bible to School Day

Make it a family occasion—bring your Bible to work! When kids bring their Bibles to school, parents, adult siblings or youth leaders can support the movement by bringing their Bibles to work! Schedule a family time that evening—or time for your youth group to meet—to talk about what the experience was like for all of you.

“My 23-year-old son, Tre, took his Bible to work, which sparked conversation about our Lord Jesus Christ. My 15-year-old daughter, Destinee, gave one of the [Bibles] to her bus driver which sparked a conversation on the bus ride to school!”

—Annette, mother of three in Pennsylvania

As a family, you can also give a Bible to your child’s school bus driver. “The Lord pressed upon my heart the desire to give one of our family Bibles to my children’s bus driver with a note, thanking her for making bus safety a priority and sharing [Bring Your Bible to School Day] as a special day and why. She was so grateful to receive the gift, given by Michael [a second-grader] after all the kids got off the bus.”

—Tracey, mother of two in North Carolina

Host a Bring Your Bible preparation party! Plan a party and provide fun snacks so students can enjoy preparing Bring Your Bible materials with their friends (including the sticker and T-shirt designs, posters and Conversation Cards provided in the guide). Use the popcorn “Be the Salt” activity in this guide (PAGE 11) for a creative way to tie in the snack time.

Watch Tracey: Sharing with Your Kids’ Bus Driver!
Please note that the image contains text that appears to be missing or distorted, making it difficult to accurately transcribe.

**Sponsor a Church Bible Celebration Sunday**

the weekend before the event. Shara, a “mother of three and wife of 26 years” in Missouri, shared these ideas for “Bible stations” or booths a church can host:

- **Art display:** Invite children and youth at your church to submit their artwork, poetry and other creative displays celebrating the power and beauty of God’s Word.

- **Bible-repair station:** Host a booth where individuals can have their Bibles cleaned and repaired. (Volunteers can polish leather Bibles and repair pages with acid-free tape.)

- **Dramatic portrayals:** Invite people with a gift for acting to portray an ancient scribe who talks with booth visitors about how the Bible was recorded and preserved—or to portray another Bible-history character such as Martin Luther or William Tyndale.

- **Family Bible display:** Invite families to temporarily contribute historically significant or ornate family Bibles for display—along with a card explaining why the Bible means so much to their family.

The Wednesday night before Bring Your Bible to School Day (on Thursday, October 6), **organize Bible-themed activities for youth** and include time to pray for the students participating nationwide. (See the sample lessons/activities beginning on PAGE 11).

Make it a family tradition! The night before he participated in Bring Your Bible to School Day, 11-year-old Greyson received something he’ll always treasure—the Bible that his dad had used when he was the same age as Greyson. Watch Greyson’s story:

Encourage your Kids on Bring Your Bible to School Day!

CLICK HERE To get more tips from Shara for Celebrating the Bible at Church
OVERVIEW: Ever heard the phrase, “Shine your light”? When we “shine a light” that means we are shining something brighter than our surroundings. And to shine a really bright light means we need to be willing to be different than what’s around us. Being different for Jesus is all about sharing our faith with others and living our faith in public.

Bringing your Bible to a public place and talking about it allows you to share your faith in simple ways with family and friends. Learn how you can be a Bible ambassador!

BOTTOM LINE: Sharing the Bible is part of sharing your faith!

OPENING ACTIVITY: GET SOME FLAVOR!

SUPPLIES: Popcorn, bowls, salt, flavorings as you like

DIRECTIONS: Pop plain popcorn and salted popcorn for your group. If there are allergies, try plain and salted rice cakes. For younger children, make sure you post a food-allergy alert at the parent drop-off location. Have your students try the plain popcorn first.

SAY: It’s not too exciting, is it? In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus talked about an important element that would help this popcorn. Do you know what it is? (Allow for answers.) That’s right, salt! Let’s read Matthew 5:13. (Have a volunteer read it.) In the next few verses, Jesus also compares us to light, but let’s stick with salt for now.

Here’s the good stuff (bring out the popcorn with salt). Tastes different, doesn’t it? You can tell that the flavor is different. In this scripture, Jesus is saying that you and I are the salt of the earth. If flavor makes salt different, how are we different? (Allow for answers.) That’s right—we bring a different “flavor” because we know Jesus as Lord and Savior. We want to follow Jesus, not the world.

But what does the verse say if the salt loses its saltiness? It’s so bland that it’s no longer good for anything. Now, we know that God says He will never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:8; Hebrews 13:5). However, if we choose to live like the world and not by God’s ways, we are no longer different. Just like the salt, we lose our saltiness.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12.)

BIBLE ACTIVITY FOR KIDS:

BE THE SALT: SHARE YOUR FAITH!

