

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

TRAIN UP A CHILD

A Booklet to help Parents and Sponsors of
Young Children

Train up a child in the way he should go and
when he is old he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6

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A CREED FOR CHILDREN

I believe in God above
I believe in Jesus' love;
I believe God's Spirit,
too Comes to tell me what to do.

Note:

Symbols used to denote Bible versions:

KJ King James

RSV Revised Standard Version

NIV New International Version

LB Living Bible

ML Modern Language

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PART ONE

THE BEGINNING

Congratulations to the parents and sponsors of

When you presented your child for baptism you made a good beginning, but it is only a beginning. You have been entrusted with a very special work--helping this precious child grow up in "wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man" ¹

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

¹ Luke 2:52

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FAMILIES

God planned for families when He created Adam, Eve and their children.

YOU ARE A FAMILY! YOU ARE SPECIAL!

THE REWARDS OF FAMILY LIFE CAN BE:

LOVE
HAPPINESS
STRENGTH
COMPANIONSHIP
JOY
ENCOURAGEMENT

God has a family. He wants your family to be a part of it.

GOD HAS WONDERFUL RICHES TO SHARE:

LOVE
FORGIVENESS
GUIDANCE
COMFORT
STRENGTH
WISDOM
JOY
HOPE
FRIENDSHIP
HIS CREATION
A HEAVENLY HOME

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RULES OR GUIDE LINES

All families need rules to live by. Children should be taught these rules and follow them not from fear but because they respect and love their parents.

God has rules for his family, too. Because he is wise and loving, we know He made them to help us have better lives. Let's pass them on to our children.

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR CHILDREN

- I. Worship God not things.
2. Don't make idols.
3. Don't use God's name in a bad way.
4. Remember Sunday as God's day.
5. Love your father and mother.
6. Do not kill.
7. Be true to husband or wife.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not lie.
10. Do not want what others have.

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RULES AS JESUS SAW THEM

Jesus condensed the Ten Commandments into just two:1

LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, SOUL AND MIND.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS MUCH AS YOU LOVE YOURSELF.

NOTES FOR ADULTS WHO TEACH CHILDREN

1. There is only one God but he is known in three ways:

1. GOD THE FATHER AND CREATOR
2. JESUS THE SON who came to earth as a baby, taught, healed, and died so we could understand God's plan.
3. HOLY SPIRIT, the presence of God in the world and in our hearts to comfort, teach and strengthen us.

2. BELIEVING and LOVING God are not the same thing.

3. The BIBLE is a good textbook for you.

1 Matthew 22:37-40

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RULE ONE - LOVE GOD

THINGS CHILDREN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GOD

1. He's our FATHER "I will be a FATHER to you, and you will be my sons and daughters.
2 Corthinians 6:18
2. He's INVISIBLE.
No one has ever seen God.
John 1:18
3. He never stops LOVING us.
God said, "I have loved you with an everlasting love."
Jeremiah 31:3
4. He MADE EVERYTHING "You alone are God. You made the skies and the heavens, the earth and the seas and everything in them.
Nehemiah 9:6
5. He KNOWS US.
"Lord (another name for God), you have examined my heart and know everything about me.
6. He HELPS US.
Fear not, I am with you. I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you.
Isaiah 41:10

(Read stories about God so they will learn more about him.)

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RULE ONE - LOVE GOD

Question: How can a child love God until he or she knows him?

Answer: Parents need to introduce them.

Question: How and when do you introduce your child to God?

Answer: See some of the suggestions in this booklet and add your own ideas.

AS BABIES

We love to talk to babies even though they don't understand at first. Tell them God loves them. Tell them they are a special gift from God. Let them hear you pray when you thank God for them and ask his blessing on their future lives.

AS TODDLERS

Now they will begin to understand some of what you tell them. Point out things in nature God made and say, "Isn't God wonderful?" Express again God's love for them. Use the resources in this booklet for finger play, prayer and songs.

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INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO GOD (cont.)

AS PRESCHOOLERS

1. Talk about God being everywhere.
2. He is so special that we are not able to see, hear or touch him.
3. But we can see what he does. Talk about the wind, which we cannot see but can watch what it does.
4. When we pray we are talking to him.
(See prayer suggestions)
5. Show them the Bible and tell them this is one-way God talks to us.
6. Church is another way to introduce children to God. Take them to the worship service and Sunday school.

AT SCHOOL AGE

1. Stress again the wonders of creation.
2. Help them enjoy Bible stories.
3. Talk about God speaking to their hearts about right and wrong, love and hate, comfort and loneliness.
4. Help them to know God is one but is revealed in three forms...God the Father and Creator; Jesus, the son who carne as a baby to earth, grew to be one who loved taught, healed and suffered for us; and the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts help us in many ways. (One--yet-three might be explained by talking about the three forms of water)

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INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO JESUS

ALL AGES

1. Christmas:
Read or tell the story
Let them help with the crèche either at church or at home
Celebrate Jesus' birthday.
2. Use a Bible story book and the Bible to read stories about Jesus.
3. Help them understand Jesus is a friend:
Someone they can talk to in their prayers.
Someone who loves them. (Use such songs, as "Jesus Loves Me")
4. Older children will cherish Easter stories.

INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

SCHOOL AGE

1. A name for the unseen form of God who wants to help us.
2. He speaks to us in our hearts:

When we are afraid or lonely.
When we need to decide about what is right or wrong.
When we need to love others.
When we are weak.
He points out work we need to do and helps us do it.

