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## Humorous Message Promotes Importance of the Bible for Kids

By Lisa M. Hendey

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Book Review - If You Give a Boy a Bible by Andy Holmes  
Reviewed by Lisa M. Hendey

On the surface, hot tubs, red Kool Aid, iguanas and shish-kebabs may not seem the perfect enticements towards promoting Bible reading for young children, but a reading of Andy Holmes newest book If You Give a Boy a Bible (Kregel Kidzone, May 2004, hardcover, 32 pages) shows that you can't make assumptions when it comes to kids.

Author and Illustrator Andy Holmes takes a humorous approach towards evangelization with this book, which is loosely reminiscent of the classic If You Give a Moose a Muffin. The opening pages of the story find a father sharing the Bible with his son and in turn taking time to read it with him. From here, the true action of the book begins as this gift leads to all kinds of imaginative thoughts. As the boy learns stories from the Bible, he begins to act out the accounts in his own little world.

Sprinkled throughout the book are references to classic Old Testament accounts. Readers will love how the boy absorbs and then finds his own take on the stories of Noah, Joseph, Moses and others. Holmes illustrations lend life to the story - I was particularly drawn to the variety of facial expressions in the book.

The book's end finds the boy sharing the gift he's received and loved so much with a friend. This gentle approach to witnessing to our faith will make sense to kids - who wouldn't want to share a gift that brings so much wisdom, enlightenment and fun? If You Give a Boy a Bible is aimed at children ages four through eight years of age, but I'm willing to predict that most grown ups will learn a thing or two from this enjoyable book.

For more information on If You Give a Boy a Bible visit  
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0825455138/digitalcropper-20>

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### **Ten Ways to Get Your Kids to Listen to You**

**By Mark Brandenburg MA, CPCC**

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There are times when every parent feels as if they might as well be talking to a block of wood. As with many other things, the harder you try to get your kids to listen, the more resistance you get. Here are ten things to consider when you want to get a message across:

1.) Make sure your relationship is solid.

If your kids don't like you, they're a lot less likely to listen to you.

2.) Remember that actions speak louder than words.

If your kids know that what you say won't be backed up with action, they'll more easily tune you out. Having natural consequences for not listening (toys disappear if kids don't listen and they're not picked up) has a way of having kids pay better attention.

3.) Talk about listening to them.

Make it a point to discuss the importance of listening occasionally when your kids are receptive. Talk about how nice it feels when someone else listens to you completely and what a great quality this is.

4.) Have a sense of timing when you talk to your kids.

Don't expect them to listen well when they're in the middle of something, when they're extremely tired, or when they're hungry. Find a time when they're reasonably relaxed and you have their full attention.

5.) Model great listening yourself.

Give them your absolute attention when they speak to you and try to reflect back what you heard so they can see how focused you were on what they were saying.

6.) Each child listens in a unique way, get to know their preferred style.

Your child may be a kinesthetic learner who listens and understands by writing something down or by walking through something. Find the way to reach your child in the way that works best.

7. Avoid Lectures

Many parents have a lecturing style that they're unaware of. Their kids are very aware of this style however, and tune them out. Speak in a casual and pleasant tone that you would use when talking with a friend

8. Limit their TV watching.

Kids who watch a lot of TV tend to be more easily distracted and have a more difficult time listening. This may also help to improve your relationship when you spend more time with your kids!

9. Talk to your kids in a non-judgmental way.

The more they feel judged by you, the more shame they'll feel and the less they'll hear. See your kids as great and they'll listen as though they are!

10. Be genuinely interested in your children's lives.

Ask them curious questions about what's they're experiencing. When your kids know that you have a real interest in their life, they're more likely to look forward to what you have to say.

Mark Brandenburg MA, CPCC, is the author of "25 Secrets of Emotionally Intelligent Fathers" ([http://www.markbrandenburg.com/e\\_book.htm#secrets](http://www.markbrandenburg.com/e_book.htm#secrets)). For more great tips and action steps for fathers, sign up for his FREE bi-weekly newsletter, "Dads, Don't Fix Your Kids," at <http://www.markbrandenburg.com>



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