BIBLE REFERENCES: Matthew 5:13; Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:20

DISCOUNT FOR FOCUS ON THE FAMILY’S ADVENTURES IN ODYSSEY CLUBHOUSE™ MAGAZINE FOR KIDS!

Clubhouse, published by Focus for kids ages 8-12, provides engaging, Christ-centered content for kids. click here to receive a $5 discount!
**TEACH:** I want to talk to you about ways that you can be salt and light for Jesus Christ. Turn with me to Romans 12:2. (Have a volunteer read this.)

"WE ARE THEREFORE CHRIST’S AMBASSADORS, AS THOUGH GOD WERE MAKING HIS APPEAL THROUGH US." 2 Corinthians 5:20

What does “conform” mean? It means to be shaped similar to something. The verse is telling us not to conform to the pattern of this world, so we shouldn’t shape our life around the things of this world. What patterns are of this world? (fame, fortune, power, material stuff, self) The verse says to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. To be transformed is to be changed with a restored mind, a different mind.

How can we be transformed? (Allow for answers: reading our Bible, praying, helping people, etc.) Those are all great answers. When you are transformed for Jesus, you are a different person. Just like the salt in the popcorn, people will notice. 2 Corinthians 5:20 says we are Christ’s ambassadors. We represent the difference that Christ can make in someone’s life.

It’s good to represent Jesus and the gift of eternal life that ONLY He can give. When you live out that difference, you are basically sharing your faith. Let’s make a list of ways you can live out your faith—how can you live out your faith? (Students learn through using all learning styles, so consider allowing your students time to interact or create lists in teams of two or three; speaking and writing helps students retain information more.)

**TIE IN:** Another way that you can share your faith in a simple way is by carrying your Bible to school on Thursday, October 6. Carrying a Bible is a religious freedom, and one of the quickest ways to lose our religious freedoms—and ultimately lose our freedom to share about God’s love—is to stop using our constitutional free-speech rights. Just like a muscle in your body, we need to exercise our rights to talk about God and His Word, even though at times we may feel intimidated or afraid.

**Apply It:**

**Tag Game**

To play, decide on someone who is “it.” That person should tag others. When others are tagged, they latch arms on either side, and the people on the ends continue tagging until everyone is tagged.

As we tell others about Jesus, more people will know about the “Good News” from the Bible and will live in God’s love and light!

The lessons and activities on the previous pages were contributed by Christi Lynn, who serves in student ministry at her local church and also leads the ADVENTURES IN ODYSSEY marketing team at Focus on the Family.
Focus on the Family’s Adventures in Odyssey®—an award-winning audio drama series for kids ages 8-12—has created a special episode about Bring Your Bible to School Day!

Hear this exclusive sneak-preview excerpt from the episode. (The full version will be live in September! Learn more about how to access the full version at the bottom of the page.)

**Family Activity Time: Hearing and Following God’s Voice**

Lexie and Sydney, middle-school students, led a Bring Your Bible event at their school that began with prayer. During their event, more than 70 students met at the flagpole with their Bibles and prayed together. “I said, everybody grab a hand … and I just started praying,” said Sydney. “I’ve never experienced God speaking through me before until this … In that moment, I really did feel the presence of the Lord upon me, and I was like … this is Jesus.”

**How Did Lexie and Sydney Have Such Great Faith?**

God’s Word tells us that “faith comes from hearing, and hearing comes from the word of Christ.” Romans 10:17

**Here Are Some Fun Games and Activities to Illustrate This Verse!**

**Be a Bible Ambassador Bible Study & Play-Doh® Activity**

**Faith by Hearing Obstacle Course Activity**

**Did You Like the Sneak Preview? Want Access to More Kid-Friendly Episodes?**

Access the full version of the Bring Your Bible to School Day-themed episode (live on Sept. 1) by joining Focus on the Family’s Odyssey Adventure Club™! In addition to this special episode, you will receive exclusive, member-only benefits, including:

- Unlimited streaming of over 800 episodes
- An Adventures in Odyssey Clubhouse magazine subscription
- Daily devotionals, exclusive new episodes, web activities and more
- Try a free two-week trial of Odyssey Adventure Club TODAY!

(After trial, you can continue the fun with a monthly membership for just $9.99 per month! The full version of the Bring Your Bible to School Day-themed episode will be the featured in September.)
**MYTH: Students can’t read the Bible or pray at public schools.**

**FACT:** Students have the right to talk about their religious beliefs, pray, read scripture and invite other classmates to join them in these activities—as long as students are voluntarily participating in and leading the activities and they are not disrupting school instruction time.

**MYTH: Students can’t distribute religious-themed materials at a public school.**

**FACT:** Schools can’t impose an outright ban on religious-themed materials if they already allow students to distribute nonreligious materials. But as with any materials, schools can prohibit distribution that is disruptive.

