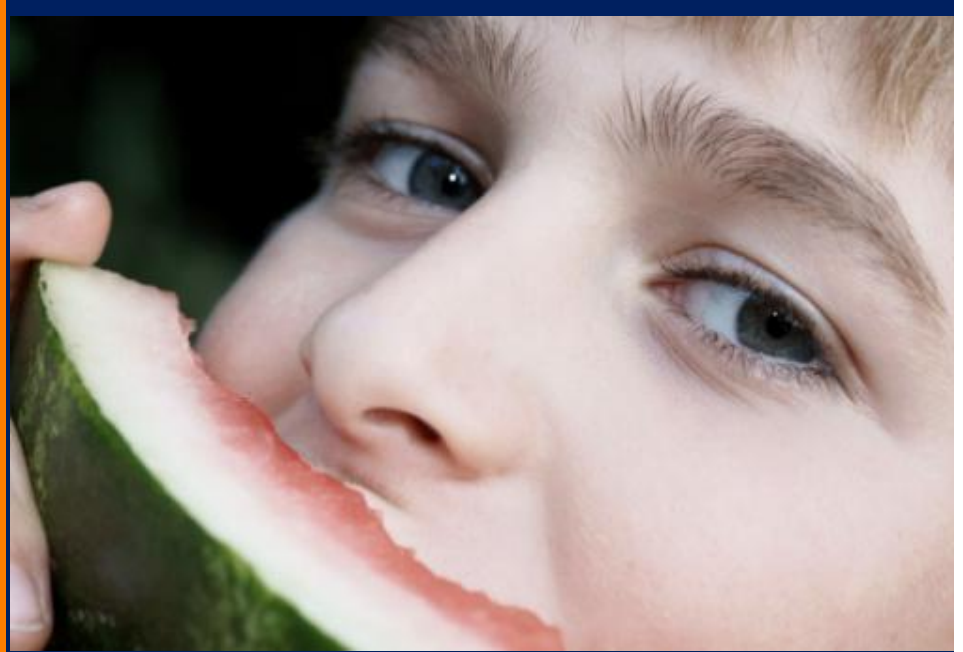




# the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition



June 2011



## POWERSOURCE

### ASK GOD:

1. To show you ways to express each fruit of the Spirit in your lives.
2. To help you grow more and more good fruit in your life—and to share the bounty with others.
3. To bless you with a “fruitful” summer of living for and glorifying God.

## Feast on the Fruit of the Spirit

As summer gets into full swing, gardens and produce departments are filled with delicious, healthy fruit we've been craving all winter long. So it's a perfect time to share with children the “fruit” of our Christian faith.

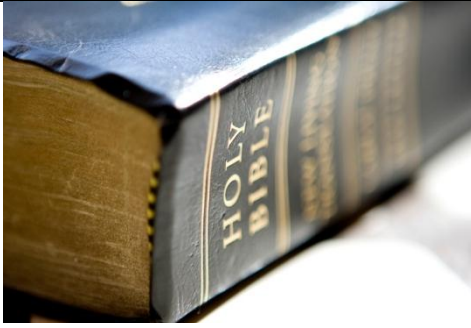
In Matthew 7:20, Jesus said, “Just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.” God wants us to bear good fruit for him, specifically “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22).

Unfortunately, these fruits can be difficult to live out—especially in families consisting of imperfect, grumpy, and impatient people. But thankfully, God provides his Holy Spirit as our helper. The Holy Spirit leads us “in every part of our lives” (Galatians 5:25), helping us plant, cultivate, grow, and share those spiritual fruits.

Use these fun, practical ideas to feast on spiritual fruit with your family this summer.

### INSIGHTS

- Regarding faithfulness, John Westerhoff identified four stages of children's faith development: 1.) experienced faith, 2.) affiliative faith (belonging to a faith community), 3.) searching faith (embracing doubts), and 4.) owned faith. (*Will Our Children Have Faith?*)
- A child's self-control skills, including self-discipline and perseverance, can predict his or her health, wealth, and criminal history in later life, according to new research. (*world-science.net*)



“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”  
(Galatians 5:22-23)

Galatians 5 contrasts the fruit of our sinful nature to the fruit of the Spirit. What a difference!

## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

**1. Fruit Fest**—Cut nine kinds of fruit into bite-sized pieces. Then assemble fruit kabobs by placing the pieces onto wooden skewers or craft sticks. Invite friends and family members to a Fruit of the Spirit Festival.



**2. Go Bananas!**—Create fun “candles” with your children. Place one half of a banana (pointed end up) inside a pineapple ring. Then attach a maraschino cherry “flame” to the top of the banana with a toothpick. While you enjoy the snack, talk about ways that showing the fruit of the Spirit helps us “shine” for God.

