

How to Show Your Kids the Way to God

After bringing children into this world, Christian parents should help them find their way through it. How may we do so?

We show them the way by directing and redirecting them to the One who said, “I am the way” (John 14:6). Such godly guidance requires three primary necessities:

1. Instruction – We should diligently teach them about the Way, His Words, and His way of life.
2. Intercession – We should faithfully pray for them in the Spirit to come to, receive, walk, and persevere in the Way.
3. Illustration – We should steadily demonstrate to them a life lived in and for the Way and Words of God.

Whatever other helpful ways of parenting we discover and practice, these three are essential if we hope to help guide our innocent ones through the wicked wilderness of the world. Naïve and vulnerable to the wily prince of this world, our children need and deserve two parents who walk with God. But with sin and stress ruining many marriages, happy nuclear families are harder to find.

While two Christian parents are preferable, one, if committed, can become an inspirational parental epistle—a walking, talking Bible message, a Christian living video seen and heard in the home daily. As Christ was the Word “made flesh” before Israel’s attentive eyes, so Christian parents can be Christianity “made flesh” before their children’s curious and impressionable gazes.

God’s plan is for our parental “Bible story,” and our priestly intercessions, to influence our children all their lives, calling and recalling them to the Way in whom we walk. But our works, ways, and sayings permanently impress our children (or

grandchildren) for Christ only if we are consistent “doers of the Word, and not hearers only” (Jas. 1:22). So Christian parent, be consistent. Day after day, show them the Way.

Demonstrate integrity, a thoroughly honest character that doesn’t act deceitfully or unethically, or speak falsely. Display humility, a soul that doesn’t seek praises, boast on its accomplishments, deny its faults, hold prejudices, or mock anyone: “What doth the Lord require...but...to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8).

Exhibit devotion, a deeply dedicated Christian disciple who takes time “first” daily to fellowship with his King and strengthen His “kingdom” and “righteousness” within (Matt. 6:33). Show dutifulness, a parent who steadily pursues his vocational obligations, rain or shine, to provide his family’s needs: “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” (Rom. 12:11). Demonstrate faith, a parent who relies on God at all times, “anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer...with thanksgiving” asking God’s help and resting in His “peace...that passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:6-7).

Display faithfulness, a parent who always honors covenantal and contractual obligations and verbal agreements: “Timothy, who is...faithful in the Lord” (1 Cor. 4:17). Show submission, a parent who willingly yields to authorities, laws, and rules in the nation, workplace, church, and home: “Be subject to the governing authorities” (Rom. 13:1, ESV). Exhibit joy, a spirit so free in Jesus that gladness springs and flows out regularly, even during long, dark trials of faith: “Strengthened...unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Col. 1:11).

Demonstrate worship, a parent who freely lavishes adoration on the true God, not the worldly idols of money, materialism, pleasure, or self-promotion: “Then David arose...and worshipped” (2 Sam. 12:20). Display the New Testament overcomer, one who consistently rises above adversaries and adversities by

persistently trusting and obeying God, regardless of what others say or do: “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:21).

Show courage, a parent who consistently obeys God and remains unmoved when the consequences are misunderstanding, criticism, slander, or betrayal: “Be strong and of a good courage...the Lord thy God is with thee” (Josh. 1:9).

Exhibit mercy, a parent who doesn’t rush to judge or condemn anyone, and who forgives all offenders: “Be ye therefore merciful...judge not...condemn not...forgive” (Luke 6:36-37). And demonstrate love, a parent who is always ready to kindly listen to, counsel, or support them, whether they excel or fail: “Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us” (Eph. 5:2).

These kinds of living illustrations combined with intercession will make your instruction impressive.

Your children, and grandchildren, will remember your parental epistle and find the Way and enter into, abide in, and walk in His Words and ways. And never depart: “Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6). In that day you’ll rejoice, knowing you’ve guided through this world those you brought into it. Got kids? Grandkids?

Go show them the way.

Greg Hinnant *is the author of Not By Bread Alone (Creation House), from which this article is adapted.*