

# From Wonder to Endurance

## A PARENT'S DEVOTIONAL FOR FORMING FAITH AT HOME

### Introduction

Parenting teenagers often feels like living in the middle of 100 important conversations — some beautiful, some confusing, some unfinished.

#### **We created this devotional for you.**

Deep breath, this isn't another task to complete! It is simply a set aside space to welcome your own formation while you are in the midst of helping guide the formation of someone else. Because the most powerful discipleship rarely begins with what we say — it begins with who we are becoming.

**From Wonder to Endurance** is a seven-part journey through themes that shape lasting faith: Wonder, Revelation, Doubt, Wisdom, Influence, Practice, and Endurance.

You can move through this devotional in whatever rhythm serves you best — over seven days, seven weeks, or at your own pace. Linger where you need to. Revisit a week that feels unfinished. Let it meet you where you are.

Our hope is simple: that as you walk with Jesus more deeply, you will feel encouraged, more confident, and less alone in this sacred work of parenting.

Remember, those 100 conversations are exactly the point. They make up one beautiful conversation with our teens that lasts an entire lifetime.

#### **We're honored to walk with you.**

*the Axis Team*



# From Wonder to Endurance

## WEEK 1: WONDER

### Devotional

*“When I consider...”*

Ok, Pause — Selah.

When was the last time you lingered?

Not scrolled. Not hurried past. Not multitasked beneath the sky— but actually stopped long enough to feel small in the right way.

The psalmist does not simply glance upward; he stays. He lets the night quiet him. For a moment, imagine him far from the noise of torches and towns, the stars scattered in uncountable brilliance overhead. His eyes trace the heavens— one star flickering, then another. He sees not mere beauty, but meaning.

*“The work of your fingers.”*

Such a tender phrase for something so immense. Creation is not described as the product of force, but of touch. The heavens are not mass-produced, they are crafted.

And something in us steadies when we hear that— doesn't it?

Because if the stars are made by fingers, and not machinery, then the universe is not cold. The God who holds galaxies together is not distant. His sovereignty is not sterile. His power is intimate and personal, the cosmos carries His fingerprints.

And then comes the whisper under starlight:  
*“What is mankind that you are mindful of them?”*

The surprise, here, is not that we are small. The surprise is that we are seen.

You know what it feels like to be overlooked — to carry responsibilities no one notices, to hold questions you don't ever voice, to lie awake calculating tomorrow. Most of our lives happen

### Scripture

“When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,  
what is mankind that you are mindful of them,  
human beings that you care for them?”

**PSALM 8:3-4**

at eye level— what must be answered, managed, signed, packed, fixed before dinner or before school drop-off. It's where urgency becomes authority, and what can be measured becomes what feels trustworthy.

And without meaning to, God is slowly resized to fit inside our anxieties.

But Psalm 8 gently lifts our chin.

It reminds us that in God, greatness and gentleness are not competing traits. The One who spins galaxies with effortless command, also bends close with deliberate care. Infinite power and intimate attentiveness dwell together in Him without tension.

### **This is Wonder.**

It isn't sentiment, nor escapism. But the soul rightly oriented in a world charged with the presence of God.

### **Wonder is what happens when the heart catches up to reality.**

And reality is this: your life is not a sealed system. Your home is not held together by your competence alone. Your prayers are not sent high up into empty air. You are not parenting, working, aging, grieving, or hoping alone.



You are held.

Our children are being formed in a culture that says, “Prove it.” Efficiency is prized. Control is comforting. Mystery is suspicious. In that kind of world, wonder can feel childish— indulgent even.

Biblical Wonder is not childish, it is very thought brought to its knees. It is intelligence humbled by glory, and clarity born from surrender.

To recover wonder is to see more truly that:

**God is immeasurably great.**

**And He is wildly near.**

We cannot invite our children into a vision of God we have not inhabited ourselves. So the invitation must begin with us.