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RULE TWO--LOVE NEIGHBORS AS SELF

Does my child love himself or herself?

1. It helps if they know they are loved.
So show them and tell them you love them:

HUG THEM
TOUCH THEM
KISS THEM
LISTEN TO THEM
ENCOURAGE THEM
DISCIPLINE THEM

2. Help them know God loves them:

HE MADE THEM SPECIAL
HE WATCHES OVER THEM
HE HAS A PLAN FOR THEIR LIVES
HE FORGIVES THEM
HE ENJOYS IT WHEN THEY PRAY TO HIM

Does your child know the meaning of "neighbor"?

1. Tell or read "The Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:25-35)
2. Talk about people who are of a different race.
3. Tell them about the handicapped, the sick, the lonely, the sad, the unfortunate and the ugly.

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RULE TWO - LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO:

1. Share toys and treats.
2. Let others have first choice.
3. Be a happy winner or loser.
4. Think of ways to help others.
5. Be friendly.
6. Try to put themselves in the "shoes" of those who are different or ill.
7. Talk to and respect elderly.
8. Join school and church service and giving projects.
9. Set aside some of their own money for church and others.

HELPING OTHERS IS HELPING GOD

For I was hungry and you fed me;
I was thirsty and you gave me water;
I was a stranger and you invited me in;
Naked and you clothed me;
Sick and in prison and you visited me.

(Taken from a story of Jesus found in Matthew 25)

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PART TWO

ACTIVITIES FOR PARENT AND CHILD

FINGER PLAY

This activity may be used with even the toddlers as well as others.

1. GOD MADE ME (Point to self)
GOD MADE YOU (Point to each other)
ISN'T IT GREAT WHAT GOD CAN DO? (Hands out as if you are amazed)

2. HOW BIG IS GOD'S WORLD?
SO-O-O-O BIG! (Open arms wide) HOW HIGH IS GOD'S SKY?
SO-O-O-O HIGH! (Reach up high) HOW MUCH DOES GOD SEE?
SO-O-O-O MUCH (Look all around) HOW MUCH DOES GOD HEAR?
SO-O-O-O MUCH (Hand to ear and listen) HOW MUCH DOES GOD LOVE?
SO-O-O-O MUCH (Give big hugs to self) HOW MUCH DO I LOVE YOU?
THIS MUCH (Give hugs to each other)

3. HOW MANY EYES DID GOD GIVE ME?
(Count them as you point)
HOW MANY HANDS DID GOD GIVE ME?
(Hold up and count)
Continue with other body parts

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FINGER PLAY (cont.)

4. HERE'S THE CHURCH (Interlock fingers toward palms)
HERE'S THE STEEPLE (Index fingers up touching at tip)
OPEN THE DOORS (Thumbs apart)
HERE'S ALL THE PEOPLE (Palms apart and fingers up)

5. ONE TWO...JESUS LOVES YOU.
THREE FOUR FIVE...HE IS STILL ALIVE
SIX SEVEN...UP IN HEAVEN.
EIGHT NINE TEN...HE'S COMING BACK AGAIN.
(Count on fingers)

6. GUESSING GAME
Child: I SEE SOMETHING GOD MADE.
Parent: WHAT COLOR IS IT?
Child: GREEN Parent guesses: Is it grass?
Child: Yes or no (until right answer)

(Parent takes a turn naming an object while child guesses)

7. CAN YOU NAME EVERY DAY?
SUNDAY, MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY.

NAME THE ONES FOR WORK AND-PLAY.
MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY.

WHAT ONE DID GOD SAY WAS BEST?
SUNDAY WHY?
IT'S FOR CHURCH, AND FUN AND REST

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LET'S LEARN TO PRAY

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Talking and listening to God.

WHEN DO WE PRAY?

We can pray any time but especially before meals and at bedtime.

WHERE DO WE PRAY?

Anywhere--outdoors, in the house, in bed, at church, at school or while in a car.

HOW DO WE PRAY?

We usually close our eyes to shut out distractions. Children often put their hands together. We can kneel, stand or sit. We can join hands with others.

WHAT DO WE SAY?

Thank God for all he does for us.
Tell God you love him.
Ask him to bless and help loved ones.
Tell him you are sorry for wrong acts.
Learn to talk to him as a friend.
Be quiet a while so he can answer you.

DOES HE REALLY ANSWER?

Yes. Answers come in many ways: In thoughts of our minds, in Bible verses, in nature, in words of a friend, in church services or in something that happens.

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PRAYERS

God is great,
God is good,
And we thank Him,
For our food.
Amen

Come Lord Jesus,
Be thou our guest.
For all thou hast given us
We are truly blessed.
Amen

Goodnight Daddy, Good night Mother,
Goodnight sister, Goodnight brother,
Goodnight God, I love you, too.
Thanks a lot for all you do.
Amen

Thank you, Jesus,
For this food;
Which you have given
For our good.
Amen

Dear God, I thank you for the night;
And for the pleasant morning light.
For rest and food and loving care
And all that makes the world so fair.
Amen

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PRAYERS

Thank you for the world so sweet;
Thank you for the food we eat;
Thank you for the birds that sing;
Thank you God for everything. Amen

Our Father God, for this good food
We thank you and we pray
That boys and girls in every land
May have good food today. Amen

God we thank you for this day
Time for work and time for play.
For the shining sun above,
For your great and tender love.
Help us Lord your will to do,
Make us patient, kind, and true. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation;
But deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom,
And the power and the glory forever. Amen.

