

# SUNDAY CLASS: Parenting 3 – Ages 6-11

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[ 0 : 00 ] All right, well, we're going to go ahead and get rolling here at 915. I want to honor the time, I want to get you guys out so you can enjoy a slow entry into the service together.

Thank you so much for taking time to be here this morning. Just so you know, my family, we are just right here. Ages 6 to 11.

Our kids right now are 4, 6, 8, and 10. And they're about to have birthdays and mess me up because I can't count by odd numbers. But we're right here.

We're square in this age bracket, which is one of the reasons I think Walt wanted to assign this to me. He's like, this guy needs all the help he can get. He needs to dig on this a little bit. So just so you know from the outset, I'm with you in the trenches on this one.

And we're so thankful to be able to do this together, to be able to dig into this content together. My prayer is that this is going to be a springboard for action, not feeling like a heap of condemnation and guilt.

[ 1 : 05 ] This is intended to mobilize us as a community to really aim at the hearts of our kids so that they might know the Lord, to grow up, fear admonition of the Lord. That's what we want.

So let me pray for us and then we'll hop right in, okay? Lord, we come to you now and ask for your help. We need you not just in parenting, but in every aspect of our lives.

We need you. We need you desperately. So I think, you know, I'm not alone in saying that parenting just helps me really recognize my need for you. And so, Lord, I pray that you meet us here today, that you'll show us that you're sufficient, not just to save us, but also to help us parent this precious age bracket, 6 to 11.

Lord, I pray that you help us by your spirit, bring conviction where conviction is needed and help move us to action by your grace. I pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So, let's see.

Last Sunday, we had community group, starting point community group at our house. And we were like probably two-thirds of the way through. And from our living room, I could hear in our center room, which is like two rooms removed, this blood-curdling scream.

[ 2 : 23 ] And like it was one of those rage screams. Like, what is going on? I'm looking around. I'm like, okay, this is a dad intervention moment. So, got up, went into the sunroom, and lo and behold, massive conflict over a small thing, of course.

But apparently, one kid had built a fort using an umbrella, and I got it positioned just right. Another sibling had come over and tweaked the fort against the wishes of the fort builder.

And that led to the back and forth, which escalated to an angry explosion, which we heard a little bit later. And so, what would you do in that situation?

What's the parenting move in that moment? What would you say? What are some options? How would you handle that conflict? This isn't part of the grade, by the way.

So, feel free. Like, what would you do? I mean, all of us have been in that. Raise your hand if you've been in a scenario like that with your kids ever. Okay. So, it's not foreign to any of us, and we have to do something.

- [ 3 : 30 ] We have to interact with that in some way. So, I'm just positing the question. Like, what would that look like? What would it look like to try to get in there and, like, handle this situation?
- Well, I'll save you. I'll save you the answering. But I'll just lay some of these options out there and see if any of these resonate with what you would probably do in that situation. So, one is, and what my knee-jerk reaction is, I'm embarrassed.
- Like, this is so embarrassing. I'm supposed to be one of the pastors. I'm supposed to have all these kids in order, right? And, man, it's, like, disruptive. It's super loud. So, one option could be to run back there and be like, just be quiet.
- Everybody be quiet. What are you doing? You're embarrassing me. So, that's certainly one impulse that I would have in that moment. Another thing would be, potentially, okay, get in there and you're trying to figure out, okay, who made the fort first?
- Like, who was here in this area first? Why don't you just stay on this side of the room and you just stay on that side of the room and everything's going to be fine? That's why we have countries and lines, you know? Just speak your language and do your thing over here.
- [ 4 : 41 ] You know? So, that's another way. Maybe it's a form of almost, like, justice that we've got to figure out. So, maybe we're just, like, just be nice to each other. Is that so hard? You know, just be nice.
- That's certainly another option. You'd be tempted, and we've done before. One, another option could be just get out the timer and you get to play on the fort for 10 minutes and then we switch and then you get to play with the fort.
- Or, another one that may be a temptation is, you know, it's all right. Boys will be boys. You know? We just kind of ignore it and step back and just let them do their thing and let them brawl for a little bit and get a little bit of blood and that's okay.
- And then we move on to the next thing. All of those are possible options. Would those sound like viable options to any of you guys? Like, I mean, I certainly have opted for many of those at different times and different situations.
- So, one of the things that we want to talk about is that even in that big list I just gave you of, what, five different possible interactions in that scenario, none of them really produce lasting fruit.
- [ 5 : 51 ] Well, at least good fruit. Because they don't ever address the heart. They don't ever, like, push into the root of the behavior. So, what we want to do today is aim for the heart.
- That's kind of the theme of all of these parenting classes. But we want to reiterate that again. So, on your outline, if you've got an outline, they're on those chairs back there. I recommend at least one per couple.
- But the first big header is just this idea that we're going to revisit again and again of aiming for the heart in our parenting. So, as you know, Matthew 5, 18 on your outline there.
- But what comes out of the mouth or the actions of the hands, the outward behavior, proceeds from the heart. And it's this that defiles a person.
- This is the epicenter of where the problem really is. It's not the outward behavior. So, behavior is external, right? Those are the things that we see, the outbursts, the rage, the selfishness, those types of things.
- [ 6 : 54 ] But behavior overflows from the heart. That's where it's coming from. So, if you think about it, I have this on your outline. Behavior has a when, a what, and a why. A when, a what, and a why.

