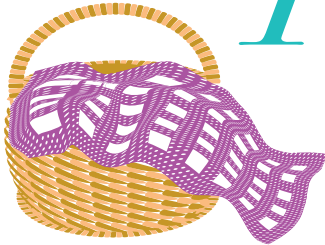


Summertime

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

1 *Plan an Evening Picnic*



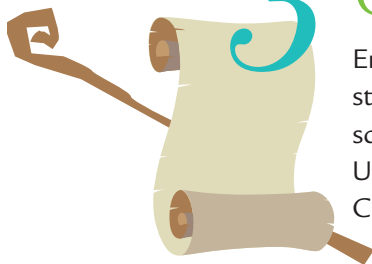
Choose a night with clear skies to enjoy the outdoors. While picnics can be fun in the middle of the day, summer evenings can provide reprieve from heat and sun. Grab a blanket, a picnic basket, and pack some sandwiches along with a cooler of lemonade. Enlist the help of each family member in gathering supplies and preparing a meal. To begin your picnic, pray together. Take the opportunity to thank God for the gift of healthy food, the beauty of Creation, and the joy of family. Bring along a children's Bible and share Scripture stories together after enjoying your meal.

2 *Keep a Nature Journal*

Children love making observations of the outdoors at any time of the year, but especially in summer. Start a journal for your child and decorate it with bright, cutout images from a magazine to personalize it. Then, invite your child to explore the outdoors with you. Look for interesting plants, insects, flowers, rocks, and animal life. Bring a magnifying glass and some colored pencils. Show your child how to make observations and draw pictures of what you see, using labels and notes. You will find that this activity not only keeps up academic skills over the summer but also sparks wonderful questions and engaging conversations with your child. Keep your Nature Journal with you as you travel to parks, beaches, and outdoor events throughout the summer and add to it whenever you can! Remark together on how beautiful and diverse Creation is!



3 *Outdoor Theatre*



Encourage your child to pick one of two favorite Bible stories to act out, such as the story of Jesus healing the blind man or the story of Jesus walking on water. Design a script so that all participants can play a role and have a few important lines to say. Using a bed sheet or tablecloth, create a stage area with curtains among the trees. Create costumes, props, and invitations. Invite your neighbors and family members over for an afternoon or evening of biblical theatre.

4 *Shell Sort*

Take a trip to the beach or shore and gather as many shells as you can. Bring them home with you. Then, on a rainy summer day when your children are looking for entertainment, rinse them off and sort them. You might decide to sort them by shape, size, color, type of shell, number of curved sides, or texture. Complete the project by painting the shells and giving them as gifts to the special people in your children's lives, along with a note or a prayer composed by your child.