(Encourage the children to do their own prayers even if it is only one sentence)

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OTHER PRAYERS

FOR ADULTS

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change,
the courage to change
the things I can,
and the wisdom to
know the difference.

Amen

PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

Lord make me an instrument
of your peace,
where there is hatred let me sow love
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope.
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

Amen

Just make up your own prayers by talking to God as a friend. Remember we should do more than ask for things. We need to thank Him, praise Him and bring the needs of others to Him.

We need to be quiet and listen for his answers. It's exciting how answers may come in unexpected ways such as a thought, a song, a word from a friend, a scene in nature or a mishap. We can talk to God any time and about any thing.

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BIBLE VERSES FOR CHILDREN

Bible verses memorized are treasures stored in our hearts to bring comfort and help all through life.

God is love.

1 John 4:16

The Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid.

Hebrews 13:6

In the beginning God made heaven and earth.

Genesis 1:1

Love one another.

John 13:34

I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.

Psalms 122:1

This is the day which the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalms 118:24

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

Psalms 107:1

I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Hebrews 13:5

For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

The Twenty-third Psalm.

The Ten Commandments

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SONGS

There are many songs that are about Jesus, God and God's creation. Many of the Christmas songs become their favorites such as AWAY IN A MANAGER and SILENT NIGHT. Books, records and videos are available, to help your child sing. Below are some all time favorites:

JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus loves me this I know
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me (repeat twice)
The Bible tells me so.

PRAISE HIM

Praise Him (hands together as praying)
Praise Him, All the little children
God is love. God is love. (Repeat above)

Love Him (self hug)
Love Him all the little children.
God is love, God is love(repeat above)

JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN

(Tune, Tramp, Tramp, Tramp)
Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
All are precious in his sight;
Jesus loves the little children of the world

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PART THREE

ABC'S FOR PARENTS

A IS FOR ANGER

MY DEAR BROTHERS (AND SISTERS) TAKE NOTE OF THIS: EVERYONE SHOULD BE QUICK TO LISTEN, SLOW TO BECOME ANGRY, FOR OUR ANGER DOES NOT BRING ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT GOD DESIRES.

James 1:19-20 NIV

The Bible tells us that God is slow to **anger**; abounding in love.¹ This would indicate he only uses **anger** when great love seems to fail. Jesus showed a bit of **anger** when he found people misusing the temple.² Moses was **angry** when the people made a golden calf to worship.³ So are we parents allowed to become **angry**?

I confess being **angry** many times when there was spilled milk, toys left out, quarreling children, broken rules and disrespect for elders. Did I try love as a solution? I doubt it.

As a wife I became **angry**, too. As I look back, I'm sure the minor differences we had, could have been solved in love.

Anger only stirs up more **anger**. If we give love it usually is given back to us. Then everyone feels better and we can begin to work out our differences.

Prayer:

Help me be slow to anger and quick to love. Amen

¹ Ex. 34:6

² Luke 19:45-46

³ Ex.32

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B IS FOR BELIEVE

BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS, AND YOU WILL BE SAVED, YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

Acts 16:31 RSV

TO THOSE WHO **BELIEVED** IN HIS NAME, HE GAVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

John 1:2 NIV

Paul was in jail, singing and praying when the earthquake shook the jail open. The jailer recognized God's hand in this but knew he would be blamed. Paul helped him **believe** in Jesus and he in turn helped his family to **believe**. They were saved from lives of sin. You as parents may be able to save your family the same way by your sincere **belief**.

Believing is the anchor that holds us fast during storms--**believing** in spouses, **believing** in our children and **believing** in God and his son, Jesus.

Believing will allow us to become children of God. He will become our father. He will care for us in this life and the next.

Will we always **believe**? No, there will be moments of doubt just the same as the father of the boy when he asked Jesus for healing for his son.¹ He said, "I believe help my unbelief." Jesus did. He will for us, too.

Prayer:

Dear God help my unbelief. Amen

1 Mk. 9:24

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C IS FOR CARES

CAST YOUR **CARES** ON THE LORD AND HE WILL SUSTAIN YOU.

Psalm 55:22 NIV

CAST ALL YOUR ANXIETY ON HIM (GOD) BECAUSE HE **CARES** FOR YOU.

1 Peter 5:7 NIV

God **cares** about our **cares** and he wants to take **care** of them and us. All parents have times of worry, distress, uncertainties, family illness and hard decisions.

What shall we do? Cast these problems to God just as a fisherman casts his line into the water expecting a fish. If he held the bait and line in his hand on shore nothing would happen. He needs to throw it out. The Bible tells us "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding.¹ We need to talk to God just as if He is sitting beside us for He is. We need to ask Him to show us the answers, help us work out the problems and we must always thank Him even before we see the help. That way He knows we really are trusting him to take care of everything.

God will help us be good **caregivers** to our families--never turning our backs to their needs, always loving and helping them, just as He does.

Prayer time:

Thank you for caring, God. Amen

1 Prov. 3: 5

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D IS FOR DEATH

EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF **DEATH** I WILL FEAR NO EVIL FOR YOU ARE WITH ME.

