

# GROWTHguide

FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 17, 2016

“Faith at Home



## THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 6:4, 2 Corinthians 5:9, John 20:24-29, Read Isaiah 64:8, Psalm 90:12

## REFLECTION AND STUDY

### DAY 1

Each child the Lord gives is a gift that comes with many blessings and responsibilities. Jesus' directive to "make disciples of all nations" starts in our very own homes, with the opportunity to teach our children to love and obey God. But how do we start? God has given parents the responsibility of creating an environment suitable for their children to become followers of Christ. He also expects parents, and grandparents, to continue to mature in their faith. **Read Proverbs 22:6.** Parents should remember that when God gives the command, He also makes the way. Since God has the best counsel and provides all the resources, He gives the responsibility of using the resources to the ones to whom He's given the child. You have all you need. It is vital that parents stay in the Word themselves for their spiritual health and stamina.

- Do you have a strategy for parenting in today's hostile culture?
- Do you follow a daily Bible reading plan? What is your scripture reading habit?

**Thank God for His Word. Recommit to a daily reading plan and to reading scripture with your children.**

### DAY 2

**Read Deuteronomy 6:4.** We love God because He first loved us. Love grows as we get to know someone better. Reading God's Word, writing it down, speaking it out by sharing it with each other helps us get to know Him and each other better. This is how we grow in our love together. We as parents, or grandparents, cannot teach our children what we do not know. We are to love the Lord with all our heart and to share that love with our children. Our children are watching us and modeling our attitudes and behaviors. They are parroting back our attitudes about Christ and His church. We cannot teach children to love the Lord with all their heart if we do not first love Him ourselves. How do you keep God's Word "on your heart?" You do it by reading the word together, talking about it and meditating on it. Talk about your thoughts as a family.

- Do you have an intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ?
- What kind of dialogue do your kids hear in your home about Christ and His church?

**Thank God for your family. Pray that you would model what you want your children to see. Ask forgiveness for any wrong attitudes. Look for opportunities to meditate on the Word together.**

### DAY 3

Busyness is a real problem these days. We all have good intentions to get in our daily devotion and take the time to unplug and be present with each other, but life happens so fast and another day is gone. If a loving relationship with God and your children is your highest priority, then give them the BEST part of your day. Read God's Word and talk with Him together when your family is most able to focus. Don't put that time off until the end of the day when you are worn out from life. You probably don't have to change much, just disconnect for ten minutes at a time. Put down the phone. Turn the radio off. Be intentional with your time or it will not happen and another day will be gone. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:9.**

- Do you have opportunities in the normal rhythm of life where you can weave prayer time with your family into your schedule? Breakfast time? Car rides? Walks?

**Pray today with your family and thank God for all you have. Ask your kids if they have anything they would like to lift up to God in prayer.**

## DAY 4

**Read John 20:24-29.** It is important we cultivate a safe environment for our children's doubts. Many children raised in church are led astray once they leave our homes. It is important that that they have sound biblical doctrine that they can stand firm on when they do have doubts. Help your child understand that doubt is something common to all Christians, so they won't be scared to share their struggles when they arise later in life. Allowing for and rejoicing in the mystery of God will help your children, giving them the freedom to worship in mystery and truth. We don't have all of the answers. Many times we attempt to protect our children from hard issues that we think may cause them to doubt their faith. However, this is not wise. In fact, parents should be the first ones who bring up difficult issues, working through them with their children and making it clear that we live in a fallen world and can expect suffering and unanswered questions. Most importantly, no matter how they feel about it, God is always with them.

- Is your faith strong enough to handle your children's doubts?

**Pray for your children and their salvation. Pray that would have a real and genuine relationship with the Lord.**

## DAY 5

**Read Isaiah 64:8.** Biblical parenting involves encouraging, exhorting, and empathizing with children according to their unique needs and character of each child. The art of good parenting begins with the fundamental skill of seeing through the eyes of the child, of sharing the child's view of reality, feelings and hopes. Becoming familiar with your child's personality will go a long way toward helping you understand why your child acts the way they do. At the same time, the more intimately you know your child, the easier you will be able to teach and guide your child. It is important to realize both their strengths and weaknesses. Every child is different and created uniquely in the image of God himself.

- What kind of personality does(do) your child(ren) have?

**Pray and thank God for your unique child. Ask God to reveal more about their character and uniqueness.**

## DAY 6

**Read Psalm 90:12.** Knowing how many days you have left with your children can make you more intentional as a parent. Maybe you would spend your days differently if you knew how many you had. Maybe you would change your priorities. No one wants to have any regrets, and we only have to tackle one day at a time. Take advantage of the time you spend with your children by being observant and prepared. Try to avoid having your attention divided and be genuine when you give it to your children. Even if you see them for an hour a day, make it a quality hour. Hold their hands, talk about what God is doing in your life, ask them about what He is doing in theirs.

- Is there anyone in your life that has been a good example of a disciple?
- How can you be a better disciple?

**Thank God for the opportunity to be used by Him. Ask God to show you how you can encourage others and tell them about Jesus. Pray for fresh opportunities to use your gifts in His service.**

## DAY 7

Today is your "Sabbath" and a time for reflection. How has God been speaking to you over the week? Use what the Lord has said to you to remold and reshape your life. If you are having trouble hearing God's voice, slow down or even stop what you are doing so that the busyness of life's demands do not squelch the whispers of God's language of love upon your heart.