

Ready-to-use mentoring

Hide and seek with God

I regularly enjoy playing a completely terrible version of hide and seek with my 3-year-old. Those of you with kids will no doubt recognise this game. She-of-few-years counts to ten, presumably with eyes wide open, but due to my impressive stealth skills I still manage to get out of sight and hide.

So far so good, but here's the twist. I deliberately get caught. Yes, that's right. I leave a leg sticking out from behind the curtains, cough or let out an implausible sneeze from behind the bathroom door. Worse still, I just stay on the sofa and chuck a coat over my head. As you know, this game is not about winning. She loves catching me, and I love being caught. Her infectious little giggle and scream of excitement and wonder when

she spots me and the ensuing hug of being together are so special.

What a picture of how God delights in us. God loves us to look for him everywhere; to find him and be found by him; to be amazed and refreshed by the adventure of knowing him. It motivates everything in Christianity, from church to mission to personal prayer times.

Do you still have that sense of wonder? Are you still motivated by that one-on-one encounter? Are you passing this on to your mentee? How much are you allowing them to see elements of your personal encounters and dropping in little stories of how God has spoken or engaged with you so they can be inspired? It's probably more important than all the theology you tell them put together.

Can you find a way to discuss this with your mentee under a clear night sky looking at the stars? Or at the top of a local tower block looking down over the city, or by visiting a natural beauty spot? The playfulness of the idea of playing 'hide and seek' with God might take the intensity out of pursuing God on a daily basis.

Ask your mentee:

- Over the last week or two, when did God stick out a leg, waiting for you to find him? For example, looking at the stars, through a phrase in the Bible before bed or in a moment of kindness during a stressful day.
- How can you play this game in the coming week? How can you weave it into your commute, your lunch break with friends, your internet scrolling?
- How much have you discovered about God for yourself? Are you relying on stories from other people's relationship with God over stories from your own?
- On a scale of one to ten, how excited and motivated do you feel about personally chasing and encountering God?

JOEL TOOMBS

has an MA in Christian mentoring and wrote the Grove booklet *Mentoring and Young People*. He is a volunteer youth worker.