Step outside. Let your eyes adjust to the dark. Let your breathing slow. Consider the heavens again.

And remember:

The God who set them in place has not overlooked you.

**He is mindful of you.**

## PRAYER

Creator of heaven and earth,  
Expand my vision of who You are.  
Where I have reduced You to something manageable, enlarge my understanding.  
Teach me to see both Your greatness and Your nearness.  
Form in me a faith that is steady —  
because it rests in you, God, who is both vast and attentive.  
*Amen.*



### Formation Question For You

Have I unintentionally shrunk God to the size of my circumstances?

Where might I need a larger vision of His greatness — and a deeper trust in His care?



### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

When you think about how big the universe is, what do you think that says about God?

### Continue the Conversation

**This week's Conversation Kit on Miracles will help you explore how Scripture frames the miraculous— not as spectacle, but as revelation of who Jesus is.**



## WEEK 2: REVELATION

### Devotional

Let's step into the boat for a moment.

The wind whips across the water, sharp and relentless. Waves slam — hard — against both sides, spraying your face. With every surge, water spills in faster than you can bail it out. The wood groans beneath your feet, threatening to splinter at any moment. The sail snaps overhead. Everywhere you look, the walls are rising. The night is thick and disorienting.

This is not inconvenient.

This is catastrophic.

Surely, you are going to die.

And somewhere in the stern— Jesus is asleep.

You can feel the panic rising in your chest now. You shake Him awake:

*"Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown!?"*

And there it is. The question beneath so many of our own.

*Don't You care?*

*Aren't you paying attention?*

*Are you with me — or not?*

We may not shout it across a lake. But when pressure builds inside our homes... when cultural currents feel strong... when conversations with our teenagers splinter... when outcomes feel uncertain and we can't control the direction of the wind...

The question surfaces quietly:

*Jesus, where are you?*

*Don't you see what's happening?*

*Don't You care?*

He stands.

### Scripture

"He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Quiet! Be still!' Then the wind died down and it was completely calm... They were terrified and asked each other, 'Who then is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!'"

**MARK 4:39-41**

#### **"Quiet. Be still."**

No panic. No urgency. No scrambling. The words are firm and unflustered...almost... parental.

And the storm obeys.

The wind collapses. The waves flatten. The chaos that threatened to swallow them moments before lies still at His command.

And then Mark tells us something surprising: They were **terrified**.

Why?

Because in the Jewish imagination, the sea was more than water. It was chaos. Disorder. The untamable. Only God commands the waters.

And they had just watched Him do it.

The disciples are no longer afraid of the storm. They are standing in awe of the One who commands it.

*"Who then is this?"*

That is the real question of the passage.

Revelation does not simply calm our circumstances. It confronts our assumptions. The disciples thought the crisis was the storm. They thought peace meant the storm stopping. But peace had been with them the whole time.



**Peace is a Person.  
And His name is Jesus.**

This matters deeply for us as parents.

If we quietly believe that Jesus is distant, distracted, or indifferent, our children will sense it. If we live as though peace only comes when circumstances cooperate, our faith will always feel fragile.

The storm revealed more than Jesus' power— it revealed His identity.

Faith does not grow from controlling the waters.

It grows from knowing clearly the One who commands them.

## PRAYER

Lord Jesus,  
When fear rises in me, remind me who You are.  
When I question Your care, steady my vision.  
Form in me a deeper trust — not in the calm of my circumstances, but in Your authority and nearness.  
Teach me to parent from the confidence that peace is not a feeling to chase, but a Person to trust.  
**Amen.**



### Formation Question For You

When pressure builds in my home, what does my response reveal about who I believe Jesus is?

### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

"The disciples asked Jesus, 'Don't you care?' Why do you think that was their first question?"