**How Do These Rights Apply to Bring Your Bible to School Day?**

**Click here** to read the legal memo.

**Test Your Knowledge—Invite Students to Take This Religious Freedoms Quiz!**

**Click Here**

**Get the Facts:**
For a one-pager on students’ rights, answers to frequently asked questions and more, visit the “Your Rights” resource center.

**Watch:**
A student shares his story.
ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP STUDENTS WHO WANT TO PARTICIPATE BY LETTING THEM KNOW ABOUT THESE RESOURCES. THEY CAN:

- PRINT STICKERS [CLICK HERE](#) to access the sticker designs!
- MAKE T-SHIRTS [CLICK HERE](#) to access this fun design.

**TIP:** Remind students to let their school officials know about their plans to put up posters and distribute Conversation Cards and fliers!

**MORE FREE-SPEECH TOOLS!** On the following pages, you will find …

**CONVERSATION CARDS** Page 16
Students can make copies and cut these out before Bring Your Bible to School Day. They can plan to distribute the cards before and after class (in a way that won’t disrupt instruction time). [CLICK HERE](#) TO ACCESS ONLINE.

**FLIERS** Page 19
If students want to invite friends to participate before the event, let them know they have access to these invitation fliers! [CLICK HERE](#) TO ACCESS ONLINE.

**POSTERS** Pages 17 & 18
Students can use these to let others know about the upcoming event. A non-dated version of the poster with space for writing in an alternative date is included—in case the official event date conflicts with something already scheduled at their school. [CLICK HERE](#) TO ACCESS ONLINE.

**VERSE CARDS** Page 20
Students can encourage their friends with this “pass it on” Bible verse activity!
What if there is a God who cares so much about each of us that He gave us a personal message of hope?

I brought my Bible to school with me today because I believe that this is true—that God does exist, that He loves us, and that He wants to have a relationship with us. I believe that this message is found in the Bible, which talks about how God sent His son, Jesus Christ, to this earth to give His life for people like you and me.

I also believe that one of the main things that makes our country great is the constitutional freedom we have to voluntarily talk about God. That’s why I’m participating in “Bring Your Bible to School Day”—because I want to celebrate our religious freedom!
BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY™

OCTOBER 6, 2016

LEARN MORE AT BRINGYOURBIBLE.ORG

“LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE” MATTHEW 5:16

#BRINGYOURBIBLE
BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE"
MATTHEW 5:16

LEARN MORE AT BRINGYOURBIBLE.ORG

#BRINGYOURBIBLE
“LETS YOUR LIGHT SHINE” 

LEARN MORE AT BRINGYOURBIBLE.ORG

BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY

OCTOBER 6, 2016

BRING YOUR BIBLE TO SCHOOL DAY

OCTOBER 6, 2016
On Bring Your Bible to School Day—or another day that same week—students and their friends can organize a “pass it on” or “pay it forward” type of activity using the scripture verse cutouts on this page. They can challenge each other to give at least one of these encouraging verses to a classmate—and then ask the classmate who receives it to then “pass the verse forward” to someone else, and so on—so that eventually the verses will be shared and discussed among lots of students at their school.

**Tip:** Remind students to only share the scripture cards in a way that doesn’t interfere with school instruction time—giving them out before or after class, or during free-time periods.

“**Come to me, all who labor ... and I will give you rest ... learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.**”

Matthew 11:28-29

“The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”

Psalm 34:18

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

“He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary ... but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.”

Isaiah 40:29-31
Step 8: Encourage Students

That they have the power to …

“SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD … HOLDING FAST TO THE WORD OF LIFE.”
PHIL. 2:15-16

Biblical Truth to Live By …
Remind students that they can be encouraged by God’s assurances that:

HIS WORD NEVER RETURNS VOID. ISAIAH 55:11
YOUTH ARE POWERFUL EXAMPLES. 1 TIM 4:12

Thank you for sharing Bring Your Bible to School Day with the youth in your life—and encouraging them to grow in confidence in sharing about God’s Word and Christ’s love!

Share Stories: Click here to share these real-life stories from students who participated in the event!

Share Videos:
Watch and discuss videos on the BringYourBible.org website with students.

Share With Us:
Let us know how you as a parent or church leader encouraged Bring Your Bible students! Share with us how Bring Your Bible to School Day went for your kids.

Stay Tuned:
Watch for our “Faith and Courage on Campus” e-newsletter featuring stories from this year’s event—as well as announcements about other student events sponsored by Focus on the Family and the latest news on religious-freedom issues in education.

Thank you for sharing Bring Your Bible to School Day with the youth in your life—and encouraging them to grow in confidence in sharing about God’s Word and Christ’s love!

The Bible is the Word of God and the foundation of our faith. Bring it. Share it. Live it.™

BRING IT. SHARE IT. LIVE IT.™ October 6, 2016

BRING YOUR BIBLE PARENT-PASTOR EDITION

*All Bible quotes from ESV and NIV.