

ParentPause

Encouragement for Parents of Preschoolers

January 2018



January is a month with a unique opportunity built into it — a chance to press the restart button on our lives. This chance to look at our priorities and make changes to how we are living them out is exciting, and can last all year — in fact, it's something God encourages!

Take encouragement from Scripture

The Bible is full of places where God acknowledges that humans are really skilled at getting into messes that they can't get out of by themselves. It is also full of His narrative of rescue and redemption. In Jesus, we have hope from our hopelessness, not just once through our salvation, but throughout our lives and circumstances too. This is good news for parents because nothing makes us aware of our failings as much as parenting does!

His mercies are new

As we look to God for hope and a changed approach to our lives, it's helpful to remember that He has

given us verses in Scripture that encourage us to find fresh hope in Him not just every so often, but every day and even every moment! Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV) states, *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.* Did you catch that? God's mercies for you are new every morning, in the midst of all the daily circumstances of your life!

Take encouragement and press "restart" where necessary

God's process of growth in your life involves moments where you realize there's something that needs to be reset or changed in how you live. This is an excellent invitation to remember that His mercies are new every morning, that He loves you and your children, and has good intentions for you. It also is a chance, in light of His mercy and love, to make the brave step to reset a particular pattern you might be in!



MEMORY

A child's brain is rapidly developing from infancy onward, building connections, understanding, and memory. The preschool years are a key window for this development!

Here are some basic things you can do as a parent to reinforce the things you want your young child to remember, especially as it relates to spiritual things.

Repetition

When you repeat something with your child many times, you are building a stronger pathway in his or her brain that will link to that information.

Stories

Embed the things you want them to remember in a story form. A story lasts much longer in our memory than a set of facts.

Visual Association

Find a picture that you can use to help your child remember something. Refer to it in connection with what you want him or her to know!

Challenge: Spend time with your child coloring this picture of Puggle the platypus celebrating the new year. Use the opportunity to talk about how we have the chance to make new beginnings, thanks to Jesus. Encourage him or her with the verse about how God has fresh mercy for everyone each day.

Bonus Challenge: Hang up this picture as a reminder to yourself and your child that God always has mercy for us to have the fresh start of His forgiveness. When you get into a rough spot and need a restart, point to the picture and decide how you need to begin again!

EVERY DAY IS A NEW BEGINNING!

*... His mercies
... are new every morning ...*
Lamentations 3:22-23



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