So, when is the circumstance in which the behavior occurred? The fort has been disrupted. And there's a conflagration, right? So, that's the when. The what is the things that are said or done.

It's the anger, the explosion, the accusation, the brawling. But then there's the why of the situation. The why is the internal heart issues that pushed or pulled a specific behavior.

The internal heart issues that pushed or pulled the specific behavior. So, our goal as parents, our goal as parents is to address the what of their behavior from the why perspective.

Right? We want to help them understand the overflow of their hearts. Why is your heart, why does this mean so much? What is it that you're understanding about your role in the world and how things should be?

[ 7 : 58 ] That's what we're trying to help them with. So, just so you know, just a little encouragement for you. I've had so many parenting fails on this topic. I think I have opted for all of those options that I mentioned earlier.

So, again, this is not new opportunities for guilt. What I'm hoping to give you is new opportunities for humble growth through repentance and faith for us as parents.

Not just for our kids, but just remember that God, He's parenting us too in the process of us parenting our children. He wants to grow us and change us and challenge us and turn us from pride and self-reliance to depending on Him.

That's the nature of the Christian life. We're done with the old life of being self-reliant. Now we're God-reliant. We need help from Him and we need help from others. So, that's what I want to call you guys to.

So, the first big header under there after Aim for the Heart is Train for Character. So, the training in this age bracket from ages 6 to 11, the training here is going to start to take a different shape.

[ 9 : 06 ] We're going to start to aim towards character development increasingly. Character development. So, I'll just give you an example. So, one of our kids was doing really well with direct adult supervision.

You know, starting to respond and kind of had the rules of the house down. It was doing really well. But when he went to school, he started to misbehave. Like, it's like the rules, all the things that we taught, like, didn't even, like, register anymore.

And he was just doing his own thing and not listening to his teacher. So, he could obey his parents as long as we were right there with him. But he was not trained yet to obey, like, another authority, for instance.

Like, listen to other authorities. He didn't have a rubric for that yet. So, as independence from mom and dad increased, we have to help him be able to, like, discern foolishness from wisdom.

To have these categories. But that's what we're trying to help him do. So, there are just unending scenarios as parents that you will not be able to directly oversee.

[ 10 : 11 ] Unending. And that's where we get helicopter moms. You know, that whole thing is, like, you're hovering, trying to, like, make sure everything's going to be okay. And you have direct lines of communication with the child to make sure they're doing or not doing the things you want.

But the thing is, you're not going to be able to live your life that way. They aren't either. We need to help cultivate this idea of distinguishing, being able to discern independently foolishness from wisdom.

This is what we're aiming to do. So, if you think about the last class, if you were here, zero to five is going to be angled towards, like, a respect, an understanding of authority.

Authority is, like, the big category for that. So, that's, like, stage one foundation. It needs to see himself as a creature made in the image of God for God. So, the goal is that child comes to understand what it means to be under authorities.

