

# Our Children

## Our Joy

Proverbs 17:6

Olive Wright is one who has spoken into the lives of children, 30 years as a 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, she wrote some of the things that she heard come from the mouths of little ones and wrote them in a book that was a great little read: ([I will choose 1 or 2 of these](#))

1. Darla: “When I was born, I was five”
2. The teacher asked Phil why he was late for school and he said, “Cause I had to pick up thirty-hundred pieces of dog doo in my backyard.”
3. Isaac, Nathan’s little brother, didn’t sleep very long and his mother said he had taken a cap nap. Nathan: “What’s a cap nap?”  
Mother: “That’s what we call a short nap.”  
Nathan: “Well, I take dog naps because they are longer.”
4. Our 4 year son, Jim Wright, stood on the kitchen chair watching me stuff the Thanksgiving turkey. The minister and his wife were to be our guests that evening. When we sat down to the table, Jim pointed to the bowl of dressing and yelled, “Don’t anyone eat any of that stuff, cause Mom had it up the turkey’s butt.”

You have to love them:

Scripture gives us over and over the trifecta of relationship. Grandparents-Parents-Children. It is clearly the Godly design. We hear over and over again your children’s children

1. [Psalm 103:17](#)

But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their **children's** children-

[Psalm 128:6](#)

and may you live to see your **children's** children. Peace be upon Israel.

[Proverbs 13:22](#)

A good man leaves an inheritance for his **children's** children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

2. We have illustrations where Paul talks to Timothy about the faith he saw in his mother and grandmother and now he sees in him. This opening scripture today clearly shows this inter-relationship between the generations

*Children's children are a crown to the aged,  
and parents are the pride of their children. Proverbs 17:6*

The Godly Design vs. the Tragedy

(will need a newsprint: With Black Marker)

Crown = award for merit and victory

Pride = splendor, beauty, glory, honor, magnificence

Grandparents

Parents

Children

So why doesn't this work?

*(speaking to Joshua) "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you." Joshua 1:5*

*"Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had experienced everything the LORD had done for Israel." Joshua 24:31*

*"After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel." Judges 2:10*

## What Do Kids Need?

### 1. Provision

*"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." 1 Timothy 5:8*

This is really why I brought up the Partners In Hope relationship, last week. We have families that are struggling financially and are getting stretched to be able to even meet this first and most basic need of kids. I talked to a Father who had been laid off. After 2 months he was OK, he was listening for God's voice, after 6 months – the edges were fraying, but he was still in tact, after 14 months – I had to hunt for him, the weight had become too great and he was embarrassed to be seen in church.

This verse is spot-lighting those who won't work, not those can't work, but even so, the natural weight of the need to provide can take a person under. The reason is #1, they know that if children are consumed by fears and worries regarding emotional safety and physical provision, then little growth can occur.

Empowerment

Accountability

### 2. Perspective

*"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Deuteronomy 11:18-19*

Kids need to know how to make sense of the world. We have found through studies that kids develop their world view before Junior High. God knew that, that is why He led the Israelites to lie by this passage from Deut. 11. Kids from the moment they are born, their brains are working overtime to coordinate and interpret the information they are taking in. Unfortunately, most Americans develop their worldview by default. They essentially learn it through sources that are thrust upon them. Look at this verse, it is a warning and a guidance system for us as parents and the church.

- a. Talk about them when you sit at home – dinner table
- b. When you walk along the road – driving in the car
- c. When you lie down – Bedtime
- d. When you get up – Other times during the day

So what do you talk about

1. The Bible – as a trustworthy source of direction and wisdom
2. Developed knowledge of Bible Content – Jr Bible Quiz – Bible Trivia
3. Tie Bible content to practical everyday life -
4. Demonstrate obedience to the Word of God and thus build a hunger in them to obey as well

### 3. Purpose

*Train a child in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not turn from it.*

*Proverbs 22:6*

Most of us have maybe even heard this text. It speaks of the need of a child to gain that needed training early on in his/her areas of their strengths. “**The way they should go**” refers to a child’s ‘bent’ their leanings. Meaning and purpose in life are gained by developing spiritual understanding.

Yet what we see is that 50% of adults and 68% of teenagers have no idea what they are on this earth for. They tend to meander through life, aimless. They are capable but basically unproductive, they are comfortable but deeply unfulfilled.

Children need the establishment of an unwavering commitment to God’s calling on their lives. Casey is a young man I know. He is now 13. At age 5 he realized he had a calling to reach out and share the gospel. He started at one of the local nursing homes, reading to the elderly that were there, by 6 he was preaching on Sunday afternoons and visiting everyone in the home each Tuesday night, reading to them and explaining the stories he was reading. He is still doing that. 2 years ago, at age 11 he preached the Christmas Eve service at the church I served to over 375, when he spoke you could have heard a pin drop.

This is what kids need, they need time to really discover, then practice what God designed them for.

### 4. Performance

*Listen, my son, to your father's instruction  
and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head  
and a chain to adorn your neck. Proverbs 1:8-9*

We have to remember that the ultimate goal is to build a spiritual foundation that serves as the basis of our children's human development. The instruction and teaching this verse is talking about lays a spiritual foundation in our children's lives that allows them to optimize the life they have been given.

This instruction and teaching need to center around 6 keys areas and serves as the fundamental elements of a children's spiritual formation pathway.

The areas are:

- Worship – kids need an adult who will help them authentically and intimately connect with God
- Evangelism – kids naturally like to tell what is most important to them. Giving them opportunities to share the faith that is developing in them is essential for the full developmental process
- Discipleship – leading children to a habit of continual spiritual growth
- Stewardship – Kids need training in becoming good managers of the resources they have been entrusted with. These resources are more than just money and include becoming good stewards of relationships, ideas, skills, spiritual gifts, time and possessions
- Service – Kids need opportunities to serve others, in fact to lead, in serving others
- Community – Kids need to be led and brought into a community of believers, where they are accepted, instructed, encouraged, supported and held accountable

So where does the church fit in all this. The bible is really clear, the job of the spiritual development of our children is clearly the parents. If the parents are too busy, to catch the intricate teaching opportunities that appear day to day in the life of their then we all lose. But the church can partner with the parents to compensate for some of our own developmental weaknesses. Working in connection with other believers is always healthy for giving our children a broader view of how the whole body of Christ works and fits together.