Psalm 23:4 NIV

Most of us would rather not think about **death** but it touches us all. It may be grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, spouses or children. **DEATH** causes us suffering when those we love are torn away from us.

Suffering is eased by family and friends--one of the ways God helps. He also steps in and puts his arms around us, crying with us just as Jesus did at the death of his friend.¹ He understands and calms us with good memories and our faith.

I have been blest with two **death**-time happenings. When my three-year old sister died, God showed Dad an angel with outstretched arms above her bed. We knew she was in good hands. My husband had a long, hard illness. After no response for 24 hours, he joined me in Psalm 23 with 4 words, "I shall not want" God reminded me he didn't want good health now. He had it.

Prayer time:

Thank you for your promises of comfort when **death** takes a loved one. Amen

¹ John 11:35 Good help in John 14,

2 Cor 5

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E IS FOR EARTH

THE **EARTH** IS THE LORD'S AND EVERYTHING IN IT: THE WORLD AND ALL WHO LIVE IN IT.

Psalm 24:1 NIV

THE LORD TOOK THE MAN AND PUT HIM IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO WORK AND TAKE CARE OF IT.

Genesis 2:15 NIV

God put us in charge of his **earth**.
He made everything on it for us to use and enjoy--not to destroy.

God had recycling going long before we ever thought of it. Think what he does with water. It falls to the ground, some is used and some eventually evaporates and goes back into the atmosphere to be used again. When many plants and animals die, they decompose and become part of new growth.

What a wise and wonderful God! He has given us the responsibility of taking good care of everything. **Earth** Day and other programs are helping us do better. Schools are making children aware of good practices.

We parents need to do our part at home and at work to encourage **earth** care. Our children learn by example. Also we need to help them be aware of the greatness of God who planned everything and entrusted it to us.

Prayer time:

Dear God, Creator of all and planner to care of its use, grant us wisdom for this earth and our children. Amen

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F IS FOR FORGIVE

BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, TENDERHEARTED, **FORGIVING** ONE ANOTHER, AS GOD IN CHRIST **FORGAVE** YOU.

Ephesians 4:32 RSV

Our Father in heaven asks us to be kind, tender, and **forgiving**. The last is probably the hardest of all. The wrong things others do to us, seems to get into our minds and memories and they seem to be hard to erase. I believe only God has the right eraser or correction fluid to eliminate such deeds from our thoughts and help us say, "I **forgive** you."

Why do we need to **forgive**? You will remember the Lord's Prayer asks God to forgive us as we **forgive** others.¹ If we don't **forgive** others God will not **forgive** us.² God sent Jesus to erase our sins and grant us **forgiveness**. We feel good when we are **forgiven** and when we **forgive** others.

What if someone keeps on wronging us? Should we keep on **forgiving**? Jesus said to **forgive** seven times seventy.³ Can you and I do that? Only with the help of God who knows how to do it for he **forgives** us time after time.

Prayer time:

God help me forgive others. Amen

¹ Matt. 6: 1 2

² Matt 6:15

³ Matt 18:21-22

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G IS FOR GIFT

GOD HAS GIVEN EACH OF US THE ABILITY TO DO CERTAIN THINGS WELL...IF YOUR **GIFT** IS SERVING OTHERS, SERVE THEM WELL. IF YOU ARE A TEACHER, DO A GOOD JOB OF TEACHING. IF YOU ARE A PREACHER, SEE THAT YOUR SERMONS ARE STRONG AND HELPFUL. IF GOD HAS GIVEN YOU MONEY, BE GENEROUS IN HELPING OTHERS WITH IT. IF GOD HAS GIVEN YOU ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY, TAKE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY SERIOUSLY. THOSE WHO OFFER COMFORT TO THE SORROWING SHOULD DO IT WITH CHRISTIAN CHEER.

Romans 12:6-8 LB

How often have you received a **gift** you didn't want or couldn't use? That's not the kind God gives. Since he knows us inside and out, his **gifts** are just right. Among his **gifts** are abilities to do certain things well. The list above is just a sample of a few of his **gifts**. Yours and mine may not be there. It is up to us to discover what we are able to do well and then keep doing it.

God gave some of us the **gift** of children and he wants us to raise them well. I believe that ability is a gift, too. The beautiful part of God's **gifts** is the promise he puts in with them-"I will never leave you nor forsake you."¹

Prayer time:

Thank you for your gifts and your help that comes with them. Amen

¹ Joshua 1:5

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H IS FOR HUSBANDS

EACH OF YOU MUST LOVE HIS WIFE AS HIMSELF, AND THE WIFE MUST RESPECT HER **HUSBAND**. EPHESIANS 5:32 NIV MARRIAGE SHOULD BE HONORED BY ALL, AND THE MARRIAGE BED KEPT PURE, FOR GOD WILL JUDGE THE ADULTERER AND THE SEXUALLY IMMORAL.

Hebrews 13:4 NIV

God knew it wasn't good for Adam to be alone so gave him a wife. She was to be a helpmate. What a nice term that is, and a good description of what married couples should be to each other. It turned out Eve was wrong in the way she tried to help. She got him into trouble because she listened to the evil one instead of God.¹

Since God planned marriage, he knows what will make it succeed. He said love your helpmate as much as yourself. How much do I love myself? I love myself enough to desire happiness, a goal to work toward, satisfying experiences and good friends. I need to work to obtain these things for myself and my helpmate. We need to become a team that pulls together, talking things out and depending on God's help in good times and bad. Love is the cement that holds us together. Read the love chapter.²

Prayer time:

Thank you for our marriage and help us keep it full of love. Amen.