Learn to obey without challenge, without excuse, without delay. Obey without challenge, without excuse, without delay. We're still working on that.

[ 11 : 14 ] You know, that doesn't just stop. We're going to continue to work on that. But now we're angling a little bit differently from that foundation towards this next bracket of six to 11 years. We commonly just call this childhood.

Now we're swinging in some ways or building from authority. Now we're aiming at character. Character development. Needs to know what to do in situations that you cannot anticipate.

Needs biblical wisdom. We've got to aim at their conscience in order to develop this. This distinguishing between foolishness and wisdom.

So, character, if we were to just give, like, a basic definition for what is character according to Scripture, it's essentially this.

Living consistently with who God is and who I am. Living consistently with who God is and who I am.

[ 12 : 12 ] Now this is important because it brings into the equation God is at the center of this definition. Like, we need to be able to help our kids understand what does it mean to live with God at the center of the world.

So, let me just ask this. What kind of character qualities do you desire for your children? Just name a few. Just pop them out. What would you say? Honesty.

Honesty. Excellent. Yeah. What else? Selflessness. Selflessness. Yeah. What else do you desire your kids to have?

Humble. Humbleness. Yeah. Humility. Anything else come to mind? Kindness. Kindness. Yes. Honor. Honor. Yeah. Integrity. Patience.

Patience. Work ethic. A work ethic. A diligence. Follow through. Self-control. Oh, man. What would we do to help cultivate self-control?

[ 13 : 09 ] What a glorious thing. So, what we're going to do, we desire these kids that have been entrusted to us to parent. What are we going to do to help develop these character qualities in their lives?

It's not like it just falls off the trees and you just walk out and, you know, fruit of the spirit is fruit of the spirit, but you don't just go out and pluck them off the tree and give it to them. And they eat it and they eat it and just all of a sudden joy, patience, gentleness.

I wish it was that easy. I wish we could just pluck it off the tree and give them the fruit. But it takes cultivation. It takes work through the grace of God to cultivate these in our kids.

So, we have to help them see themselves in reference to God. The reformers, they use this phrase, *Corum Deo*. *Corum Deo*.

It's a Latin phrase and it literally means to live before the face of God. To live before the face of God, a key text, I think I have it on your outline for you, is Psalm 56, 13.

[ 14 : 12 ] It says, For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

So, it's this reference of God saves us. He's able to do something we're not able to do. He pulls us out from death and then we're intending to live our whole life, *Corum Deo*, before the face of God.

All things lived out in reference to who God is and who I am in light of that. So, very simply, Coram Deo means to live all of one's life in the presence of God, under the authority of God, and to the honor and glory of God.

That's what we're trying to cultivate. So, as Christians, just generally, Christians, we are practicing a life lived before the face of God. All of us. If you are a born-again Christian, that's what this is intended to do.

We're supposed to live our lives this way. But as Christian parents, this has implications. We are helping our kids to understand their lives before the face of God as well.

[ 15 : 23 ] So, the pursuit of character, like I said, is defined as living consistently with who God is and who I am. So, in our training, we're helping our kids see the why of their behavior and then holding before them a picture of what it looks like again and again and again to live in right relationship with God and with others.

We need him to be, we need God to be the centerpiece of this discussion. So, I'll just give you a scriptural example of David. We're all familiar with David taking on Goliath.

But it's interesting to note, one of the things that he says on his way to fight Goliath and trust the Lord in that battle, in 1 Samuel 17, it's on your paper there.

This is what David says on his way. He says, The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.

And Saul said to David, Go and the Lord be with you. I just thought that was a really fascinating comment because what he's doing, he's looking back to his childhood.

[ 16 : 39 ] He was a shepherd boy. That was his job. His dad sent him out to be a shepherd and to take care of the flock and defend. He's training him to defend against lions and bears and things like that.

And it was these early lessons that he learned from his dad, from his parents. He cultivated a vision of what does it mean to be a shepherd? What does it mean to not just do the function, but to trust the Lord as I'm doing this function?

And now you're seeing that play out years later and he's called to a bigger battle. He's called to a bigger thing that he knows now. Okay, what does this look like in this situation to trust the Lord?