*(Listen before responding.)*

### Continue the Conversation

**Your teen is not just forming beliefs about miracles.**

**They are forming beliefs about God's character.**

**Is He attentive?  
Is He trustworthy?  
Is He near in chaos?**

**So are you.**

**Revelation is not simply seeing what Jesus can do.**

**It is recognizing who He has always been.**

**Peace was never absent from the boat.**

**They just hadn't seen Him clearly yet.**





# From Wonder to Endurance

## WEEK 3: DOUBT

### Devotional

When Jesus first appeared to the disciples after His resurrection, Thomas wasn't with them. John doesn't tell us why. Perhaps the grief was overwhelming. Maybe he needed to distance himself after the shock and violence of the crucifixion. Whatever the reason, when Jesus stepped into that locked room, Thomas was somewhere else—he missed the moment that profoundly changed the others.

Later, they found him and told him what had happened. *"We have seen the Lord!"*

Imagine being Thomas. The only one not in the room. The only one without the story. He hadn't seen the wounds. While the others were living in Sunday, Thomas was still carrying Friday.

And Thomas responds with words that have followed him for centuries:

***"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."***

We've made Thomas the poster child for doubt. But in context, his words don't sound combative or cynical. They sound cautious—like someone who has been devastated once already and is unwilling to stake hope on the strength of a rumor.

He wasn't asking for more than the others received. They had seen Jesus. They had touched Him. Thomas simply refused to build his life on secondhand faith. If suffering had been real—and he knew it had been, because he watched it happen—then resurrection needed to be just as real. He needed to know that death had not been reinterpreted, but defeated. That hope was not an idea to cling to, but a living Person standing in front of him.

### Scripture

"Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came... So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!'

But he said to them, 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.'

**JOHN 20:24–25**

In that sense, Thomas feels less like a cautionary tale and more like a companion for our moment. We live in a world that instinctively asks for evidence. "Prove it" is the air our culture breathes, and our teens inhale it every day.

They are not content with vague spirituality or borrowed certainty. They want to know whether the resurrection is history or metaphor. Whether Christianity can withstand scrutiny. Whether this faith holds when life falls apart. They are asking the same question Thomas asked: ***Is this real?***

A week later, the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. Jesus appeared and stood among them. After greeting the others, He turned directly to Thomas and repeated his own words back to him: *"Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."*

This is what makes this story so stunning: Jesus does not avoid Thomas. He does not sidestep the skeptic or rebuke him from a distance. There is no recorded shaming—only invitation.



Thomas had asked for proximity, and Jesus gave it. Confronted not with an argument but with a Person, Thomas responded with one of the clearest confessions in the Gospels: **“My Lord and my God.”**

Honest doubt, when it is brought into the light, can become the doorway to a deeper encounter. It is the doubt we hide—left unspoken and unaddressed—that tends to harden us over time.

For parents, this can feel like tender territory. When our kids begin asking hard questions, we often interpret their curiosity as a warning sign. We worry that one thread pulled too hard might unravel everything. We fear that skepticism could mark the beginning of the end.

But Thomas’ story tells a different one.

Jesus is not threatened by questions that are genuinely seeking Him. He does not withdraw from Thomas’ uncertainty; He steps toward it. The resurrection is not presented as a fragile idea that can’t withstand scrutiny. It is embodied reality—flesh and bone, wounds and breath. The risen Christ who still bears scars.

Thomas moves from *“Unless I see…”* to *“My Lord and my God,”* not because he silences his doubt, but because Jesus meets him in the middle of it.

## PRAYER

Risen Lord,  
You know the places where my faith feels steady  
and the places where it feels thin.  
Guard me from fear when questions surface — in me or in my teen.  
Teach me to bring uncertainty into Your presence,  
trusting that You are not fragile.  
Form in me a faith that is honest, embodied, and anchored in who You are.  
**Amen.**



### Formation Question For You

How do I typically respond when doubt surfaces — in myself or in my teen?



### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

“Why do you think Thomas needed to see and touch Jesus for himself?”