1 Genesis 3

2 1 Corinthians 13

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I IS FOR INHERITANCE

HAVING BELIEVED, YOU WERE MARKED IN HIM WITH A SEAL, THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT, WHO IS A DEPOSIT GUARANTEEING OUR **INHERITANCE**.

Ephesians 1:13b-14a NIV

HAS NOT GOD CHOSEN THOSE WHO ARE POOR IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD TO BE RICH IN FAITH AND **INHERIT** THE KINGDOM HE PROMISED THOSE WHO LOVE HIM?

James 2:5 NIV

You are going to be rich! You have a big **inheritance** coming. God has it all ready for you and me--not when He dies (he never will) but when we die on earth and live in heaven. That's a switch in things.

How do we know? Is there a will? We haven't really seen one but it is promised in God's book, by Jesus and by Paul. Jesus said he was going to prepare a place for us.¹ Paul was giving thanks to the Father who qualified us to share in the **inheritance** of saints in the kingdom of light.²

As parents we need to think about what we are leaving to our children. It may not be money or land--there are better things. Knowing right and wrong, loving God and others, joy, peace and hope are all good. Help them know they, too can **inherit** God's riches.

Prayer time:

Thank you for your generous **inheritance**, which I don't deserve. Help my children to know about it, too. Amen.

1 John 14

2 Colossians 1:12

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

J IS FOR JUDGE

DO NOT **JUDGE**, OR YOU TOO WILL BE JUDGED.

Matthew 7:1 NIV

LET THE LORD **JUDGE** THE PEOPLE.

Psalm 7:8 NIV

It is so easy to **judge** others, especially if they are in our own family. Even now with my children grown, I find myself wanting to point out their faults. Jesus recognized this failing in us and warned, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own?"¹ In another situation when men were ready to stone a woman for her sin, He told them the one without sin could throw the first stone. No one did.²

Only God is able to **judge** fairly and firmly. I believe we should point others to God and pray with them and for them for his guidance and **judgment**. Since I am far from perfect myself, how can I **judge** anyone else?

Prayer time:

Dear God, please forgive me for **judging** others even in the secret of my own thoughts. Please bless my children and help them. In Jesus name. Amen.

1 Matthew 7:3

2 John 8:4-7

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

K IS FOR KINDNESS

BE **KIND** TO ONE ANOTHER, TENDERHEARTED FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER AS GOD IN CHRIST FORGAVE YOU.

Ephesians 4:32 RSV

A **KIND** MAN BENEFITS HIMSELF, BUT A CRUEL MAN BRINGS TROUBLE ON HIMSELF.

Proverbs 11:17 NIV

Kindness means being considerate, sympathetic, and a willingness to do good and give pleasure to others. God is our greatest example of **kindness**. As parents we need to be **kind** to everyone but especially to our children. This does not mean we cannot correct them but making sure our **kindness** is understood along with the scolding. I heard of one mother who gave a hug and a kiss and a word of love after any punishment she felt necessary.

The best way to teach our children to be **kind** is by example. I remember acts of **kindness** by my father to a needy family and my mother helping in homes at the time a new baby was born. They urged we children to play with and befriend those who were not popular at school.

We read "Blessed is he who is **kind** to the needy"¹ So the side effects of **kindness** is blessing and happiness.

Prayer time:

I sometime miss chances to show **kindness**. Forgive me and help me to do better.
In Jesus name. Amen

¹ Proverbs 14:21

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

L IS FOR LOVE

GOD IS **LOVE**.

John 4:16b RSV

MAKE **LOVE** YOUR AIM.

1 Corinthians 14:1a RSV

What are we parents aiming at? A good target would be **love**, just as the verse above says. We may miss the target or only hit the outer edge but at least we have a goal to work for. We need **love**. Families need **love**. The world needs **love**.

Can we **love** our children even when they are bad? Can we **love** our spouse's in spite of a disagreement? Can we **love** a hateful neighbor? The answer is "yes" to all of these if--we accept God's offer to help us.

How is it possible for God to help me? His Spirit is ready to slip right into our hearts. He has a whole basket of fruit called the fruits of the Spirit to give us.¹ The sweetest and juiciest of these fruits is **love**. If I keep feasting on his **love** it will get into my blood and my **love** begins to look more like God's.

Prayer time:

Please help me make **love** my aim--Love like yours. Amen

1 Galatians 5:22

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

M IS FOR MARRIAGE

IN THE BEGINNING THE CREATOR MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE AND SAID, "FOR THIS REASON A MAN WILL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE UNITED TO HIS WIFE AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. THEREFORE WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER LET NO MAN SEPARATE."

Matthew 19:4-6 NIV

What God has joined together--what a beautiful phrase! The two of us became one flesh, cemented together with love. It's up to us to keep that cement from cracking.

For some of us, God blessed our union with children--a very part of both of us. Now we have even more need to keep the **marriage** strong and full of love. We bring the new child to the church for baptism so this little one officially becomes a part of God's family as well as our own. Now as a family we consult the "road map" -- the Bible and ask the Great Map Maker, God, to keep us from getting lost.