What does it look like to do this work with integrity? What does this look like to follow through? All those things had to be trained and inculcated by parents, by community around him, so that he was fortified in those truths.

So that later, whenever he's deployed as a warrior, essentially, on behalf of the nation to fight the giant, he has these things, these categories are in his heart, in his mind.

[ 17 : 44 ] I know what it means to trust the Lord. He's the one that fights for it. I saw him do it back here when I was a kid. He can do it now. You see what I'm saying? So this is a picture of a progression of growing and maturing into the truths that we're trying to inculcate into our children right now.

So Paul Tripp says, you want to hold out who God is as a basis for making choices about what he should do and be. So we're calling them to faith.

We're calling them to repentance. We're calling them to this life of faith. The alternative to this, the alternative of calling them to this life is to leave God out and focus merely on behavior.

We must not do that. We must not spend our whole adolescent, whole childhood just focusing on behavior and then suddenly think, oh, they're going to have all the categories later on to be able to respond to the Lord.

No, we want to spare them from all of that and continue faithfully to entrust these things to them. So Paul Tripp or David, Ted Tripp, I'm figuring out which trip this is.

[ 18 : 47 ] Ted Tripp continues to say this. You must always hold out to your children, both their need of Christ's invasive, redemptive work and their obligation to repent of their sin and place their faith in Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are not rights of initiation to Christianity. Repentance and faith are the way to relate to God. It's very important. We're not just looking for a one time conversion in repentance, a prayer.

We're looking for an entire lifestyle that the lifestyle is now repentance and faith, repentance and faith. That's that's the pattern of the Christian life from here on out. We're trying to model that and teach that.

So they're not just one time acts performed to become a Christian. They're attitudes of the heart towards ourselves and towards sin. So faith is not just the way to get saved.

It is the lifeline of Christian living. So Elizabeth and I were talking about this a couple days ago, actually. And she said, I love this illustration. She said, it's kind of like training them to ride a bike.

[ 19 : 52 ] You know, some of you might even be in that season now. You're trying to get them stabilized and you're behind them and you're trying to get them not to be afraid. And you're coaching them up and you're trying to help them. And you're you're you're helping stabilize.

You're holding on. You're you're balancing them. You're doing a lot of work for them initially, but you're helping them move forward as you're doing that. But eventually you're releasing completely eventually.

So we're what we're doing in training our children. We're training them in biblical principles of heart work. That's what we're doing. We're stabilizing them.

We're giving them biblical principles of heart work for faith and repentance. What does this look like in this situation? Faith and repentance. And eventually they will be moving forward with the Lord without our assisting hand.

That's what we're that's what we're longing for, that they'll be able to take these things. And then there will be ownership. There'll be regeneration. There'll be a new a new heart that's able to do this and depend on the Lord.

[ 20 : 50 ] It may not even be discernible. The exact moment of transition when they're no longer depending on us. But we want to be faithful to equip them for the ride for the rest of their lives.

That's what we're trying to do. OK, so those are those are the broad principles for this season. Everybody tracking with us so far? OK, so I want to take you into a couple of case studies from our own lives, from our van and from our home.

A couple of scenarios, recent scenarios to kind of walk through what this might look like. OK, so case study number one. We're driving home from community group.

A kid from the back says, I didn't get Cheerios. And they did. They got Cheerios. I want Cheerios. And they're like anticipating.

I say, OK, well, let's just turn around and let's go get some Cheerios. And like we're already in the van headed home. It's past their bedtime. We have all these things running our minds like as parents, we want to be good parents. So what does it look like to be a good parent in this scenario based on the call that we've received from the living God?

[ 22 : 00 ] So here are some possible parental responses. Just to outline a few, which I would say are the lesser choices that we don't want to do. So one choice would have been to what I would say is enabling them and saying, OK, sweetie, we'll get some for you.

OK, let's just find some Cheerios. Another one would be shaming them. How can you complain about this? You have so many blessings. You know, haven't we given you so much stuff?

You know, we could have gone that route very easily. And we're sorely tempted to do those things. It could be pacifying them. All right. OK, you can have some.

