

**NOTES: Sabbatical Reflections | Jesus and the Next Generation**  
**July 30-31, 2022, Nate Elarton, Compelled Church**

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The Importance of Children according to Jesus Christ our Lord

**Mark 10:13-16** *“And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, “Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. “Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.” And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.”* (Mark 10:13–16, NASB95)

We need to be blessing to the next generation as Jesus blessed them

How can we be a blessing to the next generation?

**1. Value them.** *“Taking a child, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, “Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me.””* (Mark 9:36–37, NASB95)

**2. Protect them** *“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea.”* (Mark 9:42, NASB95)

**3. Teach them**

*“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all you might. “These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. “You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. “You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, NASB95)

***Parents, be involved in your children’s spiritual formation, just like their educational and physical formation. Read, pray, talk, listen, and encourage them in the things of the Lord.***

Even if you are not a parent, but part of the Body of Christ, we must make time for children. How?

- Encourage parents when you see them, “good job” or “don’t give up.”
- Encourage a single parent
- Volunteer to teach in nursery, youth group, Royal Rangers, Girls Ministries, VBS, special Events.
- Encourage those and have gratitude for those teaching.
- Support children and youth ministries. Send a kid to camp/retreat/camping, offer to help, pray for our volunteers,
- Pray for Pastor Dustin and Michelle Reed and Pastor Scotty and Melissa Matta

## HOW TO RAISE KIDS WHO LOVE JESUS – 15 TIPS FOR CHRISTIAN PARENTS

1. **Read the Bible.** This is probably cliché, but reading the Bible together is a good start.
2. **Talk about the Bible.** Reading the Bible isn't just about reading stories to children. If it were that, it would be easy.
3. **Play worship music in the background of your home.** When we're all at home, I like to ask Alexa to turn on the praise & worship station or the Christian music station (both free without an Amazon Music subscription), and we listen on volume level 3. It's loud enough to hear the words of the songs but it's not so loud that we can't go about our business and have conversations over it.
4. **Pray for them.** Prayer changes situations, and it changes people. If you aren't praying for your children every day, now is the time to start.
5. **Pray with them.** How will your children learn to pray if you don't give them a good example? It's uncomfortable for me to pray out loud, even with my kids, but I do it anyway.
  - Praise Him (Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name)
  - Ask Him to expand the Christian church on Earth (Thy kingdom come.)
  - Ask Him to reveal His purpose for your life (Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.)
  - Ask for the things you need and want (Give us this day our daily bread,)
  - Ask Him to forgive your sins (and forgive us our trespasses)
  - Ask Him to help you forgive others (as we forgive those who trespass against us.)
  - Ask Him to help you make the right choices (And lead us not into temptation,)
  - Ask Him to protect you from Satan's schemes (but deliver us from evil,)
  - Praise Him (for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.)If you can follow that model, you will be praying just like Jesus did, and that is an excellent way to teach your kids.
6. **Model how to handle hard situations. Forgiveness, grace, prayer for hard decisions.**
7. **Respect authority.** Have you ever made an off-hand, snarky comment about a politician or a law? Do you drive over the speed limit or occasionally squeak through a red light? Do you criticize your pastor after the Sunday service is over? These are all showing your kids that you don't respect authority. I am so guilty of this, especially with politics and driving, and it gives my kids the worst possible example. How can I expect them to drive safely and under the speed limit when they grow up if I drive 10 miles over it every time I get on the highway? If I speed up and drive through intersections when the light has turned red? We can't be hypocrites as parents, because our kids see, and they will imitate everything we do.
8. **Love others.** What do you do when you see a homeless person on the street with a sign asking for help? Do you offer money or food? Do you show love to people that they can see with their eyes? What about your speech? Do you speak lovingly about others, especially when you disagree with them? Have your kids ever heard you make a statement about "those Democrats" or "those Republicans" or "those \_\_\_\_\_ people"? That's not loving, my friend, and your kids know it.
9. **Let them see you giving cheerfully.** Let them see giving is joy.
10. **Speak kindly to them.** This is the one that really trips up most parents. Can you say that you treat your kids as well as you would treat a stranger?
11. **Speak kindly about others**
12. **Smile more.** Children grow in security, and you communicate love, when you smile.
13. **Give them your undivided attention and listen to them.**
14. **Love your church,** worship with them, volunteer to help
15. **Nurture them,** hug them, and read to them. Tell them you love them and believe in them. Discipline to teach them not to punish or inflict pain. Don't demean them or call names. Encourage even in their failing. We have all failed. Those moments can transform their hearts.