

# ParentPause

Encouragement for Parents of Preschoolers



Parenting often begins with times that are overwhelming in ways we weren't expecting. We find ourselves coming to unwelcome moments of weakness where what we have to give doesn't feel like enough for what the moment seems to require.

Everyone wants to be strong. We want to be strong in the Lord. We want to be strong and solid parents. We want to build a strong relationship with our child. We want to build a strong family.

And yet often our experience looks so different that we expected. We are weak. We are tired. Our child throws up at 2 am, and our response is strong ... but not in a good way. Our weaknesses tear at the relationships we wanted to bless our children with. Along the way we are disappointed by our own frailty to build the family we imagined we might have.

All of this weakness draws us to a life-changing truth: we weren't actually meant to be strong. In 1 Corinthians 12:9, God promises us that His grace is sufficient because His power is perfected in our weakness. We hear God saying, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* (1 Corinthians 12:9, ESV)

When we are weak, He is strong. When we are not enough, His grace is enough.

Parenting is an opportunity to lean on Him in our weakness. When we are not enough, He is more than enough. What does it look like to let God be our strength?

It means we cry out to Him when we are failing. It means we let His Spirit work to transform us when we are weak. It means we trust His grace to give us what we need at 2 am, and ask Him to help us respond with graciously to the hard stuff.

So the next time you are overwhelmed by your parenting journey, ask our God who is so strong to help you. Give yourself to Him. Let His strength flow through you. His grace truly is enough.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD



## DEPENDING ON HIS STRENGTH

These tips can help you develop children who depend on God when they feel weak.

**Recognize that being weak is part of being a person.**

When your child sees they are not "enough," remind them you also feel not "enough." Help them understand that it is okay to feel that way. Take them into your arms and tell them that when they feel that way, God comforts and encourages us with His strength.

**Remind them that God is different than we are.**

Kids need to know that God is so much stronger than we are, and because of this, we can depend on Him. We can trust God in the moments when we feel discouraged. Think together of some ways you have seen God's strength.

**Teach them to ask God for help.**

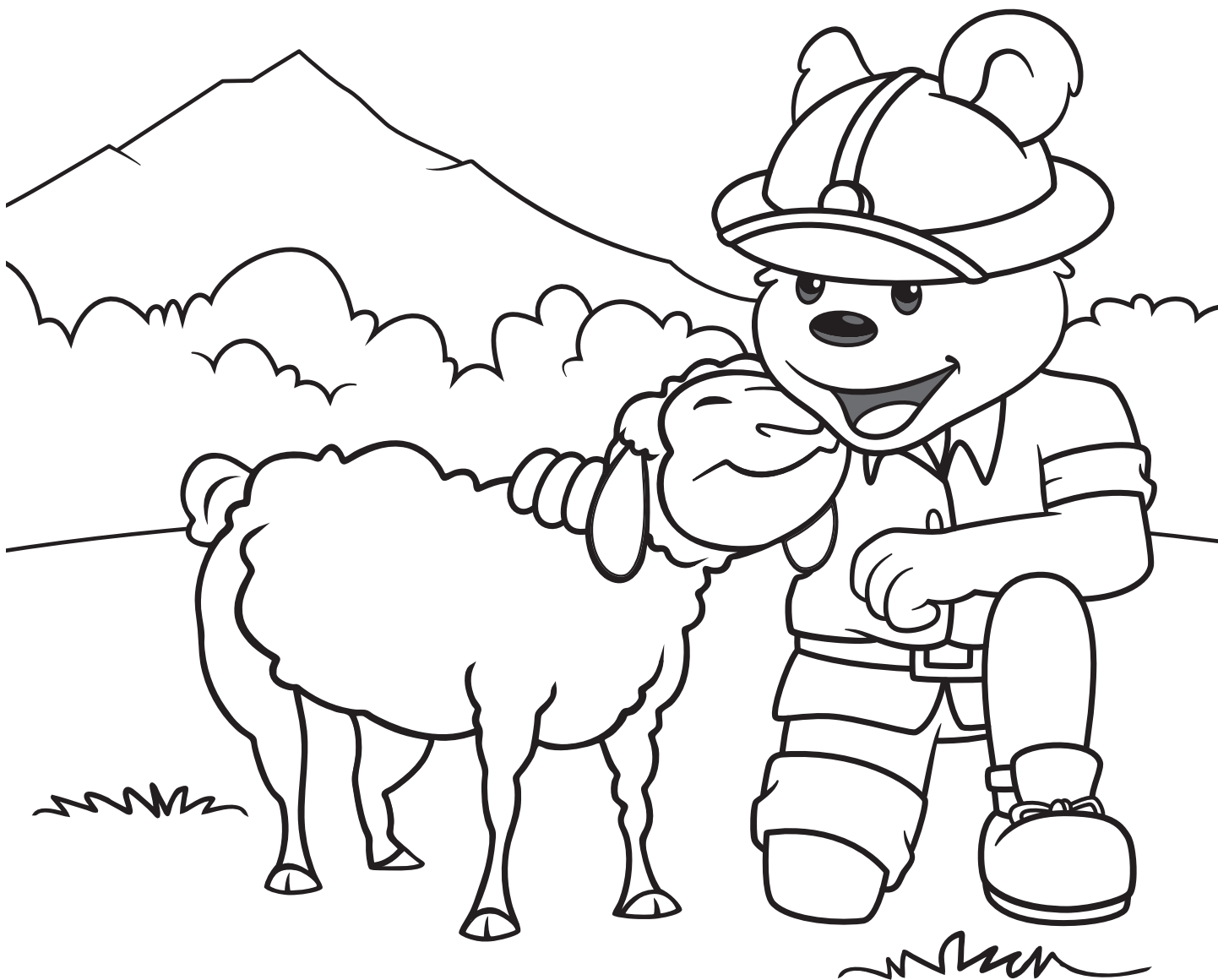
As you pray with your child, ask God to encourage them and give them His strength. Ask God to help them experience God's strength and grace when they feel tired or afraid.



## CUBBIE BEAR GOES TO PAKISTAN

**Challenge:** Cubbie is visiting Pakistan. In Pakistan there are many areas where people herd sheep. Some Awana clubs in Pakistan meet outside, near the sheep. Work with your child to color this picture of Cubbie Bear with a sheep in Pakistan.

**Bonus Challenge:** As you color this picture, pray for the kids in Pakistan. Pray that the children that live there would come to know about Jesus and His love for them.



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