Just please stop screaming. Please stop crying. Have you ever found yourself in those situations like anything? Just please stop. I don't want to hear it. Oh, man.

So those are those are pitfalls. Those are ditches that we can we can jump into. But if we were to take that scenario, what is the why of the scenario? What is the heart doing in that moment?

[ 23 : 03 ] Wanting equality. Yeah, equality. OK. Yeah. The children want justice.

Yeah, they want justice. Right. Demanding justice. Yeah. I saw what this person has. And I should get that as well in the same way at the same time. It's an outcry of injustice.

You know, honestly, it's just regardless of the justice factor, the heart is insisting on its own way. And in the van, that kid is going to scream and cry.

It's affecting everyone else around them. Do you know adults like that? Yes. So I'm sure people come to your mind.

Hopefully it's not a mirror, but it could be of man, when think when the Vols don't win and the next day just sulking the whole day. I didn't get what I wanted.

[ 24 : 04 ] And everybody else around me is going to pay for it. You know, people like that. I've been like that. So everybody else is going to be miserable because I'm not getting what I want.

We don't want our kids to live that way for the rest of their lives. You don't get the fruit off the tree, eat it and become selfless and patient and loving.

You don't. We have to do something now in order to start to cultivate. This is a heart issue, insisting on his own way. So how is he currently viewing himself in relation to God and others in this scenario?

If insisting on his own way is the issue at the heart. He's wanting to play God. He's wanting to call the shots. He's wanting to have all things go according to his plan.

Like you taking me home to the house to get me in bed. That's not part of my plan. I want the Cheerios and I want them now. That's what's happening. It's rejecting our authority, our good plan for him.

[ 25 : 05 ] So what is the truth about who he is in relation to God and others? If that's what the heart's doing, what's the reality of his relationship to God and to others?

He's not God. He's not God. He may not demand his own way. God has given him parents to help him. That's the reality. We love this child.

We want good for this child. Cheerios are a good thing. They're not a bad thing. But that's not the issue. It's not whether or not Cheerios are a good thing. Demanding the Cheerios when there are none around.

And the parent has already said not right now to demand to continue demanding. That is putting himself above God and his parents and then grumbling when not getting his way.

So he needs to know in this moment that God loves him. He's given him parents and they will give him good things at the right time.

[ 26 : 04 ] That is our goal as parents to do our duty and to bless this kid, not harm him, but to help him. And Bible says that God's love does not insist on its own way.

In 1 Corinthians 13, remember the big definition of love? Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not insist on its own way. It's one of the things that defines who God is and should define how his people operate in the world.

That's what's happening. He's insisting on his own way. And when the demand is not met, then grumbling, grumbling, grumbling. So this is a chance for him to turn from the sin of insisting on his own way and grumbling and trust the Lord for providing the right things at the right time.

So that's that's what we're aiming at in the conversation. In fact, I think I even said from the front seat, I said, you are not God, buddy. You're insisting on your own way.

And we we aren't going to do that because there are other things that have to happen and it's for your good. So I was driving when I was doing that. So it was kind of hard to have that conversation. All the other kids are like jumping around being crazy, too.

[ 27 : 12 ] But that's kind of what that's kind of the that's real life. That's the moment right there. That's what we're trying to do, trying to address the heart and get in there. Here's a second case study. So one of the kids was scraping the last like little itty bitty bit of strawberry jelly.

It's everybody's favorite. That's why there's only a little bit left. The last little bit of strawberry jelly in front of all the other kids right onto that last that biscuit in front of their plate. Not even a thought about any of the kids at the table.

And they're all staring like they're really taking the last of it. They're looking at us like looking at the strawberry. So right in front of everybody. So, OK, so here's the possible parental responses.

Could could be like, you know, first come, first serve. You know, isn't that got this kid got the thing first? Well, took the initiative. Could celebrate that, you know, work ethic.

Get out there. Early bird gets the worm. Early kid gets the strawberry jelly. The rest of you suckers should have got earlier. Maybe maybe that is a path you could take towards parenting. I don't know. I mean, you could.