Life is full of roads that look exciting but there is only one right way.¹
Marriage should be honored by all and husbands and wives must be faithful to each other.²

Prayer time:

Thank you God for joining us together. Keep us from falling apart In Jesus name Amen

1 John 14:6

2 Hebrew 13:4

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

N IS FOR NEEDS

MY GOD WILL SUPPLY ALL YOUR **NEEDS**.

Philippians 4:19 GN

I KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE IN **NEED**, AND I KNOW WHAT IT IS TO HAVE PLENTY. I HAVE LEARNED THE SECRET OF BEING CONTENT IN EVERY SITUATION.....I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH.

Philippians 4:12-13 NIV

Our family went through a hard time after my husband lost his job. We didn't go hungry but we worried. We hadn't found the secret which Paul mentions in the above verses. Paul had a hard life in many more ways than most of us. Although his life's work was to tell people about Jesus and God, he had to work as a tent maker to support himself. Beside that he was hurt physically and put in prison. But he kept cheerful and determined. He knew the secret of help from Jesus and God.

In our situation we did keep praying and hoping and God listened in spite of our doubts. The next job was much more pleasant for my husband than the old one.

God will supply our **needs** but maybe not all our wishes or longings--just our **needs**. We **need** to trust and be content.

Prayer time:

Dear God, we praise and thank you for your help and love. Amen

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

O IS FOR OBEY

IF YOU LOVE ME (JESUS), YOU WILL **OBEY** WHAT I COMMAND.

John 14:15 NIV

IT IS THE LORD YOUR GOD YOU MUST FOLLOW AND HIM YOU MUST REVERE. KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS AND **OBEY** HIM, SERVE AND HOLD FAST TO HIM.

Deuteronomy 13:4 NIV

As kids we were expected to **obey** our parents and teachers. We're adults now. Can't we forget that word **obey**? I guess not but we can see it in a new way. If we love Jesus (and how can we help loving him?) we will **obey** willingly. He is the way¹ we want to walk through this world and into the next. The two signposts on the way are:

LOVE GOD WITH ALL OF YOURSELF
LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

God gave us ten signposts to follow:

WORSHIP GOD ONLY
DO NOT KILL
DON'T MAKE IDOLS
NO ADULTRY
DO NOT SWEAR
DO NOT STEAL
REMEMBER SUNDAY
DO NOT LIE
HONOR YOUR PARENTS
DO NOT COVET

It is impossible to **obey** perfectly but we should try and if we fail, ask for forgiveness. Jesus took the punishment for our mistakes. See why we love him so?

Prayer time:

Help my family and me to obey you willingly and lovingly. In Jesus name. Amen

¹ John 14:6

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

P IS FOR PATIENCE

BE PATIENT WITH EVERYONE.

1 Thes 5:14c

LOVE IS PATIENT.

1 Corinthians 13:4a

A PATIENT MAN CALMS A QUARREL

Prov 15:18

Today's newspaper had two sad stories about impatience. A young man became tired of the teasing about his old car. One person made an unkind remark and banged on the hood. The first young man got a gun and shot his tormentor. Then there was a mom who got impatient with 3 small children who played with her things and lost a ring. She locked them in a closet all day without food or water. Now she must answer for her deed.

We are not born **patient**. It seems easy to feed the sparks of conflict rather than extinguish them. So how do parents get this trait we need so much?

We need that extra presence in our hearts, God's Spirit, to overcome our weakness and give us strength. He can work miracles if we give him a chance.

Prayer time:

Come into my heart, Dear God, and help me to be **patient**. Thank you in Jesus name. Amen

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

Q IS FOR QUARRELING

THE LORD'S SERVANT MUST NOT BE **QUARRELSOME**.

Timothy 2:24 RSV

A **QUARRELSOME** WIFE IS LIKE CONSTANT DRIPPING

Proverbs 19:13b NIV

A PATIENT MAN CALMS A **QUARREL**.

Proverbs 15:18 NIV

In the book, "Growing Toward Peace" the story is told of a little girl named Amy. She came to school one morning crying. The teacher and pupils gathered around her to see why she was so upset. Finally she said, "My daddy and mother said ugly words to each other this morning." Her heart was broken by a **quarrel** in the family.¹

A family needs to be a peaceful, loving group for the good of all. This means talking things out calmly and respecting the viewpoint of other family members.

We see **quarreling** between nations. We see conflict in government groups. We often see neighbors who disagree. We see children quarreling on the school playground. Why? We are self-centered. We want our way. In the midst of a **quarrel**, could we stop and smile and say, "I love you"? It's worth a try.

Prayer time:

Dear God, help us to replace **quarreling** with quiet talk. Amen

¹ Growing Toward Peace by Aschliman Herald Press

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

R IS FOR REJOICE

REJOICE IN ALL THE GOOD THINGS THE LORD HAS GIVEN YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

Deuteronomy 26:11b NIV

MAY YOU **REJOICE** IN THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH.

Proverbs 5:18b NIV

God **rejoices** over us the way a bridegroom **rejoices** over his bride.¹ When we remember the joy we had on our wedding day, we marvel at God feeling that way over us. What makes Him so?

Rejoicing shouldn't stop after the honeymoon. God says **rejoice** always. You really mean "always", God? You know we have worries, illness, and conflicts. How can we **rejoice** then? God reminds us that we should accept good as well as evil.² Only in heaven will it be all good. God sees our hard times as opportunities for us to accept his comfort and encouragement.