**3. Berry Special**—While you enjoy a fruit salad, affirm one another. Start with “You are berry special because...” Then list ways you see each person show the fruit of the Spirit in his or her daily life.

## Start a “peachy keen” conversation about the fruit of the Spirit with these discussion-starters:

1. How are these nine fruits of the Spirit like or unlike actual fruit?
2. Which fruits of the Spirit are easiest and hardest for you to consistently show, and why?
3. What conditions do fruit crops need to grow? What conditions do we need in our hearts to grow spiritual fruit?
4. What will help you live a more fruit-filled life for God?

## FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Try these fun, fresh ideas about the fruit of the Spirit:

• **Bearing Fruit**—Give each family member a packet of seeds and a piece of construction paper. Read aloud Galatians 5:22-23. Talk about the fruit of the Spirit as you fold the papers in half to make cards. On the front, write, “You plant the seeds...” Inside, glue down a seed packet and write, “...that’ll help me bear fruit for Jesus.” Add the fruit of the Spirit and sign the cards. Give them to people throughout the summer.

• **Apple of God’s Eye**—With younger children, have them paint the flat sides of apple halves. Write “You’re the Apple of God’s Eye” on 10x14-inch pieces of craft foam. Then have children decorate the foam by firmly pressing down the painted apples. After the paint dries, cover the place mats with clear adhesive vinyl. Read aloud Psalm 17:8 (NIV). Talk about what it means to be the apple of someone’s eye—and why we’re each special to God.

• **Bountiful Harvest**—Teach older children how to use a Bible concordance or online Bible search tool. Together, look up each fruit of the Spirit and find Bible verses to see what God says about “growing” them. On 3x5 cards, write down what you learn about each fruit. Have family members share their discoveries with one another. Then place all your cards in a fruit bowl as a reminder to live out those qualities. Close by reading aloud Psalm 65:11 (“You crown the year with a bountiful harvest”) and praying that God will help you each reap a great harvest of fruit.





# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIES

**Movie:** *Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer*

**Genre:** Comedy

**Rating:** PG



**Cast:** Jordana Beatty, Heather Graham, Jaleel White

**Synopsis:** With the help of her little brother, Stink, and her fun-loving aunt, 8-year-old Judy Moody is determined to have her most thrilling summer ever.

**Our Take:** In this movie, based on the popular “Judy Moody” books by Megan McDonald, the young protagonist goes to great lengths to earn “thrill points.” It’s sure to be a hit with adventurous kids ready to move beyond animated films.

## MUSIC

**Artist:** Peter Furler

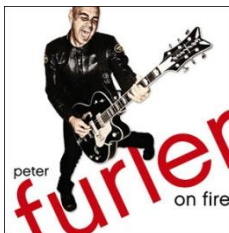
**Album:** *On Fire*

**Artist Info:**

Furler, the son of missionaries, was lead singer of the Australia Christian band The Newsboys. When he stepped down, he sold most of what he owned and took time to play music purely for pleasure.

**Summary:** In “Reach,” the first single from Furler’s solo debut, he reminds listeners that God is personal and cares for each of us individually.

**Our Take:** Furler’s joy and faith shine through in the upbeat, uplifting music that fills *On Fire*. Fans of Newsboys will be glad to hear his trademark voice again.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

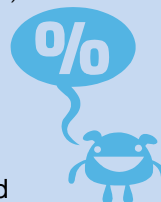
- Researchers say listening to music might help boost the immune system, so crank up some tunes this summer!

(msnbc.com)

- More than half of summer camps now organize community-service projects that promote empathy and show children they can make a difference in other people’s lives.

(American Camp Association)

## QUICK STATS



- Between October and December 2010, 677 cases of energy-drink overdoses were reported. One-quarter of the cases involved children younger than 6.

(American Association of Poison Control Centers)

- In a survey conducted in the United Kingdom, 59% of children said religion has a negative effect on the world.

(Penguin Books)

## GAMES & SITES

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Squinkies</i>	This game capitalizes on the trend of miniature collectibles. Players complete challenges to find lost “friends.”	E; Nintendo DS
<i>LEGO: Pirates of the Caribbean</i>	Disney’s popular movie franchise comes to life with hidden treasures, sword fighting, and humor. Contains cartoon violence.	E 10+; Wii, Xbox 360, Nintendo 3DS, PlayStation 3
<i>Roman Town</i>	In this educational computer game, children become archaeologists and dig up artifacts at a realistic excavation site.	Best for ages 8+; Windows

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn’t meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you’ll make informed decisions about what your children watch, listen to, and wear.