[ 28 : 16 ] But we also are trying to aim at some other things. What is the why of that scenario? Obviously, they love strawberry jelly. But but the why in the heart is is ultimately selfishness.

Like just I'm thinking about anybody else. I'm just getting what I want. So we do want to address that. So how is this this kid viewing himself in relation to God and to others?

Not really thinking about God or others. Just thinking about how good that strawberry jelly is going to taste. Trying to get what the flesh wants without sharing. Just kind of a self focus. But what is the truth?

What is the truth about who this child is in relation to God and others? I think we even asked this in the moment. What would you do? Talking to this kid. What would you do if your brother said, I want the jelly?

Should we just give it to whoever wants it the most? Is that what justice is in this situation? Is that the right thing? Should I should he just get it because he wants it? Well, and I think we talked about this at the table.

[ 29 : 20 ] We don't usually want to share and we want to look out for ourselves. That's how all of us are without the Lord. That's what I do, too. That's what we all do. We want what we want and we tend to just look out for ourselves.

And this is selfishness. But God is not like that. God, he's generous toward us. He's generous toward us, even when we don't deserve it. So he can change our hearts to be generous toward others.



So we said, let's just let's cut the biscuit in half and share so that we can be givers like God. Like we want to be like God. So you can have half of this.

Other one can have half. And then the other half of the biscuits they had previously were blank slates and they could put the raspberry jelly on. And that's wonderful, too. Let's just be thankful for God's generosity toward us.

We want to be like that towards others. And so, of course, it doesn't it doesn't like magically make them more generous for the rest of their lives. But what we're what we're doing is we're continuing to pivot it back to the conversation of this is selfishness.

[ 30 : 19 ] This is in your heart. We don't want we don't want you to grow up like this. We God has something better for us. We want to live like God. He's there's actually a Sovereign Grace Kids song called Givers Like God. It's a cool song.

And so we kind of like riff on that occasionally, like we want to be givers like God. OK, so those are two case studies. I hope those are helpful because that's just like the last week coming up with a couple of those.

There's millions of them that we could draw from. But we botch a bunch of them. We do. We just botch a bunch of them. But we are being parented by God to turn from self-reliance, turn from behavioral kind of therapy with our kids.

And we're we're aiming at the heart. That's what we want to learn and to do as parents as well. OK, so here are a couple of questions that I want to give you to think about and for discussion with your spouse.

If your spouse is here, you take this later and discuss it. So can you identify situations in which you've been tempted to give your child a keepable standard because it made things easier?

[ 31 : 23 ] I think maybe looking back at some of the patterns of like recent conflicts, for instance, how do we handle these conflicts? How did what did we do in this situation? Was it aimed at behavior or did we start to pivot it towards the heart and have these conversations?

So what would it look like to train their heart in those situations? If you were to take this, what we're just talking about and revisit it, if you go back in the time machine, what are some of those scenarios you could just walk through with your spouse to talk through?

What what could have this what could this look like instead? Because that will help prep you for future conflicts because they're coming. They're coming your way. And then the second thing, if you were to name two character training objectives for your child, what would they be?

We can look at each of our kids and we can see like sin trends, if you want to think of them that way, that are kind of like dominant sin trends, sneakiness, deceitfulness or another one, anger and rage or another one, self pity.

You know, those those are ones we can they're like easily identifiable sin patterns. And we all have them, too. So don't don't be don't be thinking this is just for kids. This might be helpful exercise for all of us to do in our own lives, because I think even that helps us relate to our kids like, buddy, I am very sinful when it comes to self pity.

[ 32 : 44 ] God's teaching me and training me to these are the things that I tend to do. That lead down that path. And God's God's not wanting me to stay there.

He loves me too much to leave me there. I love you too much to leave you there. We've we've got to change. We've all got to change. And God gives us power to do that. So I think those are just a couple of questions that I'd like to to leave with you on this.

What are some scriptures potentially that could help you, your child live quorum Deo in these areas? OK, we're going to pivot now to another section.

This is all training oriented, more like discipline and things like that. Addressing conflict. But I want to give you three priorities during this season for parents. Three priorities. And I hope that this will really encourage you because it's more than just discipline.

