

Christian Parent: Don't Ever Stop Fighting for Your Children

Read Time: 4 Minutes 47 Seconds

There are few things in life that I wish for more than a bright future for my children.

Yes, I want them to be successful in whatever career or ministry God calls them to. Of course, I want them to experience the joy that comes from raising a family of their own. Sure, I would even love to leave them a nice inheritance, have their college aspirations fully funded and keep them from experiencing many of the learning pains I had as a young adult.

However, in the words of 3 John 1:4, I will have no greater joy than to know my children have made their own decision to walk in truth with a love for their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Admittedly, being a father of four girls (ages 6, 11, 14, 17) is more than a little intimidating in a society that seems increasingly less focused on instilling the truths of God's Word and more focused on propagating fake agendas and distortions of reality. My wife and I have frequently discussed how to find a balance in keeping their precious minds from the chaos of this present world, while also ensuring they are armed with information and tools to equip them for the realities of young adulthood.

We do not claim to have all the answers, and frankly we've made a lot of mistakes as parents over the past 17 years. I'm sure we will make many more.

But I will never apologize for every time we've taken them to church, prayed together or opened and discussed the Bible as a family. I will never apologize for teaching them values and the difference between right and wrong.

Yes, there is a difference. And, no matter what life throws at them, dad and mom will always have open arms to love and point them toward the cross.

Over the past decade I've heard a lot about "making church relevant" for the younger generation. While I certainly agree that we should provide programs and resources that appeal to children, teens and young adults alike, I do not agree, on principle, that the Bible needs to be changed to be "relevant." In fact, there is nothing more relevant than God's Word.

No other writing has stood the test of time, transcending different centuries and cultures, and yet, when opened and read today, is still able to speak to each of us in a very relevant way. The Bible is both a historical book and a living book. We learn Bible history while the living Word guides us through life.

Each year for the past seven years, at least one of our daughters has participated in a Bible verse memorization and competitive quizzing program. It is a half-year long season covering a few hundred pre-selected verses that are memorized verbatim.

Each "quizzier" typically invests up to an hour per day on memorization and review. That might seem like a large investment but in reality, they've really just replaced excessive "screen time." It's amazing how their motivation for Bible quizzing has built on its own over time. We initially introduced them to the program but I must say, never have we pleaded, bribed or required participation.

A few years ago, one of our daughters dropped out for a

season. She felt she wanted to focus on school, which we supported whole heartedly. By the end of the year, she had told her friends and us that she never wanted to miss a season again. She missed the focus, community and competition.

In fact, each of the kids have developed a passion, pushed through fears of public speaking and found a way to boldly proclaim their faith. Hearing them share their faith with others, defend it with scripture and even encourage one another (Yes, they still have daily sibling squabbles!) is a blessing to us.

The first year, my wife, Lydia, wanted to find a way to encourage and help them in their endeavor. Inspiration struck one day, and she sat down at her piano and began to sing one of the verses as a catchy tune. The kids were excited! The tune caught on, and it helped them learn the verse.

One tune turned into 10, 10 into 100 and she and her mother, "Grandma," now write 500+ songs every year for hundreds of groups across the nation who learn their verses by song. We love to hear the testimonies of kids who previously had learning or attention challenges, but now are able to memorize scripture by listening to songs.

Lifelong friendships, teamwork, wins, losses, ups, downs, travel and adventures have all brought valuable life lessons of their own. Don't get me wrong, we are not living "Pollyanna" lives. We've had the usual ER visits, emergency surgeries, professional counseling, ILPs, sibling rivalries, family meetings and now we have teenage daughters! We have a long way to go in our parenting journey and yes, we covet your prayers.

As I think about my 17-year-old graduating this year, my parental radar goes on high alert again. I have to fight back the "what-ifs." What if she doesn't remember what we've instilled in her? What if...What if...

In discussing college a few weeks ago, she came to us almost in tears... "I feel like God wants me to go on a mission trip before I go to college. Would you be supportive?"

We needed no time to consider.

Today, I pray for every parent standing up for a faith-filled future for their children. Heavenly Father, would You encourage every parent, guardian and grandparent who reads this. This world seems overwhelming with pressure to pull kids away from You. Help every family to have a boldness and wisdom to know when and how to point their family closer to You.

For the parent reading this who is trying to instill Godly principles into your children, but feels the pressure of the world closing in, be strong and keep fighting. Your efforts will not return void. For the parent who may have a child who no longer attends church, I pray that you will keep believing. Don't lose heart. You may not see a way right now, but God is working and He is able to do anything!

Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!

Wes Lindsey serves as the Sr. Director of Marketing for Medi-Share/Christian Care Ministry. He and his wife Lydia, have four daughters, Melaina (17), Elyse (14), Adalyn (11) and Emma (6). In 2023, Wes and Lydia will be celebrating their 20th wedding anniversary. Since 2003 they have served in various ministerial roles, including music, children, youth, small groups, drama, tech and pastoral ministry.