*(Listen before responding.)*

### Continue the Conversation

Questions about faith, evidence, and science are not new.

**The Greatest Debate** resource will help you explore the relationship between faith and reason with clarity and confidence.





# From Wonder to Endurance

## WEEK 4: WISDOM

### Devotional

In Acts 17, Paul enters Thessalonica and goes directly to the synagogue — a place where people were well-versed in Scripture and trained in debate. Luke records that Paul “*reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead.*” His approach was deliberate. He did not ask them to suspend their minds; he invited them to engage them.

Many of us inherited our faith from trusted parents, pastors, or leaders. For a season, that was enough. But our teenagers are forming beliefs in a different intellectual climate. They are trained to verify information, evaluate competing truth claims, and question authority. Critical thinking is not optional — it is assumed.

This can feel unsettling if we equate questioning with rebellion. Yet the biblical model suggests otherwise. Paul did not treat scrutiny as a threat; he treated it as an opportunity. He engaged objections with reasoned arguments grounded in Scripture.

In the hands of the Spirit, examination refines rather than erodes. Questioning, when guided well, becomes discernment — the process by which conviction is formed.

**The concern, then, is not that teenagers are asking difficult questions. In fact, it would be more concerning if they stopped!** Questions signal investment. They indicate a faith that is wrestling, not drifting.

Importantly, Paul's reasoning did not replace faith; it supported it. Christianity has always made claims rooted in events — particularly the death and resurrection of Jesus. These are theological claims, but they are also presented in Scripture as historical realities. Faith, in this framework, is not blind acceptance; it is informed trust.

Parents, this one is for us.

If we respond to hard questions with panic, we imply that faith is fragile. If we shut down conversation, we suggest Christianity cannot withstand scrutiny. But when we engage calmly and thoughtfully, we model confidence in the truth.

We do not need to be professional apologists. We will not have immediate answers to every objection. What we can offer is presence: steady engagement, intellectual humility, and a willingness to explore questions together with our teens. Loving God includes loving Him with our minds.

Ultimately, Christian faith rests not on the absence of questions, but on the person of Christ and the truth of His resurrection. If that claim is true, it remains true under scrutiny and examination.

Teenagers' doubts are not endpoints. Properly guided, they can become the pathway from inherited belief to personal conviction.

### Scripture

“As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead.”

**ACTS 17:2-3**



## PRAYER

Lord Jesus,  
You are not threatened by careful thought.  
You are not diminished by honest questions.  
Give me the courage to examine what I believe  
and the humility to keep learning.  
Guard me from defensiveness when doubt surfaces —  
in me or in my teen.  
Form in me a faith that is both thoughtful and steady,  
confident not in my arguments,  
but in You.  
**Amen.**



### Formation Question For You

When questions about faith arise, do I feel anxious or anchored? What might it look like to grow in confidence — not by avoiding hard conversations, but by engaging them?



### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

“How do you see the Christians you know engage in tough conversations?”

### Continue the Conversation

Questions about faith, evidence, and science are not new.

**The Greatest Debate** resource will help you explore the relationship between faith and reason with clarity and confidence.





# From Wonder to Endurance

## WEEK 5: INFLUENCE

### Devotional

Jesus does not say, “Try to become light.”

He says, “You are.”

Identity precedes obedience in the kingdom of God. We do not behave our way into light. We live from the light we have received.

Light, by its nature, does not strain. It does not shout. It simply reveals. It makes visible what would otherwise remain hidden. When Jesus calls His followers “light,” He is saying that proximity to Him will inevitably make something visible about the Father.

Which means the question is not whether we influence our children.

We do.

The question is: **What becomes visible in us over time?**

Our teens live close enough to see past our curated selves. They see what steadies us and what unsettles us. They observe what happens when we are contradicted, disappointed, exhausted, or afraid. They notice the tone we take when stressed, the pace we adopt when anxious, the posture we assume when we feel out of control.