Remember Pollyanna and her glad game? She had the ability to find good in any situation.³ Her joy changed the lives of those around her. Our joy can be an influence on our families and friends.

Prayer time:

May your joy be contagious, We'd like to catch it, too. Amen

1 Isaiah 62:5b

2 Job 2:10 by Porter

3 Pollyanna (book and movie)

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

S IS FOR SIN

ALL HAVE SINNED.

Romans 3:23 NIV

WHO IS A GOD LIKE YOU WHO PARDONS SIN?

Micah 7:18 NIV

Sin is an ugly word we hate to think about but God says we all do it. Who me? I don't steal, murder, lie or beat anyone up. I guess I have spoken in anger, been unkind to some people, wished for things others had or could do, and not put God first in my life. Yes, I have **sinned** and I must ask God's forgiveness. He will grant it because of Jesus taking the punishment I deserve. That is wonderful.

My mother was once willing to take punishment I deserved. We had looked at hats but didn't find one we liked. When I picked up my packages to leave the store I accidentally picked up a hat and went out. We discovered it soon and she grabbed it from me and said, "I'll take it back. I don't want you to get in trouble since you teach school here." Didn't I have a wonderful Mother? She helped me understand Jesus. Parents need to do that.

Prayer time:

We are sorry for our **sins** and are grateful for Jesus' help. Amen

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

T IS FOR TEACHING

TEACH ME YOUR WAY, O LORD; LEAD ME IN A STRAIGHT PATH...

Psalm 27:11 NIV

ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES SAID TO HIM, "LORD **TEACH** US TO PRAY."

Luke 11:1 NIV

THE COUNSELOR, THE HOLY SPIRIT, HE WILL **TEACH** YOU ALL THINGS.

John 14:26 NIV

We may say, "I'm out of school. I've had enough of studying and being taught." The trouble is parents face things that no school ever taught them to handle. Raising a child is a big responsibility. We need top-notch teaching. We can get this from an experienced person, a book, or from the one who knows all the answers--God.

Jesus went about **teaching** his disciples and the crowds. We can read about this in the Bible but we can't actually see and hear him now. However he sent the Holy Spirit to **teach** us all things. Simply put, it means God in us. We need to say, "God come into my heart and **teach** me." Talk to Him, wait for answers quietly. Answers come in many ways--thoughts, sermons we hear, Bible verses, advice from family or friends who listen to God, a song, a poem, or a Sunday School class discussion. Be alert. Be expecting answers.

We need to **teach** our children to find answers from God, too.

Prayer time:

Please **teach** me, God and give me ears to hear. Thank you. Amen

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

U IS FOR UNBELIEF

THE BOY FELL TO THE GROUND AND ROLLED AROUND, FOAMING AT THE MOUTH. JESUS SAID, "HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN LIKE THIS?", "FROM CHILDHOOD," SAID THE FATHER. "IF YOU CAN DO ANYTHING TAKE PITY AND HELP US." JESUS SAID, "EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE FOR HIM WHO BELIEVES." THE FATHER SAID, "I DO BELIEVE. HELP ME OVERCOME MY **UNBELIEF**." JESUS TOOK THE BOY BY THE HAND AND LIFTED HIM UP AND HE WAS HEALED.

Mark 9: 17-27 NIV

The boy's father believed and yet some doubts crept into his mind. I can know how he felt. I've prayed for important things (I thought) and yet I couldn't quite erase the thoughts of **unbelief**. I knew God was able to do anything but was he going to do it in my case?

God knows our weaknesses and will excuse them as he did for the father of the boy...if we admit them and ask for help. In all this we must be ready to accept God's decision in matters. He views the situation through a wide-angled lens while we see only through a tiny hole. Therefore we should not hesitate to ask and believe and then put it into his hands.

Prayer time:

Dear God, I believe, help my **unbelief** in Jesus name. Amen.

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

V IS FOR VALUABLE

ARE NOT TWO SPARROWS SOLD FOR A PENNY? AND NOT ONE OF THEM WILL FALL TO THE GROUND WITHOUT YOUR FATHER'S WILL. BUT EVEN THE HAIRS OF YOUR HEAD ARE NUMBERED. FEAR NOT YOU ARE OF MORE **VALUE** THAN SPARROWS.

Matt.10 29-31 RSV

The estimated population of the world in 1995 was around five billion. I am one little insignificant person in a huge crowd, so of how much importance am I?

Someone has said, "God never made junk." We are **valuable** in his sight. He carefully made us in his image and is not willing to cast us aside. He is sad when we walk away from him just as parents are heartbroken when a child abandons his family and goes his own way. Just as a family hopes and prays for the return of its child, so God is seeking his "lost sheep".

He, who even watches over sparrows, also keeps his eye on us and thinks we are really **valuable**. He never calls us dumb or stupid. Here is a lesson for those of us who are parents.

Prayer time:

Thank you for making me feel important in a world of billions of others. Bless the **valuable** gift you gave--my children. In Jesus name, Amen

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

W IS FOR WIFE

IF YOU TRULY FIND A GOOD **WIFE**, SHE IS WORTH MORE THAN PRECIOUS GEMS I HER HUSBAND CAN TRUST HER AND SHE WILL RICHLY SATISFY HIS NEEDS. SHE WILL NOT HINDER HIM BUT HELP HIM ALL HER LIFE... .SHE GETS UP BEFORE DAWN TO PREPARE BREAKFAST FOR HER HOUSEHOLD, AND PLANS THE DAY'S WORK....SHE IS ENERGETIC, A HARD WORKER AND WATCHES FOR BARGAINS. SHE WORKS FAR INTO THE NIGHT.