We're not just called to be disciplinarians and having talks like this. We want to be proactive in other areas as well. So one way that I've been really convicted of as I was putting this together is I want to pray for my children more regularly.

[ 33 : 54 ] And I'd put that before you, too. I want to I want this to be a priority for all of us that we would pray for our children. Remember in Psalm 127, there's all of these references to the Lord. Unless the Lord builds, unless the Lord watches, unless the Lord convicts and saves.

It's all in vain. Like we can't do this. We can't make this work effective in the lives of our kids. We need God to help us. So I want to I want to be more proactive. And I'd call you to it as well to pray to the Lord that he bring conviction.

I outlined just a few prayer points that could guide you as you pray for your kids, things that that we want for them. Drew these from a series.

You can look into the article itself. Just type in seven things to pray for your children by John Bloom. I just cherry picked a few that I really liked. We want to pray that Jesus will call them and no one will hinder them from coming.

We want our kids to become Christians. We should be praying for that. We want to pray that they will respond in faith to Jesus's faithful, persistent call. They will experience sanctification through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

[ 35 : 03 ] They will increasingly desire to fulfill the greatest commandments to love God, to love others and that their thoughts will be pure. There's scripture references there. I invite you to dig on those and make them into prayers for your kids.

The second thing I want to call us to a priority is to fight for a simple practice of family worship. William Bokstein, I guess is how you say his name, had this helpful comment.

It said, every family has a God. Every day, young adults leave home with the gods of self-fulfillment, money, leisure, work, or even ministry.

That's a really important line. And I think it points at me, too. It's not just the, you know, the secular jobs need to make sure they do some spiritual things occasionally.

No, we can idolize and get out of proportion our families in this essential area, especially as dads. So I want to call you to heed this warning.

[ 36 : 15 ] Every family has a God. Is it clear that the Lord God is God over your family, not just on Sunday, but through the rest of the week as well?

Joshua 24, 15. Joshua says, but as for me and my house. Use my house, this individual unit. We will serve the Lord. It's a declaration of how they're going to operate day in and day out.

So I want to commend to you a very basic structure that we can make it very simple. But it'd be wonderful to implement this pattern if it's not a pattern already. The structure is this.

Read, pray, sing. Read, pray, sing. You don't have to be a scholar. You don't have to be a musician. So I'm giving you just a few ways to do this that I found helpful.

One is be simple. Be simple with this. Read something simple that matches your kid's level of understanding. Something like potentially if your kid's a little bit older, the Gospel of John's a wonderful place.

[ 37 : 15 ] Psalms, Proverbs are a good place to start. Aim for like five to ten minutes total. I read something and I would be like this one to like make a whole like liturgy and like have it be like thematic and go in.

Like it doesn't have to be like that. OK, just let's just get started on something simple. I brought a couple of these actually. I had one out already. But if you're a parent and you're like, I don't have anything.

I don't know how to do this. This is intimidating to me. This is yours. Who wants it? This is this is the biggest story Bible storybook written by Kevin DeYoung, a pastor, very faithful brother.

We really like them. And it's daily devotions throughout the whole Bible, kind of summaries of different scripture stories, all pointing to Jesus. It even has really good pictures and it has and it has a prayer at the end.

So actually implements the prayer to help you out. So I'll just leave this on the front row right here. And whoever wants it can come and grab it. That would be a blessing to your family.

[ 38 : 16 ] OK, so if you don't get it, then buy it. That's it's great. So that's another option to do. So we want it to be simple. You can pray out of the text. You read, pray a simple prayer for things going on in your church or in your family life.

It could be it could be this morning we prayed. What do we pray for, Elizabeth? It was praying for church, right? It was like, man, pray that the Lord would use the meeting today to change us, to not leave us how we are.

That was our prayer today. It doesn't have to be real complex. The second thing is to be flexible. Be flexible. Disruptions happen. Kids start crying or they get distracted.

You're trying to keep things kind of on board. Do what you can and entrust it to the Lord. Let's just do that. Like, Lord, I'm trying. I really am. Let's just entrust it to them.

Let's let's be flexible. We try to correct a crowd, but don't don't feel like you have to get to the end. That's not the point. The point is, like, they're seeing this model that this is a priority in our lives, in our family's life.

