

Helping our Children Survive the Onslaught of Our Culture

Today's children are growing up in a culture of political correctness, new atheism, and the marginalization of the Word of God. In fact, Richard Dawkins has said that the worst form of child abuse is "teaching children Christianity." As a result, children often grow up with unanswered questions, unrealistic expectations, and crippling pressures. What strategies could we pursue to help us as families, churches, and communities in dependence on God to reverse the current trends? How can the resources that are available help us do what Joel 1:3 calls us to do? "Tell your children of what has happened and let your children tell their children and their children the next generation."

William Mackenzie is a gold medal graduate of Glasgow University. Initially he worked in agriculture and continues to be active in the family farming business. Along with his wife, Carine, an author in her own right, he began publishing Christian books over thirty years ago, with the objective of telling children the Bible stories. Christian Focus now has in excess of a thousand titles in print under four imprints – for pastors, students, adults and children. The titles have been translated into over 70 languages. William's passion is to bring glory to God by pointing readers to the excellencies of the Gospel. William is chairman of the board for Evangelicals Now, a leading UK Christian newspaper. He also serves as a trustee of Christian Literature Crusade. As a ruling elder for over thirty-five years, he regularly preaches in congregations, large and small, often taking the opportunity to encourage the use of Christian literature. Carine and William live in Inverness in the Highlands of Scotland. They have three daughters, who are all following Jesus and eight grandchildren.

Our children are the church of today and we need to develop strategies and act upon these to ensure that our children survive the culture. This can only be done in dependence on God's Word and the help of the Holy Spirit

I. Pressures threatening our children

1. The secular society and its advance.
2. The media – be it the television or the social media or the music culture.
3. Dumbing down of the Word of God in the church.
4. Education.
5. Pressures from the family.

II. Biblical Imperatives

The Biblical imperatives for the nurture of children are given and are ageless. Children are created and given to us so that they will enjoy God and bring glory to Him.

1.Genesis 33:5	Gift from God
2.Exodus 10:9	Leaders' commitment to Children
3.Exodus 12:26	Personal Testimony
4.Deuteronomy 6:4-7	Duty of Parents
5.Joshua 4:5-7	Questions Answered
6.Judges 2:10	Danger of Breaking the Chain
7. Nehemiah 8:3	Listening Together
8.Psalm 78:4-8	Generational Impact
9. Psalm 127:3	God's Heritage
10.Proverbs 14:26	Personal Confidence in God
11. Lamentations 2:9	Spiritual Orphans
12. Joel 1:3	Four Generations, One Verse
13. Matthew 19:14	Jesus Rebukes His Disciples
14. John 21:15	Nurturing Children
15.Acts 20:28	All the flock
16. 2 Timothy 1:5	Mother and grandmother
17. 2 Timothy 3:15	Teaching the Scriptures

III. Effective use of strategies to ensure our children grow in their faith

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1.The Word of God in the Family | Family worship – how, when, why and how long? We will do family worship. |
| 2. Setting boundaries | Discipline, correction, encouragement |
| 3. Prayer for and with children | A bookmark will be provided with 31 suggestions as to what we should pray for, for our children.
Using the Bible in prayer with the family and sharing family concerns at the throne of grace |
| 4.Empowering Children to Face the Realities of Life | Coping with death, sickness, unemployment, distress and choices |
| 5. Involvement with their friends and peers | Knowing their friends; setting limits on social media activities etc. |
| 6. Their questions answered biblically | Basic apologetics using the Bible to confirm faith in dependence on God's Word and Spirit |
| 7.Explaining lifestyle choices | Dealing with materialism, hedonism, individualism and relativism |
| 8. Effective use of free time | Setting priorities for use of time and remembering how brief time is in comparison to eternity |

9. Church community involvement

Children are the church of today. What can they do in the church? What can the older church do for them?

10. Wise use of resources

And Read books!!

Suggested Readings:

The Big Book of Questions and Answers by Sinclair Ferguson

Aren't They Lovely When They're Asleep? by Ann Benton

World-proof Your Kids by Timothy Sisemore

The Dawkins Letters by David Robertson

Jesus Rose from the Dead – the Evidence by Catherine Mackenzie

You Asked by William Edgar

Family Worship Book by Jason Heleopolous

Your Days are Numbered by John Perritt

My First Book of Bible Prayers by Philip Ross

My First Book and More Carine Mackenzie and Philip Ross

The Shorter Catechism - Lawson

John MacArthur's "Successful Christian Parenting"

Parents,

If you fail to teach your children to fear God, the devil will teach them to hate God.

If you fail to teach them to guard their minds, the devil will teach them to have a corrupt mind.

If you fail to teach them to obey their parents, the devil will teach them to rebel and break their parents' hearts.

If you fail to teach them to select carefully their companions, the devil will choose companions for them.

If you fail to teach them to control their lusts, the devil will teach them how to fulfil their lusts.

If you fail to teach them to enjoy their own spouses, the devil will teach them to destroy their marriages.

If you fail to teach them to watch their words, the devil will fill their mouths with filth.

If you fail to teach them to pursue their work, the devil will make their laziness a tool of hell.

If you fail to teach them to manage their money, the devil will teach them to squander it on riotous living.

And if you fail to teach them to love their neighbours, the devil will teach them to love only themselves.

We have a great responsibility to this generation
And to the NEXT.

PRAY FOR YOUR CHILD THROUGH THE MONTH

Pray that they would: -

1.	Know Jesus Christ as Lord	Phil. 3:8
2.	Love the Word of God	Psalms 119:97
3.	Understand the gravity of sin and repent of it	Rom. 6:23
4.	Realise the greatness of the mercy of God	Luke 18:13
5.	Obeys and respects authority of their parents	Exodus 20:12
6.	Glorify and enjoy God in all circumstances	1 Thess. 5:18
7.	Devote themselves to persistent prayer	Luke 18:1-8
8.	Be protected from schemes of Satan	Ephesians 6:10 ff
9.	Be morally pure	1 Thess. 4:3-8
10.	Know and follow God's will in their lives	Col. 1:9
11.	Be wise, knowing the fear of the Lord	Prov. 1:7
12.	Speak gracious words always	Col. 4:6
13.	Forgive as the Lord has forgiven	Matt. 18; Eph 4:32
14.	Think biblically	Rom. 12:1-2
15.	Love going to worship in God's house	Psalms 122:1
16.	Encourage others in the Christian life	Hebrews 10:24-29
17.	Know the love of God for them	Psalms 103
18.	Love the Lord their God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength	Matt. 22:37
19.	Hunger and thirst for God's righteousness	Matt. 5:6
20.	Know contentment with godliness	1 Tim. 6:6
21.	Understand grace and live humbly	James 4:6
22.	Keep God's commands and obey his voice	Deut. 13:4
23.	Know God's peace in their heart	Phil. 4:17
24.	Be truthful	Proverbs 12:17
25.	Trust in God with all their heart	Prov. 3:5
26.	Be washed from all iniquity	Psalms 51:2
27.	Bear fruit that is pleasing to God – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness	Gal. 5:22-23
28.	Have and be a good friend	1 Sam. 20
29.	Resist temptation and pursue what is right	2 Tim. 2:22
30.	Keep their eyes fixed on heaven	Phil. 3:20
31.	Persevere to the end	Phil. 1:6