They may not analyze it, but they absorb it. And they learn, quietly, what we actually rely on.

**This is why influence cannot be separated from formation.**

The Sermon on the Mount is not concerned with image management. It is concerned with the interior life. Jesus names anger because it reveals what rules the heart. He names anxiety because it exposes what we believe about control and provision. He names enemy-love because love presses against the limits of our mercy.

He is not polishing behavior. He is renovating the heart.

**And whatever governs our hearts will shape our homes.**

There is often a gap between what we profess and how we live. Every parent feels it. The impatience we regret. The sharp response. The silent withdrawal. The subtle self-reliance. But that gap is not the end of the story.

Jesus does not expose it to disqualify us. He brings it into the light so that grace can reach it.

*“A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”*

In the ancient world, a city elevated above the landscape was visible because of its position. Its light carried because of where it stood. In the same way, whatever anchors our lives will become evident.

### Scripture

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden... In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

**MATTHEW 5:14,16**



If our lives are rooted in ambition, that will show.  
If they are rooted in fear, that will show.  
If they are rooted in Christ, that will show too.

Our children do not need flawless parents. They need parents who know where to go with their weakness — and who allow the Father’s grace to become visible.

And so we return to His first words.

“You are.”

We do not generate the light. We live from it. And when we do, it does what light was always meant to do:

It points beyond us.

## PRAYER

Father in heaven,  
You have called us light, not because we are impressive,  
but because we belong to You.  
Search my heart.  
Show me what governs me when I am tired,  
when I am criticized,  
when I am afraid.  
Renovate what I cannot renovate on my own.  
Let Your grace become visible in the ordinary rhythms of my home.  
Form in me a life that reflects You —  
not in perfection,  
but in steady dependence.  
**Amen.**



### Formation Question For You

When my teen observes my reactions — not just my words — what might they conclude about where my trust truly rests?

### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

“When you think about someone whose life really reflects what they believe, what stands out to you?”

### Continue the Conversation

**The next time you lose patience, resist the urge to recover privately.**

**Apologize openly. Pray briefly. Let your teen see what returning to Jesus looks like.**

**Later, ask:  
“What do you think it means to live as light in ordinary moments?”**

**Influence is rarely dramatic. It is formed in how we recover.**





# From Wonder to Endurance

## WEEK 6: PRACTICE

### Devotional

Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount with an image of a house. He knows something about each of us: we are all building. Every decision, every reaction, every habit is shaping a structure that will eventually have to bear weight.

The difference between the two builders in Matthew 7 is not access to truth. Both heard His words. The difference is whether those words were taken seriously enough to be practiced.

To practice the teaching of Jesus is not to perform spiritual excellence. It is to allow His authority into ordinary places — the way we speak when we are tired, the way we respond in conflict, the way we surrender control when we would rather grasp for it. Obedience is not dramatic most days. It is steady.

Spiritual formation is slow work. The Spirit reshapes our instincts, our reflexes, even our desires. Much of that work happens beneath the surface, where no one sees it at first. It rarely feels impressive. But it is decisive. Like roots pushing down into soil, God is forming in us a life capable of standing when pressure comes.

Roots grow unseen — but in time they bear a tree strong enough to shelter and steady others.

In parenting, this matters deeply. Our teens learn what Christianity truly is — not from our explanations alone, but from the patterns of our lives. Over time, what we practice becomes what we trust, and what we trust becomes our foundation.

C.S. Lewis once observed that every choice bends the soul in a direction:

*“Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before... all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing either into a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature...Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other.”*

Not instantly. But steadily. We are always becoming something.

The storm Jesus described did not evaluate the builder’s intentions; it revealed the builder’s foundation. When the rain came, when the streams rose, when the winds beat against the house, what had been built in quiet obedience either held — or it did not.

And here is the promise beneath the warning: the house built on the rock stood.

