

Five Teachings Your Family Needs for Spiritual Preparedness

Our greatest responsibility as parents has and will always be to spiritually prepare each child, based on their age, gender, temperament, strengths and weaknesses, personalities and gifts, for the soon coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Talk about Blended Family

We have a somewhat unique family. We were born in the mid to late 1960's so we're classified as "Baby Boomers" or "Generation Xers." Our first two children who happen to be girls, ages 32 and 20 are considered "Millennials" or "Generation Y," and last but not least, our 14-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son represent "Generation Z" or the "New Silent" generation. Our family is well represented, generationally speaking.

In the midst of the changing and dare we say tense political climate, influences by social media, peer pressure, and the simple emotional and developmental changes that each of our children experiences, we have had to be very deliberate and intentional in bringing awareness to them of the fact that earth is still only temporary and there is a life after this one worth living for.

We will share with you five lessons that God has given us to prepare our children to be candidates for Heaven and we hope these points will help you too.

Whether you're a single mom or dad, or are a two-parent household, or a grandparent, or just simply you on your own, trying to make sense of this world we live in, we are still family!

1. Get To Know Who Made You.

You were created by God! Talk to Him through prayer. Matthew 6:9-13 teaches us the Lord's prayer and how to talk to God.

Study Him. The entire Bible comprises factual accounts of people connected to the beginning, middle, and end of Jesus Christ's life on earth, and all that will occur when He returns. 2 Timothy 2:15 encourages us to study God's word because knowledge of our Creator removes shame and gives confidence in a world with so many conflicting traditions, messages and changes.

Henry Blackaby wrote in his best selling book, *Experiencing God*, "The Bible is God's word to you. The Holy Spirit honors and uses God's word in speaking to you. The Scriptures will be your source of authority for faith and practice. You cannot depend on human traditions, your experience, or the experience of others to be accurate authorities on God's will and ways. Experience and tradition must always be examined against the teaching of Scriptures."

2. Understand Who You Are.

Psalms 139:14 says, "I will praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" When you were made by the Creator, you received genetic traits from your parents and grandparents. Learn and understand your temperament, and your inherited strengths, as well as your inherited weaknesses. Don't make

excuses for your weaknesses, but give them to God daily. A great book that speaks more on this is, *The Spirit-Controlled Temperament*, by Tim LaHaye.

3. Develop Your Spiritual Gifts Daily.

God has given every child of His spiritual gifts to fulfil our purpose for being on this earth. Only what you do for Christ matters, so it is important that your decisions are driven by your spiritual gifts (Read 1 Corinthians 15:58 and 1 Corinthians 12:5-7).

Here is a great website to find out your spiritual gifts within a few minutes, and there's even a version of the inventory for youth—www.spiritualgiftstest.com.

4. Understand That There Is Both Good and Evil In This World.

From the beginning there was good. God made Heaven and Earth. (Read Genesis 1.) But just as real and as good that God is, there is also evil that began by one who was once a beautiful and gifted angel in heaven. His rebellion, got him thrown out of Heaven down to this earth, along with a third of heaven's angels. Satan—as he is called—makes it his mission to turn everyone against God. When this world comes to an end, the Bible tells us that Satan will lose, be permanently destroyed. No more evil, death, or sorrow will exist.

Stay close to God and you will be able to discern good from evil. You will not be confused by the mixed messages you will see and hear about God's plan for the family and eternity (Revelation 12 and Ephesians 6:12).

5. God's Love Is Bigger Than Your Mistakes.

Absolutely nothing can separate you from God's love. "[I] am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). Nothing that you have said or done will stop God from loving you.

You do not have to live in the shame or guilt of the mistakes you have made or may make. God sent His Son Jesus who paid the price for those sins. He did this long before you were born and would sin. His love knows no end!

Jesus Christ came to earth as a baby, in the flesh, to show us His love in human form so we could see a real life example of God's love on Earth. Jesus is the way to the God the Father, so if you study the life of Jesus Christ, you will understand God more and more, and will grow to love Him more and more!