

5 Loving Ways You Can Nurture Holy Spirit's Call on Your Child's Life

When I was in the sixth grade, I talked a lot. I mean a whole lot. I would often lock myself in the bathroom, grab a pencil to use as a makeshift microphone and render award-winning speeches to a make-believe audience. My mother, who sometimes needed a break from my constant jabbering, insisted that I stop talking so much.

"Valerie!" she'd shout. "Be quiet—and I mean now!" But later she would come back and unknowingly prophesy: "You have the gift of gab, and one day you are going to use it."

As I look back, I'm sure my mom wasn't trying to predict my future. But she was and still is a praying woman who sought the Lord earnestly concerning His plans for my life. In time, He revealed to her that my natural ability to communicate was His design. So she did whatever she could to open up doors of opportunity for me.

When I was 13, my parents landed a spot for me and my identical twin sister, Vanessa, on a Christian TV show for kids called Acorn Alley. I don't know how they managed to get us for a month, but I do know my mother was taking her cues from Scripture. Proverbs 22:6 gives specific instructions on developing the God-given potential embedded in every child. The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition, offers an insightful translation: "Train up a child in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it."

In essence, parents are responsible for investing in their children the love, guidance and structure that can one day produce a life fully committed to the Lord. As we lead them

“in the way they should go”—according to their unique personalities and natural giftings—they can live fulfilling lives.

We need to imitate Eunice, the mother of Timothy, the apostle Paul’s prodigy. Her godly influence on Timothy created an ironclad commitment that would seal his faith in Christ. Eunice’s devotion to that challenge carved a place for her in biblical history, and Paul remembered “the genuine faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and that I am persuaded lives in you also” (2 Tim. 1:5).

Like Eunice, parents can help their children fulfill their purpose in life by intentionally nurturing them. Here are some ideas:

1. Pray with your child daily.
2. Demonstrate unconditional love, regardless of your child’s failures or successes.
3. Shun performance-based acceptance, and avoid forcing your unfulfilled dreams on your child.
4. Spend quality time imparting character-building traits that will stand against the toughest temptation.
5. Talk with your kids about their day at school, their homework and their future goals or aspirations.

Parents who are vigilant in their pursuit to raise kids who love God and who will use their gifts to serve Him are not easily shaken by the enemy’s attempts to shatter their dreams for their children. Why? Because they are trusting God for the outcome.

When my daughter was in the sixth grade, she also talked a lot. I mean a whole lot. She loved drama and writing. She enjoyed auditioning for plays and competing in oratorical contests at school and church because it came so naturally to her. But in the spiritual realm, the Holy Spirit was developing the skills that were necessary for her to minister

to God as well.

So the next time your child locks the bathroom door to rehearse a prize-winning speech, don't hush them—help them. Only God knows what's in the making.

Prayer Power for the Week of May 7, 2017

Pray for our children this week and all those who impact them the most. Pray for wisdom as parents, teachers, youth leaders, pastors and mentors. Include them when you pray for national and worldwide revival. Continue to pray for our president and all those responsible for the decisions that affect our country and the world. Include our allies when you pray for our nation and its protection (Matt. 18:3; Matt. 19:13-14; Prov. 22:6).