SHE SEWS FOR THE POOR AND GIVES GENEROUSLY TO THE NEEDY. SHE HAS NO FEAR OF WINTER FOR HER HOUSEHOLD, FOR SHE HAS MADE WARM CLOTHES FOR THEM.

SHE IS A WOMAN OF STRENGTH AND DIGNITY, AND HAS NO FEAR OF OLD AGE. WHEN SHE SPEAKS HER WORDS ARE WISE, AND KINDNESS IS THE RULE FOR EVERYTHING SHE SAYS. SHE WATCHES CAREFULLY ALL THAT GOES THROUGH HER HOUSEHOLD, AND IS NEVER LAZY. HER CHILDREN STAND AND BLESS HER AND SO DOES HER HUSBAND. HE PRAISES HER WITH THESE WORDS, "THERE ARE MANY FINE WOMEN IN THE WORLD, BUT YOU ARE THE BEST OF THEM ALL." CHARM CAN BE DECEPTIVE AND BEAUTY DOESN'T LAST, BUT A WOMAN WHO FEARS AND REVERENCES GOD SHALL BE GREATLY PRAISED. PRAISE HER FOR THE MANY THINGS SHE DOES.

Taken from Pro. 31:10ff Living Bible.

The above Bible passage has a lot for us to think about--both husbands and **wives** Probably none of us can live up to all the things mentioned here but it can give us a goal. We can try to move toward this goal much as a football team moves toward the goal post. There are forces to overcome.

Prayer time:

Help us Lord. Amen

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

X IS FOR EXAMPLE

.....CHRIST SUFFERED FOR YOU, LEAVING YOU AN **EXAMPLE** THAT YOU SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS. HE COMMITTED NO SIN, NO DECEIT WAS FOUND IN HIS MOUTH. WHEN THEY HURLED INSULTS AT HIM, HE DID NOT RETALIATE, WHEN HE SUFFERED HE MADE NO THREATS. HE ENTRUSTED HIMSELF TO HIM (GOD) WHO JUDGES JUSTLY.

1 Peter 2:21-23 NIV

DON'T LET ANYONE LOOK DOWN ON YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE YOUNG, BUT SET AN **EXAMPLE** FOR BELIEVERS IN SPEECH, IN LIFE, IN LOVE, IN FAITH AND PURITY.

1 Timothy 4:12 NIV

I have a grandson who walks like his father and one who walks like me (I am a bit crippled up by arthritis). Whether we realize it or not we are **examples** to others. And furthermore we have **examples** we follow.

Examples may be good or bad. So it is time as parents to check out whomever we are patterning our lives after and start becoming a better **example** for our children.

Jesus once said, "Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect."1 We know there is no perfect person but this gives us a goal to work for. We need goals. With God's help we can improve our lives.

Prayer time:

Forgive my mistakes and help me follow you--my **example**. Amen

1 Matthew 5:48

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

Y IS FOR YOUTH

REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF YOUR **YOUTH**.

Ecc 12:1a NIV

LIKE ARROWS IN THE HANDS OF A WARRIER ARE CHILDREN BORN IN ONE'S **YOUTH**.

Psalm 127:4a NIV

Youth--a wonderful time of life! There is vigor in the body, eagerness in the mind and questioning in the soul. It is a time for making plans and working to achieve them.

Did you know God has a plan all ready for you? It is one that will not harm you but give you hope and a future.¹ That is one reason we are told to remember our creator in the days of our **youth**.

I am not young but I think God is still developing plans for me. I must not waste the days I have. And the verse above is true--the children of my **youth** give me strength as I face life's trials. I am most fortunate to have them.

Prayer time:

Please open my ears to hear your plan and help me carry it out. In Jesus name Amen.

¹ Jeremiah 29:11

Praise God for the Holy Spirit

Train up a Child

Z IS FOR ZEAL

LOVE MUST BE SINCERE. HATE WHAT IS EVIL, CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD. BE DEVOTED TO ONE ANOTHER IN BROTHERLY LOVE. HONOR ONE ANOTHER ABOVE YOURSELVES. NEVER BE LACKING IN **ZEAL**, BUT KEEP YOUR SPIRITUAL FERVOR, SERVING THE LORD. BE JOYFUL IN HOPE, PATIENT IN AFFLICTION, FAITHFUL IN PRAYER. SHARE WITH GOD'S PEOPLE WHO ARE IN NEED.

Romans 12:9-13 NIV

The above verses give us some guidelines for action after we have decided to accept God. Did you notice that word **zeal**? It may be a little out-dated but it is good. It means, "Give it all you have". Be strong, enthusiastic and hard working. Why?

Being half-hearted will get us nowhere. If your kitchen needs a coat of paint, do you say, "I guess I should get at it some day"? God demands **zeal** when he commands us to love him with "all our heart all our soul and all our mind." He doesn't say to love our neighbor half-heartedly. "Love him as you love yourself."¹ Maybe we will fall short when we try these things but they are goals and we parents need goals.

Prayer time:

Thank you for the **zeal** with which you work to save us all. Forgive when I fail to reach your goals but keep me trying. In Jesus name. Amen

¹ Matthew 22:37-40