[ 39 : 20 ] So you can be flexible. Be consistent is another piece. Find the time that works best for you. Look it over. Talk it over with your spouse. We have different seasons, different things going on.

So right now, our season is, like, we've got these little guys. They're kind of close together in age bracket. I know some of you all have them spread out and are different kind of, like, life seasons in general. So you've got to look at your season.

For us right now, it's like we do breakfast together. And that's, like, the best time for us to eat. And I kind of – I eat fast. I'm just, like, a monster. And then I'm able to – while they're still finishing, I'm able to share a scripture and we are able to do a song and things like that.

So that just works right now. There's coming a time that's not going to work. It's going to change. But we just got to keep coming back and seasonally saying, all right, what could we do?

Where could we get this five to ten minutes together and make it a priority consistently? So just keep revisiting that again and again. And then lastly, be hopeful. Be hopeful.

[ 40 : 24 ] Be hopeful. This might seem daunting to you. Or it might even, while you're doing it, seem ineffective. Had that thought. Is this doing anything?

Like, is this helping anybody? This is really hard. A lot of times that's kind of the end line is, this is really hard for me. You know, I don't want to stop doing something because it feels hard to me.

I want to be faithful. I want us to be faithful and pursue this. Even if we don't see perceivable, perceptible growth. That's not what we're basing our hope on.

We're basing our hope that we're scattering seed and asking the Lord to bring the growth. That's what we're doing. We're just, we're going to keep scattering seed and watering. Scatter seed and water.

Scatter seed and water. That's what we're going to do. So I just want to urge you and call you to keep going. Just keep going. It's okay if you don't see immediate fruit or this feels like it just went off the rails.

[ 41 : 19 ] Just keep going. Just keep going. So be hopeful. Exposes your kids consistently to the word. The concepts of prayer and faith.

It provides a context for conversations about the Lord. And we've seen often that it's a springboard for conversations later in the day. Like stuff that we talked about earlier. Now we have some kind of like traction points to have conversations later.

Not even in that moment necessarily. So just know the Lord uses these small moments to shape their hearts and your heart too. He's shaping your heart too while you're doing this stuff.

It's wonderful. So, and then the last thing I wanted to share with you is just simply make this a priority. Keep your heart amazed by grace.

Keep your heart amazed by grace. This might seem counterintuitive. Like I thought this was a parenting. Like where are the methods for the kids? This is the ultimate method.

[ 42 : 22 ] This is the, I left it at the end because it's the ultimate method. Your heart is so much more caught than taught. They're watching you, what you live for, what you pray about, how you respond to crisis.

They're watching you and learning from you. Keep your hearts amazed by grace. Brian Chesmore, brother in Louisville. He said, in order to have something glorious to transfer to your children, we must first make sure to keep it glorious in our eyes.

So well said. JW Alexander, where, where the head of a family is lukewarm or worldly, he will send the chill through the whole house.

Wow. And if any happy exception occur in one and another surpass him in faithfulness, talking about kids, it will be in spite of his evil example, where the dad is a man of faith, of affection and of zeal, consecrating all his works and life to Christ.

It is very rare to find all his household otherwise minded. It's more caught than taught. So let's let's just continue to say, Lord, I want to know you.

[ 43 : 35 ] I want to follow you. I want to grow. Don't leave me unchanged as I'm trying to reach out to my kids. Change me, too. So let's pray together. Oh, Lord, we we do need you and we don't want to remain unchanged.

You are faithful and you will do it. That's the promise that we have as parents. You're going to give us the grace to to sustain this season.

Lord, I pray for the many in here that are in the trenches with us. Lord, I thank you for their desire to to be faithful to the things that you've entrusted.

Lord, I pray that you bring fruit, Lord, and in due time and that we will not give up, but we will reap a harvest one day in the future. If not already, Lord, help us to keep laboring in this area of parenting.

And Lord, help us to live our lives quorum Deo so that our kids can see what that looks like. Lived out day in and day out, not just in our parenting, but in all of our relationships.

[ 44 : 38 ] Lord, we we thank you and ask for help in Jesus name. Amen.