What we practice now becomes what we stand on later. When the rain comes — and it will — our foundation will not be revealed by what we meant to do, but by what we have been doing all along.

### Scripture

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

**MATTHEW 7: 24-27**



## PRAYER

Lord Jesus,  
Let me not simply be content with only hearing you.  
Shape my habits, Lord. Reorder my reflexes.  
Form in me a life tuned fully toward You.  
Align my heart with your's O God, and steady my steps in obedience.  
Teach me to rest solely in Your grace.  
May my faith take root in the ordinary moments of each day.  
**Amen.**



### Formation Question For You

Where in my daily life is  
Jesus inviting me to align  
my practice with His words?  
Where do I see that I am  
resisting Him?

### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

"What do you think makes  
someone's faith real instead of  
just talk?"

### Continue the Conversation

**This week, do not announce  
a new discipline. Choose one  
small act of obedience and  
practice it consistently. Let  
your teen see the steadiness,  
not the speech.**

**Over time, what is steady  
becomes trustworthy.**



## WEEK 7: ENDURANCE

### Devotional

Throughout these weeks we have considered wonder, revelation, doubt, wisdom, influence, and practice.

All of it leads here: **Will it endure?**

Your teen will not remember every conversation. They will not retain every explanation. They will question. They will wrestle. They will grow beyond the boundaries you once held for them.

That's ok—this is the pathway towards maturity.

The deeper question is not what will they remember you saying.

It is what will have settled in them.

*“Train up a child in the way they should go; even when they are old they will not depart from it.”*  
—Proverbs 22:6

Proverbs is not offering a mechanism for control. It is offering a pattern of formation. To “train” is to set a direction early and consistently enough that it begins to feel natural — like a well-worn path underfoot.

When Deuteronomy was given, parents stood at the edge of a new land. Freedom lay ahead of them, but so did distraction. And God did not first tell them to manage the culture around them.

He told them to tend the condition within them.

*“These words shall be on your heart.”*

Before they are in your instruction,  
before they are in your correction,  
they must be in you.

### Scripture

“These words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

**DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7**

**Because what settles in the parent, settles in the home.**

*“When you sit... when you walk... when you lie down... when you rise.”*

Enduring faith is rarely built in dramatic spiritual moments. It is formed in ordinary ones — in your tone after a slammed bedroom door, in the quiet prayer whispered over a sleeping child, in what you consistently bring before God and what you allow to remain.

You cannot control your child's future allegiance. Covenant faith has never worked like that. Even Israel wandered.

**But what is planted deeply is not easily uprooted.**

You are not simply raising a teenager.

You are shaping a soul who will one day stand in storms you will not witness.

And when that day comes, what has settled in you may steady them — the reflex to pray, the memory of repentance, the instinct to return, the quiet certainty that God is near.



Morning light. Evening fatigue. Car rides. Kitchen tables. Unremarkable hours that make up most of a life.

That is where endurance is formed.

Your child may travel far. They may test the boundaries of belief. They may pass through seasons where faith feels thin or distant. That is not the end of the story.

*“These words shall be on your heart.”*

Start there.

What settles in you will settle in them.

And what God roots deeply, He is faithful to tend.

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## PRAYER

Father,  
In the cry of our hearts, form in us what will endure.  
Let Your words settle deeply in our hearts —  
so that in ordinary moments,  
faith becomes our reflex.  
Build in our home only that which lasts.  
**Amen.**



### Formation Question For You

Looking back over these weeks — wonder, revelation, doubt, wisdom, influence, practice — which one has most deeply formed me? And which one still needs to settle more fully in my own heart?



### Conversation Starter With Your Teen

“How does faith change the way we think about hard seasons?”  
  
“If endurance is like a muscle, how do we train it?”

### Continue the Conversation

**The Experience: Sermon on the Mount** invites you and your teen to explore what it means to build on rock — not just hearing truth, but living it.

**Because what is practiced is what endures.**

